

Friends I have needed your help, your love, your patience again and again this week, and I need your help once more on this sermon. Here's what I need you to do: whenever you hear the word "standing", I need you to say, "on the side of love."

Can you do that for me? Want to try it – "Standing..."

Very good! there you go.

I have discovered, this week, what many of you have known for years: UUMAC is a community that is **STANDING**

In what we what we do, in how we play together, in the time we share, we are **STANDING...**

And when we are unable – or just too tired – to stand up, we are simply **outSTANDING...**

This week, we have occupied holy ground. I'm not talking about the fact that this is a Catholic University, though we are grateful for their hospitality. I'm talking about the fact that there has been a special energy present here as we have gathered together as a community. It's a magical energy, this creativity-ecology connection. Oh, I'm sure its very scientific, involving endorphins and all that jazz, but I think it's magical all the same.

Here, moved by the beauty of the world and the beauty we find within each one of us, people have been transformed a little bit, maybe a lot. People have been given courage – and not just the cowardly lion. Like the scarecrow, people here have learned their own wisdom. And like the tin man, who, in *my* version of the Wizard of Oz, shaved his head for UUMAC, people here have learned just how deep their love really is, when we gather together and we find ourselves **STANDING...**

Now, my fellow Dorothys, it is time we return home. Some of us may be a little sad to climb into that balloon. But remember: you are never all that far from this place. Do not forget the friends you have made here. Do not forget the strength and serenity and peace you glimpsed within yourself. We may not all have ruby red slippers, sadly, but we can all bring our connection to UUMAC home with us. Just remember that you are **STANDING...**

I'll tell you a secret, usually reserved for wizards behind curtains: wherever you go, now, no matter how far, you will take a little of us with you. Each of us goes with a little of the spirit of this community. From henceforth you are, among many other things, a UUMAC-er. May that give you strength to bring whatever positive energy and love you found at UUMAC out into the world. Don't leave it here, to pick up a year from now. Oh, no.

We need the spirit of this place out in the world. Tomorrow is the one year anniversary of the shootings in Tennessee. Our prayers are with the people there, and the families of the

two people killed in that tragedy. And if we are going to build a safer world tomorrow, we need to be able to share our values with the world.

Wherever you go, remember that you are STANDING...

We will live our lives with connection to the earth and to our own spirits, and this connection will allow us to be be morally upSTANDING

When you love our earth, when you reduce, reuse, recycle, you are STANDING...

When you bring to another person the love and gratitude you found here, you are STANDING...

Try not to forget the energy of this place. Take the memory of these beautiful faces with you. Take these voices around you, who join with you in support and love. Remember, wherever you go, whether you are alone, not at home, disowned, whether you ain't got nothin' but a bone, when you need to hear that someone on the phone, but you don't know who would be calling, and your whole empire is falling, and you're finding walls that have no top, and doors that have no key, when you're looking for a land of the free, and you're stuck on the reservation, and you're paralyzed with hesitation, and you can't find a place to admire creation, or a face to remind you of life's elation.

Don't lose hope. Remember what you've got. Remember the voices around you, ringing in your ears, calling you to your best self. Remember that you belong to a summer community that is STANDING....

In what we what we do, in how we play together, in the time we share, we are STANDING...

And when we are unable – or just too tired – to stand up, we are simply outSTANDING...

May we stand for one another, and may you have a wonderful year, until this beloved community meets again.

AMEN