



RESOURCES ON "GOD"

First Unitarian Church
Portland, Oregon

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"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in [them]."

- 1 John 4:16

"Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God. "

- Martin Luther

"With God, every moment is the moment of beginning again."

- Catherine Doherty

For Margaret, Who Fights the Same Battle Over and Over Again

- Nancy Shaffer

Listen.

When you quarrel with God
Really you are quarreling with
Those who have come after God.
It is not God who taught you only
A certain prayer or said reward
Lies in only one direction. It's not
God who said *reward* rather than
Embracing love, which is everywhere;
Not God who taught you to hate
God, shun God. Those like you---
Two legged and mortal---did this: those
Also hurt, in turn, by others before them.

You could leave off this quarreling:
Just begin again, with just yourself
And God. You can choose a different
Name for the Holy; stop cringing when

I say mine. Each is only a word for what
Can't be said, the barest beginning,
A glimpse. The rest you may do in private.

But see, what you do there in private
Shows: what you come back with is written
All over you. It doesn't matter
What the particular word is. Only
That you have been there to fetch it.
Only that you return there often, opening
Yourself to everything that makes it.

Those who taught you what to pray and
How to pray were wrong, if what they
Taught you, you hate.

You can begin again.

“It is easy to understand God as long as you don't try to explain him [them].” - *Joseph Joubert*

“There is a very good saying that if triangles invented a god, they would make him three-sided.”

- *Charles de Montesquieu*

Ground of Being by Natalie Fenimore

Knowing ourselves radiant
May we know God radiant
Beautiful as a clear-eyed child
Blinding us in glory.

Knowing ourselves dark,
May we know God dark
Beautiful as sun-kissed skin
Fertile as the deep earth.

God of the Earth,
Spirit of Life,
You are for us as the ground is for seed.
Warm and nurturing,

You are our sacred birthplace.
In you we sprout, take root, and grow;
Like growing seeds, may we live into our radiance,
Our possibilities, our imaginings, and our love.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”

- *Psalms 46:1-3*

HERE is the image of the power of God... I am the one whose
praise echoes on high. I adorn all the earth.
I am the breeze that nurtures all things green.
I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits. am led by the spirit
to feed the purest streams.
I am the rain coming from the dew that caused the grasses to laugh with the joy of life.
I am the yearning for good....

- *Hildegard of Bingen*

“O God, my God, my Beloved, my heart's Desire.”

- *Bahai Prayer*

In truth, everyone is a shadow of the Beloved Our seeking is His seeking,
Our words are Her words.
At times we flow toward the Beloved like a dancing stream.
At times we are still water held in His pitcher.
At times we boil in a pot turning to vapor.

- *Rumi*

“Call on God, but row away from the rocks.”

- *English Proverb*

Great, living God, never fully known, joyful darkness far
beyond our seeing, closer yet than breathing, everlasting home:
Hail and hosanna, great, living God!
- *Spiritual from “Bring Many Names”*

“Mysterious is the union of human and God.
The person, who with honesty worships God, becomes God; over and over the
growth of this better self is new. ...
When we have moved beyond our god of tradition, and stopped listening to our god of
lecture, then may God fire the heart with God’s presence.
The heart itself opens, with a power of growth, to a new infinity on every side.
Within us is the soul of the whole...the wise silence, the universal beauty, where every
part and particle is related; the Eternal One.”

- *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

“How hard is it for us moderns to concede - much less express it as our deep conviction - that our inner lives ultimately are dependent upon a power-not-ourselves[or as many A.A. participants say “A power greater than our selves”. Such an attitude seems weak and cowardly. But we go even farther; we suspect that faith in a spiritual Presence outside ourselves is absurd.”

- *Rev Dilworth Lupton, Nov. 1939*

Minister at First Unitarian in Cleveland, Ohio. Preaching about the AA program that had just began in 1935 in Akron, Ohio.

You have been invited to meet The Friend. No one can resist the Divine Invitation. That narrows down all our choices

To just two:

We can come to God Dressed for dancing,

Or

Be carried on a stretcher To God's Ward.

- *Hafiz*

“To make God laugh, tell him your plans.” - *Yiddish Proverb*

“It is as impossible for us to demonstrate the existence of God as it would be for even Sherlock Holmes to demonstrate the existence of Arthur Conan Doyle. All-wise. All-powerful. All-loving. All-knowing. We bore to death both God and ourselves with our chatter. God cannot be expressed but only experienced.”

- *Frederick Buechner*

“God! There is no god but He,—the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and the earth.”

- *Qur'an*

“While I know myself as a creation of God, I am also obligated to realize and remember that everyone else and everything else are also God's creation.”

- *Maya Angelou*

I have made up my mind that if there is a God, he will be merciful. Upon that rock I stand.

That he will not torture the forgiving. Upon that rock I stand.

That every man should be true to himself, and that there is no world, no star, in which honesty is a crime.

Upon that rock I stand.

The honest man, the good woman, the happy child, have nothing to fear, either in this world or the world to come.

Upon that rock I stand.

- *Robert Ingersoll*

“Never place a period where God has placed a comma.”

- *Gracie Allen*

“If you don't find God in the next person you meet, it is a waste of time looking for him further.”

- *Mahatma Gandhi*

“I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do because I notice it always coincides with their own desires.”

- *Susan B. Anthony*

That Which Holds All

-Nancy Shaffer

Because she wanted everyone to feel included
In her prayer,
She said right at the beginning
Several names for the Holy:
Spirit, she said, *Holy One*, *Mystery*, *God*

But then thinking these weren't enough ways of addressing
That which cannot be fully addressed, she added
Particularities, saying, *Spirit of Life*, *Spirit of Love*,
Ancient Holy One, *Mystery We Will Not Ever Fully Know*,
Gracious God and also *Spirit of the Earth*,
God of Sarah, *Gaia*, *Thou*

And then, tongue loosened, she fell to naming
Superlatives as well: Most Creative One,
Greatest Source, *Closest Hope*~
Even though superlatives for the Sacred seemed to her
Probably redundant, but then she couldn't stop:

One Who Made the Stars, she said, although she knew
Technically a number of those present didn't believe
The stars had been made by anyone or thing
But just luckily happened.

One Who Is an Entire Ocean of Compassion,
She said and no one laughed.
That Which Has Been Present Since Before the Beginning,
She said, and the room was silent.

Then, although she hadn't imagined it this way,
Others began to offer names:

Peace, said one.

One My Mother Knew, said another.

Ancestor, said a third.

Wind.

Rain.

Breath, said one near the back.

Refuge.

That Which Holds All.

A child said, *Water*.

Someone said, *Kuan Yin*.

Then: *Womb*.

Witness.

Great Kindness.

Great Eagle.

Eternal Stillness.

And then, there wasn't any need to say the things
She'd thought would be important to say,
And everyone sat hushed, until someone said

Amen

