

Unitarian Universalist Society of Martha's Vineyard

August 17, 2025

"The Power To Bless"

with

Reverend Vicky Hanjian

One glorious chain of love,
of giving and receiving,
unites all things.
All things exist in continuous
reciprocal activity —
one for All, All for one.
None has power, or means for itself;
each receives only to give,
and gives only to receive, and finds therein
the fulfillment of the purpose of existence.
- Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

Bell Ringing

Welcome and Community Connections

Sheila Hanley

Prelude

Silas Berlin

Chalice Lighting *Celebrating Blessings*
by Rev. Suzelle Lynch

Sheila Hanley and Kevin Longval

Opening Words *Blessings are real, and ours to claim...*
by Rev. Dr. Rebekah Savage

Jan Pogue

Hymn #21 *For the Beauty of the Earth*

Candles of Joy and Concern

Reading *How to give a blessing...* by Rev. Kathleen McTigue

Sheila Hanley

Offering

Music

Silas Berlin

Reading *Salutations* written by Leslie Prosterman

When you encounter a traveler on the path,
greet them.
Not because she may be
a God in disguise.
Not because she will give you
a fistful of magic beans,
nor because he will turn into your lost grandmother
and reveal some arcane but homely wisdom.
But because it is in your power to give
a beneficence.
Because the Chinese red blossoms of this aloe plant
are full of hummingbirds
and there is a fly on the window
trying to join them.

Sermon *The Power To Bless*

Rev. Vicky Hanjian

Hymn #29 *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Three*

Closing Words *May You Be Filled...* by Eric Williams

Rev. Vicky Hanjian

Postlude

Silas Berlin

Leslie Prosterman, a former tenured Associate Professor of American Studies and Folklore at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, received her doctorate in Folklore and Folklife from the University of Pennsylvania. During her time as an academic she published *Ordinary Life, Festival Days: Aesthetics in the Midwestern County Fair* with Smithsonian Institution University Press, along with various exhibition catalogues, book chapters and scholarly articles. She is the author of the poetry book *Snapshots and Dances*, and most recently has published poems in *Sense and Sensibility*, *Zen Peacemakers Newsletter*, *Live Mag!*, *Axon*, *Unlikely Stories*, *Maintenant*, and great weather for *MEDIA*. Leslie has been a seasonal resident of Chilmark for the last 47 years; off-island she divides her time between Washington, DC and New York City. She has loved teaching poetry online, in person at Island libraries and at the Martha's Vineyard Hebrew Center.

Thank you to Bill Bridwell, Genevieve Abbot & Karen Sankey for service support and Joni Merry for refreshments. Our flowers today are from Jan Pogue in memory of Sara Tortora, who died in 2024. The flowers were grown by Jan Pogue's daughter on her farm on Chappy. She knew Sara her entire life.

