

## Broadway Gospel: The Musical Hair

“Where do we go? Follow the Love.”

July 9, 2017 – The Rev. Jan Reynolds

### Call to Worship

Where do I go...  
Follow the children?  
Where do I go...  
Follow their smiles?  
Is there an answer  
In their sweet faces  
That tells me why I live and die?  
Where is the something  
Where is the someone  
That tells me why I live and die?  
Where do I go...  
Follow my heartbeat?  
Where do I go,  
Follow my hand?  
Where will they lead me  
And will I ever  
Discover why I live and die?  
Tell me why.

- Lyrics: “Where do I go” – from the Musical *Hair*

### Affirmation

“When one has once fully entered the realm of love,  
the world — no matter how imperfect —  
becomes rich and beautiful,  
it consists solely of opportunities for love.”

- Soren Kierkegaard

## Scripture

### Luke 6:27-36 - The Message Interpretation

“To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously.

“Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that’s charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that.

“I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we’re at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind.

**Summer Series: Love is My Religion  
Broadway Gospel: The Musical *Hair* –  
Sermon: “Where do we go? Follow the Love.”  
July 9, 2017 – The Rev. Jan Reynolds**

Hair, the first Rock Musical produced 1968, illustrates the '60s generation's search for meaning and provides an insight into the Flower Children of the '60s.

For all the joyousness of the music, the plot is poignant. Hair was set against the time of the Vietnam war, peace and equality demonstrations as well race riots and street violence, the emergence of recreational drugs and the PILL, feminist consciousness raising ...

This era, as we well know, represented a dramatic social shift. *Hair* tells the story of the "tribe", a group of politically active, long-haired hippies of the "Age of Aquarius." They live a bohemian life in New York City and fight against the Vietnam draft.

Claude, his good friend Berger, their roommate Sheila and their friends struggle to balance their young lives, their loves and the sexual revolution. They rebel against the war and their conservative parents and society. Ultimately, Claude must decide whether to resist the draft as his friends have done, or to surrender to the pressures of his parents and establishment America. Should he serve in Vietnam, compromising his pacifist principles and risking his life?

Claude comes to see that life in the streets offers no more fulfillment than life in the establishment. He enters the army. The finale reveals Claude lying in his uniform on a black cloth in center stage.

These young people are at the cusp of adult life, struggling with how to make choices in a tough world. Where do they fit in a world gone mad with violence?

At the heart of HAIR is an ethical dilemma for us all: How are we to be relevant and live a life of meaning? What do we steer by? Where do we go?

Of course, we are faced so often with these decisions right now. We long for peace and love. Yet we have hard decisions to make about how to pay for health services for everyone.

Jesus says, “Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we’re at our worst. Our God is kind; you be kind.”

Perhaps the hippies of the Summer of Love were doing what they could to cope as young people who did not yet have the power to enact change within the establishment: they found ways to bring on the joy to escape the difficult realities of the times. We surely can relate to that.

Yet, their message of the Summer of Love lives on, Because it's classic! Love has the greatest power. Love lives on.

Where do we go? How do we know what to do? How do we make peace when the world is at war? How do we forgo judgment in an age where it is rampant? How do we live together in an age of discord and disagreement?

Love is the foundation of ethical decisions. When we wonder what "truth" is, we remember Jesus' wisdom: "To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst."

When we wonder "Where do we go? Which direction to follow?" we follow the Love. that isn't always clean and clear, or easy. And often following Love requires sacrifice.

When the character Claude dies, the Hair chorus sings "Let the Sunshine In." their response to the death of their friend is to call for the regenerating energy that joins us in making the world new, again and again.

And then everyone comes up on stage for a Love-In! Love-in's live on, in communities throughout the US and the world. The 27<sup>th</sup> Pride parade in San Francisco on June 25 was a giant Love-In. Love-ins happen in families, in couples. Love-ins look like the community meetings I had this week with the Marin Interfaith Council, Marin Unified Schools, and the Center for Non-Profit Leadership to respond to rising acts of intolerance in Marin Schools.

Today, our Mission Committee will give you an update about what Marin Organizing Committee is doing to address housing for the homeless and for those who find it very difficult to afford housing in this county. There will be a gathering in August to educate our community about these issues.

These gatherings, are Love-Ins, undertaking decisions together in the name of Love. Today's worship service is a Love-In. We are here to demonstrate our love of God and all of life!

The musical Hair reflects the seemingly carefree life the hippies led in contrast to the difficulties faced by many US citizens of the day, including those affected by violence at war and in the streets.

Behind the joy of the music and our nostalgia for this period, we see that HAIR's message is deep and revolutionary. The composers ask us to test the validity of our values for whatever era.

Richard Rohr, the Franciscan brother, wrote this week: “We are called to be both activists *and* mystics, missionaries of love *and* contemplatives, great lovers *and* deep thinkers. Informed by the belief that the world is birthed by God and is precious and sacred and *one*, the true spiritual quest is that the world become whole—and we along with it.”

Where do we go? We can’t always know. But whatever we do shall come from Love.

“When the moon is in the Seventh House  
And Jupiter aligns with Mars,  
Then peace will guide the planets  
And love will steer the stars.  
Harmony and understanding  
Sympathy and trust abounding  
No more falsehoods or derisions.  
Golden living dreams of visions...”

Visions based on true Love.  
Let the Sunshine In.