Quest
for meaning

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Inferno of the Living

by **Archene Turner**, Community Minister, Washington D.C., Former Youth Minister, Cedar Lane UU Church, Bethesda, Maryland

A friend suggested that I read *Invisible Cities*, a short novel by Italo Calvino that consists of dialogues between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan, because she found the stories meaningful. I certainly found Polo's thoughts about inferno provocative:

> *The inferno of the living is not something that will be; if there is one, it is what is already here, the inferno where we live every day, that we form by being together. There are two ways to escape suffering it. The first is easy for many: accept the inferno and become such a part of it that you can no longer see it. The second is risky and demands constant vigilance and apprehension: seek and learn to recognize who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not inferno, then make them endure, give them space.*

I think we are living in an inferno. People acknowledge we are living in an economic crisis, but family, we are in a moral crisis, too.

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A 2009 survey found that one in four families had been hit by a job loss during the past year, and nearly half had suffered a reduction in wages or hours worked. For the working poor, already struggling, the current recession is knocking them down another notch—from low wage employment and inadequate housing toward erratic employment and no housing at all.

Barbara Ehrenreich went back and interviewed some of the people in her 2001 best seller, *Nickeled and Dimed*, a book about the working poor (the quarter of the population that struggle even in the best of times). She called her article "Too Poor to Make the News," because the media is looking for what has been called "recession porn" —stories about the incremental descent of the well off from excess to frugality, from ease to austerity. A typical story from Ehrenrich's article reads:

Sarah and Tyrone Mangold… She was selling health insurance, and he was working on a heating and air conditioning crew. She got laid off in the spring, and he a few months later. Now, they had one unemployment check and a blended family of three children.

They ate at his mother's house twice a week. They pawned jewelry. She scoured the food pantry. He scrounged for side jobs. Their frustration peaked one night over a can of pinto beans. Each blamed the other when that was all they had to eat. "People get irritable when they're hungry," Ms. Mangold said.

Mr. Mangold no longer objects to using food stamps. "I always thought people on public assistance were lazy," he said, "but it helps me know I can feed my kids."

Stories like this often include phrases like "Those we serve are now our neighbors, our former colleagues and hard working individuals struggling to make ends meet."

I wanted to SCREAM. Were not the people they served before *also* our neighbors, our former colleagues and hard working individuals struggling to make ends meet? And this: "We're hearing from more and more middle class people who have never in their lives gone to a food pantry...they are very, very frustrated and angry."

**Justice is what love looks like in public.
—Cornel West**

A monthly for religious liberals

THINKING ABOUT JUSTICE

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Who goes to food pantries for kicks?

I thought about the hundreds of people I had seen at some of ALIVE's programs, through which volunteers from over 40 congregations help those in need in the area of Arlington, Virginia. On Halloween Day, members of the UU Church of Arlington took the time to show me ALIVE's child development center, food distribution and shelter, as others prepared for monsters, ghouls & goblins.

The people I saw in the food distribution center did not appear angry. They were unusually quiet and respectful. Many of them looked like members of my own family tree—white, Native American, Asian and Pacific Islander, African, Arab and Latino/a descent. Perhaps the frustration and anger had passed out of them. Maybe there is a difference in people's minds between climbing up a ladder or going down one. But to me a rung on a ladder is a rung.

I thought of Calvino's Marco Polo, and his two ways to escape suffering the inferno. The first is to accept the inferno and become such a part of it that you can no longer see it.

Many people do not know about or see the people ALIVE serves in Northern Virginia. We think that need, struggle, and hunger are in some distant land. In Africa, New Orleans, the District of Columbia—but oh no, not here, not in our own neighborhoods or religious communities.

We can live our lives so we no longer see what is happening in our world. We pretend that things are not happening all around us and we become a part of the inferno.

When most people imagine an inferno, they think of Dante 's *The Divine Comedy*. However, I was raised on another story about hell, a parable told by Jesus, in which a rich man goes to hell and a poor man to heaven. The rich man is surprised to see the poor man in heaven by the side of Abraham. In his suffering, the rich man pleads to Abraham to send the poor man to give him water to quench his thirst. Abraham says that the chasm is too wide to be crossed.

Perhaps, like the rich man in the story, our souls are destined to hell because we are blind to the needs of others.

Martin Luther King, Jr. and other preachers have interpreted this story to mean that the rich man went to hell not because he was rich, but rather because he allowed the poor man to become invisible to him. He passed this poor man every day and failed to help. The rich man was blind to the need of others. Even in hell, he still believed he was better than the poor man and could expect that the poor man should serve him. The callous rich man wanted the people in heaven to care and help him, but he had failed to do this in his own life on earth for others.

Perhaps, like the rich man in the story, our souls are destined to hell because we are blind to the needs of others. We might be that way because we ourselves are barely holding on. In *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*, David Shipler writes that "in the house of the poor the walls are thin and fragile and troubles seep into one another." Perhaps those troubles seep into our own lives, too, because we are just as fragile.

That is why I say we are living in an inferno, even hell some days. Each of us walks that tightrope of hanging on to make sense of our own world. Something in us says, "Just do for you and yours."

I want to tell you to resist this urge. The act of doing the exact opposite—reaching out to help others—is the balm that heals us and is the very essence of who we are as religious people. It is what will lead us into a moral recovery.

Calvino's Polo says that the other way to escape suffering in the inferno is to "Seek and learn to recognize who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not inferno, then make them endure, give them space."

He does not say do things to make *you* endure and give *you* space—he says give to *them*. The act of caring for someone else provides salvation from the inferno. Do these acts with no expectation of a thank you, or need for acknowledgement from the other person or people, because these are things you are giving *yourself*, to pull you out of the inferno of the living. The only way to escape the inferno is together, building a land of liberty and justice for all. ■

Within this community you choose what you believe—

Sometimes tentatively, sometimes assuredly drawing the outline of your spirit. Our faith encourages introspection, knowledge gained, and life experience: justice and liberty are at the forefront of how to live in this world together.

Your offerings, given with the enclosed envelope or through our website www.QuestForMeaning.org are important to the vitality of this virtual church. Please see our website or contact us to learn how monthly or quarterly donations can now be arranged via electronic fund transfers (EFT) from your checking or savings account. The CLF is thankful to its members for their generosity in all of its forms. ■

Restoring Justice

By **Susan Conrad,** chaplain and associate supervisor of pastoral education, Alta Bates Summit Medical Center, Berkeley/Oakland, California

Over the past few years, I have been a volunteer with AVP—the Alternatives to Violence Project. AVP volunteers work with prisoners who are seeking new ways of relating to themselves and others—ways that are supportive and creative rather than destructive. That's a tall order in U.S. prisons, which are no one's idea of a good time. During weekend workshops held inside prison walls, I have met men who have been convicted for drug and gang offenses, for robbery, rape, and murder. These men are facing the shame of being labeled as outcasts and failures by their families and communities. Many of them, however, have also begun a journey on the path toward remorse. Each of them has been confronted with a moment of truth—a moment in which he has had to own up to the pain and suffering he has caused others.

In AVP workshops, prisoners learn nonviolent ways to handle conflict. These events are one of the few settings in which prisoners' worth and dignity is acknowledged. But such programs in U.S. prisons are rare, and their effectiveness is limited by a prison system with an overwhelming emphasis on punishment.

Instead of reconciliation and rehabilitation, we as a nation have chosen to inflict increasing levels of suffering. We now have two million people behind bars, compared with 200,000 three decades ago. With only 5% of the world's overall population, the U.S. accounts for fully 25% of the world's prison population. In small town America during the last decade, a new prison has broken ground every 15 days. And criminal justice scholars remark on a disturbing trend—the rapid growth of so-called "supermax" or super-maximum security prisons. These institutions are designed for permanent and complete isolation of human beings, and they are known for brutal practices that human rights groups have denounced as torture.

With all this emphasis on building prisons with our tax dollars, we might well ask: Has the intensification of incarceration actually "worked"? It's true that the "great American lockup," as one observer called it, has happened alongside a falling crime rate. But there is no evidence that lower rates of crime are actually a result of increased incarceration. In fact, during the last decade, states that did not embrace tougher rules for sentencing saw the same decline in crime as those with tougher sentencing laws. And recidivism—the rate at which released prisoners commit new crimes—actually increased during this prison-building boom.

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The idea of making an offender suffer for his or her crime is often understood as retribution—literally, "paying back." But, as a New York Times reporter noted: "How the suffering inflicted on an offender compensates for his crime has never been clear, unless it is through vindictive satisfaction." And is this really the meaning of justice? Lawyers, religious leaders, and even victims' families, are asking the same question. Many of them have joined a movement for "restorative justice." They aim to respond to the impact of violence and wrongdoing in ways that heal, in ways that reduce rather than perpetuate suffering.

Renny Cushing, executive director of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation, was motivated to do restorative justice work by his own agony of a loved one lost to violence. In 1989, Renny's father was murdered on his doorstep by a stranger who shot him in the chest while his wife of 37 years stood nearby. Renny continues to struggle with ways to bear the pain. But one thing he knows is that his suffering will not dissolve by shifting it to the person who killed his father. "Sometimes people think it's a zero-sum game," he says. "They think if they can make someone else feel pain, theirs will go away. I just don't think it works that way."

Through efforts of the group Renny directs, victims' families have been able to tell their stories, support one another, and speak out against the death penalty. Some courageous members of this group have found the strength to meet with the prisoner who killed their loved one, and even to move toward forgiveness.

A man from Tennessee, a member of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation, shared his thoughts from a conference several years ago:

Meeting people who had a relative executed by the [government] was one of the most powerful experiences, because in putting my arms around them, I felt somehow as though I was working towards reconciling myself to the man who attacked our daughter [who had been murdered only seven months before]….I remember our first small group meeting where several people told their stories, and we were then asked to draw what we felt about the death of a loved one. I drew a picture of our daughter's grave, and then lost it for a few minutes—I just couldn't stop weeping.… When a group of people who have been terribly wounded by the actions of others comes together, not for revenge, but to seek reconciliation and forgiveness, there is a power present: God is near.

Seeking reconciliation and forgiveness is not easy. As anyone who has tried to forgive themselves or other people knows, it doesn't happen overnight. And when the crime committed includes loss of life, the work is even harder.

The movement for restorative justice aims to create spaces where the seeking of reconciliation and forgiveness can happen—spaces where healing and liberation can have a fighting chance. Those at the forefront of this movement believe that criminal justice as it is typically practiced in the U.S. rarely provides such opportunities.

Restorative justice scholar and religious leader Jim Consedine is one of these voices. His experienced observations are insightful: "Many years of prison ministry have shown me how little remorse there is among inmates simply because they never have to meet their victims and see the devastation they have caused."

Prisoners are far more likely to re-offend, says Consedine, if they are not given the opportunity to express shame or grief over their offenses. When these emotions are repressed, and when jailers and judges treat prisoners as worthless or doomed, the cycle of offending continues. And victims are left no better off than before. "Restorative justice," writes Consedine, "offers a process whereby those affected by criminal behavior…all have a part in resolving the issues that flow from the offending.… [W]hile *retributive* justice asks, 'How do we punish the offender?', *restorative* justice asks 'How do we repair the damage of this offending?'"

In some indigenous communities, like the First Nations of Canada, and the Maori of New Zealand, this latter question has inspired centuries of attempts to deal with the impact of crime. In the U.S., communities have started to put similar wisdom into practice. In Burlington, Vermont, a Community Justice Center has been operating since 1998. The Center oversees five panels of citizens who meet weekly to review cases, including simple assault, drug possession, and theft. Unlike traditional courts, this process helps offenders see the actual pain their behavior caused, and this makes them less likely to offend again; as an added advantage the process is a whole lot less expensive than the court system.

Restorative justice. A simple idea. A deeply religious idea.

> The movement for restorative justice aims to create spaces. . . where healing and liberation can have a fighting chance.

The Hebrew notion of *teshuvah*, or returning to God through repentance, is closely connected to the ancient notion of *shalom*. Usually translated merely as "peace," shalom's full meaning has to do with a reign of justice, healing, and righteousness. Scholars tell us that the purpose of Jewish law was not the meting out of vindictive suffering, but the restoration of balance, and a renewal of the promise of abundant life between humans and God.

Perhaps one of the reasons our nation clings so closely to punitive models of justice is that we are still steeped in orthodox Protestant—and specifically Calvinist—notions of atonement. Orthodox Christians writing long after Jesus' death interpreted his execution as a "necessary sacrifice" which would save the righteous. And Calvinism taught that certain souls were damned, predestined for eternal torment.

But our Unitarian Universalist tradition sees things differently. We defy the notion that suffering in itself brings atonement or salvation. We reject orthodox interpretations of Jesus' death. We believe that if there is something healing about Jesus, if there is something redemptive about this storytelling troublemaker from Nazareth, it is the way he lived, not the way he died. And we reject the claim that God is a vindictive and abusive father who would inflict murder and suffering.

As Unitarian Universalists, we have another element in common with the restorative justice movement. We are a covenantal faith, not a creedal one. What is most important to us is the quality of our relationships: not conformity of belief, but the promises we make to one another and to the larger human family. Not a particular book, not a particular place, but relationships are sacred. Restorative justice shares these values. Restorative justice helps people and communities heal their relationships, if at all possible, rather than condemning some to the hell of continual punishment.

The practice of covenantal faith requires not only a personal returning, but also a collective one. A collective promise that says, "Return to me,
and I will return to you."

A collective promise that says, if you hunger for reconciliation and healing, if you are ready to tell the truth, come as far as you can. Come as far as you can, and we will return the rest of the way to you.

A collective promise that says, if you are willing to seek forgiveness, we are willing to work with you to heal the pain and the damage that resulted from your actions. "Return to us, and we will return to you."

When people come together to seek reconciliation and forgiveness, the God of love and justice is near. The presence that transforms, the presence that forgives, the presence that makes us new—that presence is near. It is in the places of transgression and return that we will learn what it means to be human. It is in the places where we are broken that we will encounter a sacred and transforming power.■

Justice Should Be a Thing of the Past

BY **TIMOTHY D. WELLS**, CLF MEMBER, CLINTON, NEW YORK CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Once
individuals were cheated
with misleading mortgages

Yesterday
storms randomly destroyed homes
and families suffered alone

In the past
innocent people were victimized
and criminals were incarcerated

At one time
citizens were cheated out of fair
public policy and safe products
Tomorrow
companies will be
worthy of our trust

In the future
all communities will be
prepared and willing to help

There will be a time
when our neighborhoods are safe
and atonement replaces punishment

Someday
we will have constructive
democratic debate and honest markets
Justice is useless if it is
only a vision of the future ■

Alice Walker has graciously agreed to let us publish her poem, "Women" from *Revolutionary Petunias and Other Poems* in our printed and mailed version of Quest. She requests that her poem not appear on our website. For those of you interested in reading the poem, please email Beth Murray at bmurray@clfuu.org and request a separate pdf of page 5.

Hands

In a *Peanuts* comic strip, Charlie Brown is eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. He looks admiringly at his hands and says:

Hands are fascinating things. I like my hands…. I think I have nice hands. My hands seem to have a lot of character. These are hands that may someday accomplish great things. These are hands that may someday do marvelous works. They may build mighty bridges or heal the sick, or hit home runs, or write soul-stirring novels. These are hands that may someday change the course of destiny!

Lucy looks down at Charlie's hands and says: "They've got jelly on them!"

Lucy's comment, albeit insensitive, is right on target. Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

Hence, we start by recognizing that our own hands are covered with jelly. And they always will be. But they are all we have. They are who we are.

Messy to be sure, we keep using our hands in acts of justice and kindness, that life might be less evil.

*by **Tom Owen-Towle**, minister emeritus, First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego, California. From* Freethinking Mystics With Hands: Exploring the Heart of Unitarian Universalism. *Published by Skinner House in 1998, this book is available through the UUA Bookstore (www.uua.org/bookstore or 800-215-9076) or the CLF library (617-948-6150).* ■

From Your Minister

BY **MEG RILEY**
SENIOR MINISTER,
CHURCH OF THE
LARGER FELLOWSHIP

Recently I had the good fortune to go on retreat with some amazing ministers. These folks have been called to spend their ministries helping people in extremely difficult situations.

The populations these ministers work with are mostly young, disproportionately people of color, from a broad span of religions. Many of those they serve suffer from mental illness or trauma, struggle to make it financially, struggle to keep their families from falling apart, struggle to find jobs. Many ministers have been told they are the only thing that stands between those they serve and suicide.

It was a huge privilege to be invited into their honest, often painful conversations. My respect for these ministers grew as I got to know them. So did my awareness of the stress and pressure that they are holding. What amazing ministry, I kept saying to myself again and again. What amazing advocacy for justice.

When I returned from my time away with them, a UU friend asked me where I had been. When I replied that I had been on a retreat with UU Military Chaplains, she looked astonished. “UU Military Chaplains!?” she exclaimed. “I can’t even believe that there is such a thing! That must have been so hard for you, peace activist that you are!”

As I have reflected on her comment—and many people have said similar things, to me and to the military chaplains themselves—it has clarified the limited, inaccurate way that our culture has taught us to understand what it means to work for justice. In the stereotypical mind, “justice activists” would be those people who don’t join the military, they picket the military!

That’s not how I see it at all. From my perspective these UU military chaplains are some of the most amazing advocates for justice in our movement. Every day, every hour, they are standing up for humanity instead of dehumanization, names instead of numbers, fair treatment and equality for all of those they serve.

Our culture is good at calling soldiers “heroes” (especially if they die), but we are not good at paying attention to their real lives and needs. The UU military chaplains are doing that, often in routine, unexceptional, daily support and conversation with the soldiers.

> Whoever you are, whatever your situation, you have the opportunity to create justice.

Our culture also likes to lift up justice “heroes,” warriors for good causes (especially if they die). We make them larger in life—in part so we don’t have to be like them, so we can just relax even though we’re not doing anything to bend the moral arc of the universe towards justice. I’ll never be Martin Luther King Jr., so I might just as well sit back and remodel the kitchen and watch TV. Routine, unexceptional, daily ways that we can stand up for justice aren’t “good enough” so I might as well not bother at all. That’s the story we’re told, and I’m so glad that so many of you in the CLF community don’t believe it!

As I think about the people reading this column, I am awed by your courage in diverse situations.

Some 400 of you will read this from inside prisons. “Greetings from a hell that you can’t even imagine,” one of you began a letter to me recently. And I know that you are right, you live in conditions I cannot imagine. And yet you are faithful, finding courage to live from a place of compassion even in hell. You are my heroes.

I am aware that some of you who read this are in Afghanistan, serving our military in weather so hot and conditions so stressful that I can’t imagine them either. And that others of you are getting pepper-sprayed as you wear your yellow Standing on the Side of Love t-shirts to Occupy events, where you are committed to nonviolence even as the pepper burns your face. You are also my heroes.

And most of you are like me. Comfortable in some ways, suffering in others. Most of us benefit from some kinds of social privileges, and suffer from the absence of privilege in some other ways. You, too, are my heroes, living an examined life as you attempt to use the privileges you have to stand up for the common good, as you take small actions where you see them.

Whoever you are, whatever your situation, you have the opportunity to create justice. “Justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love,” said Martin Luther King. “Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”

Yes, it would be great if I were as eloquent as Martin Luther King, Jr. I’m not. Probably you aren’t either. But as long as we have breath, we have power, life force. As long as we have breath we can choose to love. As long as we have power, and know the truth of love, we can create justice. No matter our age, ability, race, financial status. No matter whether we are in prison or out, in the military or picketing against it, in a wheelchair or running marathons.

Justice is not a giant abstraction that will someday roll down upon us like waters, even though we sing out the ancient words longing that it will. Justice is daily, mundane, one breath at a time. Love and power are the tools with which we can bring it to life. May we practice using those tools daily. ■

REsources for Living

BY **LYNN UNGAR**, MINISTER FOR LIFESPAN LEARNING, CHURCH OF THE LARGER FELLOWSHIP

What is justice? That seems like a reasonable question for a month when justice is our theme. We know that Unitarian Universalists think that justice is important. After all, our second principle is "justice, equity and compassion in human relations." *Equity* pretty clearly means fairness—people being treated equally. *Compassion* means kindness and caring, from root words that literally mean *feeling with* someone else. So justice must be something other than fairness or kindness, otherwise there would be no point in listing it along with equity and compassion.

Maybe we can get a hint from one of my favorite bits of the Hebrew Bible, the famous call from the prophet Micah to "Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God." Justice, it seems, is something you *do*. You can love kindness from a distance. You can feel compassion for someone who will never know your caring thoughts. But justice isn't justice unless you *do* it.

OK, fine, that's a start, but what is it that you do when you do justice? After all, you do everything from swimming to grocery shopping, so just knowing that justice is something that you *do* isn't much help. What actions are justice-making, as opposed to just being, well, nice? Do you have to be changing laws and influencing the government in order for something to count as justice, or does justice take place in small, person-to-person ways as well?

One way I like to think of justice goes back to another bit from the Jewish tradition, the phrase *tikkun olam*. In order understand *tikkun olam*, it helps to know the story behind it, which comes from the Kabbalah, writings of medieval Jewish mystics. According to the kabbalists (or at least my version of the kabbalists), in the beginning of the universe there was only God. But eventually God got bored, or lonely, and decided that an eternity of being the perfect "Everything" was going to get old. And so God drew God's Self back to create an empty space, and in that empty space God created ten crystal spheres, ten spheres to hold the manifestation of God's Self in the created world. And so God poured God's divine essence into these ten shimmering globes to create the world.

But something went wrong. Maybe the balance wasn't quite right, maybe the power was too great, but somehow all of the ten spheres shattered into tiny bits, making a universe that was far more chaotic than what God originally intended. But here's the thing. Every living being has a tiny shard of one of those original God-created spheres inside. And the point of our living is to recognize the shard in ourself and in others. When we truly recognize and honor that little divine splinter, then it joins up with the other bits that have been recognized and honored, restoring some piece of the original creation.

Justice is repairing the world by honoring the sacred inside all living beings.

That's what *tikkun olam* means. *Tikkun* means to repair. *Olam* means the world, or the universe, or forever. To practice *tikkun olam* is to repair the world, or to fix all of eternity. It happens when we honor the bit of perfection, of divinity, inside each of us. But the Jewish tradition is clear that *tikkun* isn't something you feel, or a kind of enlightenment. *Tikkun olam* is something you do, something you create through your actions.

I think that's as good a way as any to understand justice. Justice is repairing the world by honoring the sacred inside all living beings. We UUs might describe it as actions that affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the interdependent web of life. The UUs who were arrested for protesting the XL Pipeline (which would bring toxic oil sands from Canada across the United States) were engaged in justice work. So were all the folks who took to public square as part of the Occupy movement, declaring that money cannot be allowed to equal power.

STOP
TRANSCANADA
PIPELINE
THE CornFinger .COM

Photo by Shadia Fayne Wood, Tar Sands Action

But acts of justice, or repairing the world, also take place in much smaller, less public, ways. Perhaps today you have composted your kitchen waste or chosen to walk when you were tempted to drive, choosing small ways to protect the web of life. Maybe you pointed out to someone at work or at school that you don't like to hear people described as "retarded." It might be that you called your senator about internet censorship or school funding. One way or another, you may have taken some small step that nudged the arc of the moral universe in the direction of justice.

That's the other thing I would say about justice. It shapes the future. Bringing soup to your sick neighbor is kindness. It's important, but it's a thing of the moment. Visiting a friend in the hospital is an entirely worthy act of compassion. But justice tries to shape the world, to make a future in which a few more pieces of our common destiny are healed. Justice, in the end, is the foundation of hope. ■

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The Resting Place (Excerpt)

May all nations rise up together
and with FireSpirit burn to ashes
the Great Anger that separates us.

May all nations rise up together
and with WaterSpirit wash away
the Great Shame that drowns us.

May all nations rise up together
and with EarthSpirit bury
the Great Hate that strangles us.

May all nations rise up together
and with AirSpirit blow away
the Great Fear that stops us.

As we leave this resting place today
may we find the rhythm of our own soul
and ever dance to it. ■

My Faith, My Vote for Immigration Reform
IMMIGRATION REFORM NOW!
STOP THE RAIDS
IMIGRATION REFORM THIS YEAR
STOP
STOP DEPORT
WORKERS

*by **Marta I. Valentín**, minister, First Church Unitarian, Littleton, Massachusetts. From* Encounters: Poems about Race, Ethnicity and Identity, *Paula Cole Jones, Editor. Published by Skinner House in 2011, this book is available through the UUA Bookstore (www.uua.org/bookstore or 800-215-9076) or the CLF library (617-948-6150).*