

The SUN

Sydney Unitarian News

The Unitarian Church in NSW
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‘BLOOD AND FIRE’: THE STORY OF THE SALVATION ARMY

This unusual topic is prompted by the centenary of the death of ‘General’ William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, on 20 August 1912. While Unitarians may not have much time for his theology, we can certainly respect his commitment to social service at a time when that was badly needed. We may find other commonalities as this story unfolds.

William Booth was born on 10 April 1829 in Nottingham, the son of an architect whose poor investments rendered him a bankrupt and an alcoholic. He had to leave school at the age of 13 and become an apprentice pawnbroker, his father dying in the same year. He had not been brought up in any particular church but he became a Methodist and, through extensive reading and training himself in writing and speech, took up lay preaching to the poor of Nottingham.

When his apprenticeship ended in 1848, Booth looked for more suitable work than pawnbroking, which he considered ungodly. All he found was another such job in London, where he also got so little preaching work in churches that he took to evangelising in the streets and on Kennington Common. (Interestingly, that was a public speaking venue where the early Methodists, John Wesley and George Whitefield, had spoken to huge crowds in earlier years.)

In 1851, Booth joined the Methodist Reformed Church and he soon became a full-time preacher at their headquarters, Binfield Chapel in London. He adopted the style of the American revivalist, James Caughey, whom he had heard during a visit to England. In 1853, he became the minister at Spalding in Lincolnshire and, two years later, he married Catherine Mumford. Their wedding was very simple, as they wanted to use their money for his ministry – even during their honeymoon, Booth was asked to speak at meetings.

Booth became a prominent [evangelist](#) but he found his pastoral duties interfering with the frequent requests for him to take part in public campaigns. After repeated requests to be relieved of ministerial work, he resigned in 1861 – only to find himself barred from campaigning in Methodist congregations. He became an independent evangelist, though his [doctrine](#) remained the Calvinist line of eternal damnation for unrepentant sinners who rejected the Gospel of Christ. However, he insisted that genuine faith would manifest itself in a life of love for God and service to mankind, and that became the defining aspect of his movement.

In 1865, Booth was preaching in the streets of London's [East End of London](#) and some local missionaries asked him to lead the meetings they were holding in a large tent in Whitechapel. True as it may sound, his message to those destitute and desperate people that Christ loved them all had a profound effect. Later that year, he and Catherine opened the Christian Revival Society (later to be called the Christian Mission) in the East End, which featured soup kitchens and other social work.

The Christian Mission became the Salvation Army in 1878, with its own uniform, flag, officers and music (hymns written to popular and folkloric tunes). Despite an unending struggle to raise funds, the Army extended its operations in the UK and, in the early 1880s, branches were set up in the US, France, Sweden, Switzerland and most parts of the British Empire (Australia in 1880, New Zealand in 1883). A large number of these were started by rank-and-file 'soldiers' who had emigrated and, once their operations were viable, requested 'officers' from Britain. During his lifetime, Booth established Army work in 58 countries and colonies, many of which he visited.

Booth composed many of the Army's songs and wrote a number of books. His *Darkest England and the Way Out* set the foundations for the Army's social welfare schemes. It became a best-seller when it was published in 1890 and was reprinted several times (as recently as 2006!). He proposed housing projects for the homeless, training schools for the urban poor, and homes for 'fallen women' and released prisoners. He also had schemes for legal aid, credit unions, free clinics and even a seaside resort for poor people, saying that it is the task of Christians to provide if the state fails to meet its social obligations.

The effectiveness of the Salvation Army is evident from the frantic opposition it received from the alcohol industry. A shadowy group called the 'Skeleton Army' violently disrupted Salvation Army marches and attacked both their property and their personnel, even killing some of them. The press, too, was often hostile, attributing a dire meaning to the Army's motto: 'Blood and Fire'. (That just referred to Jesus' redeeming blood and the sanctifying fire of the Holy Spirit.) The Church of England was highly critical of the equal status given to female officers.

However, given time, the Army gained public approval and Booth received audiences with kings, emperors and presidents. In 1902, he was invited to attend the coronation of King Edward VII and, in 1906, he was made a Freeman of the City of London and given an honorary degree by the University of Oxford. In 1904, he took part in a motorcade around Britain, stopping in cities, towns and villages to address the crowds.

Booth died at 83 in his London home and 150,000 people filed by his casket as he lay in state at Clapton Congress Hall. The funeral procession comprised 10,000 uniformed Salvationists and 40 Army bands. He was buried in Abney Park Cemetery, the main burial ground in London for non-conformist ministers.

SERVICE DIARY

Meetings every Sunday from 10.30 – 11.30 a.m.
(followed by coffee, tea and food)

Date	Presenter	Topic
5 th August	Peter Crawford	Judaism: Early Unitarianism?
12 th August	Mike McPhee	Unitarianism in Africa*
19 th August	Noel Jordan	The Druids*
26 th August	Peter Crawford	Islam: The Religion of the Prophet
2 nd September	Curt Fraser	Australia's Energy Needs
9 th September	Peter Crawford	Zoroastrianism: The Mother Religion
16 th September	Peter Crawford	Is Atheism a Religion?
23 rd September	Michael Spicer	Russia, East to West*
30 th September	Peter Crawford	A New Look at Christianity (Part 1)

* These will include PowerPoint presentations.

[Please check the church website (www.sydneyunitarianchurch.org) for updates. The program for the month of October will be available from the beginning of September.]

<i>Overvæld ingen med flotte gaver. Små ting får ofte megen ros. Med et brød til deling og en kop sendt rundt fandt jeg venskab.</i>	Load no one with lavish gifts. Small presents often win great praise. With a loaf cut and a cup shared I found fellowship.
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Submitted by the Danish Unitarian Church; words from the *Hávamál* (Sayings of the Vikings), though the translator was not identified.

*Nechť hoří tento plamen a připomíná nám, že každý z nás může světu
přinášet dobro a lásku, že každý z nás může být světu požehnáním.*

May this flame burn and remind us that each of us can offer goodness
and love, and that each of us can be a blessing to the world.

Submitted by the Religious Society of Czech Unitarians; Czech and English words written by Rev. Petr Samojký, minister of the Prague congregation.

[These are the Chalice Lightings from the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists for the months of July and August.]

The Unitarian Church of Denmark (*Unitarisk Kirkesamfund*) was founded in 1900, making it the oldest Continental church after the historic Transylvanian and Hungarian churches. Its only congregation is in Copenhagen, consisting of 55 member families and 110 supporters, and operates as a lay-led fellowship. However, they have a beautiful meeting house which was erected in 1927, partly funded by a donation from Nina Grieg, widow of the Norwegian Unitarian composer, Edvard Grieg.

The Danish church had liberal Christian origins but, today, most members prefer a more abstract theology. For its size, it has a lively program of services, a fortnightly 'Debate Café' and various evening activities. They also have a website (www.unitarisme.dk) but it is only in Danish.

The *Hávamál* is part of the Old Norse *Poetic Edda*, compiled in Iceland in the 13th Century. Its main section consists of advice on living, correct conduct and wisdom, ostensibly spoken by Odin.

The Religious Society of Czech Unitarians is celebrating the 90th Anniversary of its foundation by Rev. Norbert Čapek in 1922. As part of that commemoration, an International Flower Communion was held in Prague on Sunday, 10 June, with many participants from other countries attending either in person or via video link. The Flower Communion was devised by Čapek and it is a truly beautiful service; however, this must be the first time that 'virtual flowers' were presented by those who attended from cyberspace.

The ceremony was lead by Rev. Petr Samojký, minister of the Prague Unitarian Congregation, and Rev. Mark Shiels, minister of its English-speaking branch. Also taking part as official hosts were Rev. Eric Cherry (Director of International Resources at the UUA), Rev. Bill Darlison (Vice-President of the UK General Assembly), Rev. Steve Dick (Executive Secretary of the ICUU) and Freya Bednarski-Stelling (Ambassador of the German Unitarians).

All of the music was composed especially for the occasion by the prominent Czech organist and composer, Karel Loula, and performed by the combined strength of the Uni-Sono choir and the Church Choir of the Holy Spirit, accompanied by the *Orchestra di Spirito* and the Prague congregation's newly-acquired pipe organ. The RSCU's website has a page in English about this historic occasion, which contains a link to a video of the entire ceremony: www.unitaria.cz/flowercommunion.htm. (Actually, the whole website has an English translation.)

We now learn that Judith Crompton of the UK, whose Chalice Lighting appeared in the last issue, is actually a former president of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (2000/01).

THE FATE OF THE PRIMATES

By Peter Crawford

In the famous book, *Planet of the Apes*, and the films that it still inspires, apes rise up and dominate the earth. It is an imaginative story but nothing more. In reality, one type of ape, *Homo sapiens*, has risen up and now dominates the earth, while the others are all on the edge of extinction. While Unitarians, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and lawyers rattle on about ‘human rights’, our species is rapidly turning the world, its lands and oceans into a slum. The lifeforms of our planet are dying and it is high time we woke up to this. Nothing indicates this frightful dilemma more blatantly than the fate of the primates, our nearest relatives in the animal kingdom.

“For the current reality of great ape populations is more of a tragedy than an action thriller,” says Richard Carroll, the head of the World Wildlife Federation’s Africa program and a gorilla expert. “If we as humans can’t protect our nearest living relatives then we’ve failed as a species”, he told *Time* magazine in 2011. The world’s primates are rapidly falling victim to man’s relentless destruction of their habitats – about half the forests that cover the earth are gone and, each year, another 16 million hectares disappear. The World Resources Institute estimates that only about 22% of the world’s old growth forest cover remains ‘intact’.

Consequently, almost 50% of the world’s primate species, including apes, monkeys, tarsiers and lemurs, face extinction. The others face extreme diminution in numbers, to the extent that most of them will only be curiosities in zoological gardens by the middle of this century. As well as habitat destruction, they are also being decimated by illegal hunting and infectious diseases. For example, scientists say that already 25% of the world’s gorillas have died in recent years from Ebola disease.

There are four main types of great apes. These are gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos, orangutans and *Homo sapiens*. There are at least 7 billion humans on the planet, whereas the other great apes together number no more than 500,000. This figure is down from several million just twenty years ago; ten thousand years ago, there were probably more apes than humans. The lesser apes comprise four genera of Asian gibbons, most species of which have ‘threatened’ or ‘most endangered’ status.

Scientists plead for greater awareness and call for an awakening as to how dire things are. “Changes in attitudes towards apes may be crucial as to whether they survive or not,” states Jarred Diamond, Professor of Geography and Physiology at UCLA. “If the present trend continues, the mountain gorilla, the ‘Pileated Gibbon’, ‘Kloss’s gibbon’ and possibly other apes will in the near future exist only in zoos....” Human overpopulation is exacting a huge toll. Our numbers are soaring at the expense of other animals and the environment.

The new scientific term for our geological era is the ‘Anthropocene’. This reflects that humans via carbon emissions, excessive use of resources and soaring population growth are affecting the climate as well as destroying the environment in a myriad of other ways. In the last few years, news reports have highlighted the worsening plight of primates in Madagascar, Africa, Asia and Central and South America. In some cases, only a small number of them continue to survive.

For example, Reuters, citing the World Wildlife Fund, reported in May 2010 that mountain gorillas in Africa were dying out. Around 680 remain in the wild, making them one of the world’s most endangered great apes. About half of the mountain gorilla population live close to the Virunga volcanoes, which cover the central African countries of Rwanda, Uganda and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The rest live in the World Heritage-listed Bwindi Impenetrable Park in Uganda.

According to the WWF, the primates die because of poaching, destruction of habitat, live ape trade, disease and temperature fluctuations. Other reports reveal that gorillas in Africa’s Greater Congo Basin also face extinction. According to a United Nations report, these animals could die out by the mid 2020s because many are sold for bush-meat, body parts or illegal pets.

A report in 2011 also highlighted the perils facing orangutans in Borneo. Villagers living on the Indonesian side of the border with Malaysia have exterminated at least 750 of these great and delightful creatures over a period of 12 months (2010–11). Ostensibly, they do this to protect their crops but also to obtain orangutan meat, the report in the journal *PLoS ONE* (produced by the Public Library of Science in San Francisco) said.

The plight of the orangutans is in fact far worse than previously thought, according to Eric Meijard, the main author of this report.

Indonesia has 90% of the world's surviving orangutans. The remainder are a beleaguered few thousand hiding out in the remnants of Malaysian Borneo's rainforests. Less than 50 years ago, the Indonesian archipelago was covered with dense rainforests. Today, much more than half of the tree-cover is gone and most of the 50-60,000 Indonesian apes live in depleted forests where they are extremely vulnerable.

The Nature Conservancy and 19 other private organizations have conducted a survey to learn more about them. They spoke to 6983 people in 687 villages in three provinces of Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of Borneo, from April 2008 and September 2009. Statistics from the interview were taken from a population of men 15 years and older, since only 11 women reported killing of orangutans. This showed at least 750 orangutans had been killed in the previous twelve months.

Some orangutans had been killed specifically for their meat while others had strayed into cropland areas and were eaten only after being shot as threats to crop yields. Meijard emphasized the importance of the new study. "We used robust scientific methods to assess the social dimensions of orangutan conservation," he said. "Unless we assumed most of the survey residents lied, we have to accept the hunting issue as an uncomfortable issue that has to be addressed if we wish to save the orangutan."

Primates in other parts of Asia are also at risk. An *Agence France Press* report in 2011 revealed the plight of the hapless little Philippine tarsier, the world's smallest primate. It is only 10 centimetres tall and weighs 120 grams. Conservationists say that tourists are endangering the tarsier, which is nocturnal and extremely sensitive to noise, light and human contact. "People go near and they're loud, or take pictures with the flash or next they're touching them. Most of the tarsiers when they're stressed commit suicide," says local expert Carlito Pizzaras. "They don't breathe and slowly die. If you put them in a cage they bump their heads on the cage and will crack their craniums, they are so thin."

Pizzaras is the field manager of the Philippine Tarsier and Wildlife Sanctuary in Corella on the island of Bohol, a popular destination for tourists. Unlike other tarsier attractions on the island, visitors, are not allowed to get too close to the primates. Generally, the future for these delightful mini-primates is grim. The Philippine tarsiers are in serious decline and categorized as near threatened, while species in Brunei, Malaysia and Indonesia are also under threat.

An article in Britain's *Guardian* newspaper also highlights the plight of the golden headed langur (a slender long tailed Asian monkey). It lives only on the island of Cat Ba in northeastern Vietnam and its numbers have fallen to only about 60 or 70. There are less than 100 northern sportive lemurs alive in Madagascar and about 110 eastern black crested gibbons left in Vietnam, the report said.

Of the world's 634 primate species, 48% are now listed as threatened with extinction on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's 'red list' of endangered species. A recent report was produced by 85 primatologists and launched at Bristol Zoo in early 2010 by conservation groups, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Conservation International and the International Primatological Society.

"All over the world it's mainly habitat destruction that affects primates the most", explains Christopher Schwitzer, head of the Bristol Conservation and Science Foundation and one of the authors of the report. Hunting, illegal logging and fragmentation of the forests by fires are big issues in African countries and, also now in Madagascar. In Asia, one of the main problems is the trading of primate hearts mainly for 'medicine' to China.

To reiterate then, the family known as primates is everywhere under threat because their most prominent member is behaving disgracefully as a global citizen. Everywhere the story is the same. Greed, whether of the corporate, individual or governmental variety, causes unreasonable predation of resources with little concern for the ramifications. Deforestation, population growth, pollution and downright animal cruelty form a formidable force of depletion, destruction and extermination of our closest relatives in the animal kingdom. A new form of Unitarianism must arise that has a sense of practicalities and the extreme urgency of the problems which confront the planet.

[Peter Crawford's 'Twelve Points of Concern' series continues in future editions.]

GENERAL BOOTH ENTERS INTO HEAVEN

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
The Saints smiled gravely and they said, "He's come"
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Walking lepers followed rank on rank,
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank
Drabs the alleyways and drug fiends pale
Minds still passion ridden, soul flowers frail:
Vermin eaten saints with moldy breath,
Unwashed legions with the ways of Death
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Ev'ry slum had sent its half a score
The world round over. (Booth had groaned for more).
Ev'ry banner that the wide world flies
Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes,
Big voiced lassies made their banjos bang,
Tranced, fanatical they shrieked and sang:
"Are you? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Hallelulah! It was queer to see
Bull necked convicts with that land made free.
Loons with trumpets a blare, blare, blare,
On, on, upward thro' the golden air!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Booth died blind and still by Faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God!
Booth led boldly and he look'd the chief
Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.

Jesus came from the court house door,
Stretched his hands above the passing poor.
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there
Round and round the mighty courthouse square.
Yet! in an instant all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.

The lame were straightened, withered limbs
uncurled,
And blind eyes opened on a new, sweet world.
Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole!
Gone was the weasel head, the snout, the jewel.
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires and of forests green!
The hosts were sandall'd and their wings were fire!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
But their noise play'd havoc with the angel choir,
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

Oh shout Salvation! It was good to see
Kings and Princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jingling jingl'd in the hands of Queens.

And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master thro' the flag fill'd air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth the soldier, while the throng knelt down.
He saw King Jesus; they were face to face,
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Vachel Lindsay (1913)

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay (1879–1931) was an American poet, considered the father of modern singing poetry in which the verses are sung or chanted. Because of his identity as a performance artist and his use of American Midwest themes, he became known in the 1910s as the 'Prairie Troubador'. For the final twenty years of his life, he was one of the best-known poets in the US.

Lindsay intended this poem to be sung to the tune of 'The Blood of the Lamb' (Elisha A. Hoffman, 1878) but it was also put to music by the famous American composer, Charles Ives, shortly after publication. You can view performances of the latter by searching the title on Youtube: www.youtube.com.

We just have space for a few jokes about the Salvos:

Don't spend two quid to dry-clean a shirt – donate it to the Salvation Army instead. They'll clean it and put it on a hanger. Next morning, buy it back for seventy-five pence.

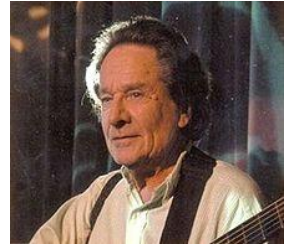
I just joined the Salvation Army. You don't get to kill people but you can annoy the hell out of them.

My uncle got thrown out of the Salvation Army. Apparently, when saving young girls from sin, you aren't allowed to save any for yourself!

A young wag sees a female Salvation Officer collecting outside a pub and cajols her into trying a drink. She asks him to have it served in a coffee cup for the sake of appearances. However, when he places his order, the bartender says: "Not the Salvation Army woman again?"

PRIDE OF MAN

Turn around, go back down, back the way you came
Can't you see that flash of fire ten times brighter than the day
And behold the mighty city broken in the dust again
Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again



Turn around, go back down, back the way you came
Babylon is laid to waste, Egypt's buried in her shame
Their mighty men are beaten down, their kings have fallen in the ways
Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

Turn around, go back down, back the way you came
Terror is on every side, though the leaders are dismayed
Those who put their faith in fire, in fire their faith shall be repaid
Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again



Turn around, go back down, back the way you came
Shout a warning to the nations that the sword of god is raised
On Babylon that mighty city, rich in treasure, wide in fame
It shall cause thy tower to fall and make it be a pyre of flame
Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again

Oh thou that dwell on many waters, rich in treasure, wide in fame
Bow unto a god of gold, thy pride of might shall be thy shame
Oh God, the pride of man, broken in the dust again



And only God can lead the people back into the earth again
Thy holy mountain be restored, thy mercy on thy people, Lord

Hamilton Camp (1964)

This song, usually associated with Quicksilver Messenger Service and Gordon Lightfoot, is presented to mark Hiroshima Day (06 August). You can view both singers' renditions by searching the title on YouTube (www.youtube.com), though we recommend Lightfoot's version.

Hamilton Camp (1934–2005) was an English-born American singer, songwriter and actor, who changed his name from Robert when he joined the *Subud* spiritual movement. Camp became a child actor in films and onstage and had his debut as a folk singer at the Newport Folk Festival in 1960. An early gospel song he co-authored, "You Can Tell the World", was the opening track on Simon & Garfunkel's first album, *Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M.*

The Subud movement was founded by Muhammed Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo in Indonesia in the 1920s. While its basis is a spiritual exercise called *latihan kejiwaan*, Subuh saw this not as a new teaching but as a source of evidence for spiritual realities. The denomination spread to Japan, Hong Kong, Cyprus and the UK in the 1950s and there are now Subud groups in about 83 countries with a total membership of 10,000.

MUSIC FROM KENYA

As was mentioned in the last issue, your editor commissioned a DVD of local UU songs by 'The Kenyan Trio', tracks of which can be viewed on YouTube. The singers are Josphat Mainye, his wife, Callen Gesimba, and David Okelo, all leaders of the Kitengela UU congregation, and the visuals are as impressive as the music. The actual DVD has now arrived and I have made copies to send to other ANZUUA groups.

I will be using the DVD in my presentation in church on 12 August, so please be there. My PowerPoint will feature pictures of Unitarian sites in Burundi, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa.

THE ECONOMICS OF LEVITICUS

By Doug Muder

Culture war conversations often end with a verse from Leviticus, the Old Testament book of laws. After the verse has been quoted, it does no good to point out that the implied solution is impractical or unfair or causes needless suffering. God has given his command and we should be carrying it out, whether it makes sense to us or not. Strangely, though, the economic parts of Leviticus aren't quoted with the same air of ultimate authority. If they were, Biblical literalists might have to become radicals rather than reactionaries.

For example, when vulture capitalists ruin towns by closing factories and shipping jobs overseas, someone might quote Leviticus 19:9–10, which clearly denounces business practices that wring out every last dime of profit:

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner.

The foreigner? You mean, like, illegal aliens? Could be. Leviticus 19:33–34 says:

When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt.

It doesn't say anything about a Green Card, it just says “resides among you in your land”. (Don't argue with me, argue with God. I'm just reading literally.)

But by far the most radical part of the book is Leviticus 25, the chapter that institutes the Jubilee Year:

Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan. The fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; do not sow and do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the untended vines. For it is a jubilee and is to be holy for you; eat only what is taken directly from the fields. In this Year of Jubilee everyone is to return to their own property.

“Their own property” includes anything that has been sold or repossessed:

If one of your fellow Israelites becomes poor and sells some of their property ... [and] if they do not acquire the means to repay, what was sold will remain in the possession of the buyer until the Year of Jubilee. It will be returned in the Jubilee, and they can then go back to their property.

Basically, every fiftieth year all mortgages and foreclosures are cancelled and land goes back to its original owners. Anybody whose debts forced them into slavery is freed.

I know what you're thinking: “That would never work.” And you're absolutely right: It would never work with our modern capitalist notion of private property. But guess what? Leviticus has a completely different understanding of property:

The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers. Throughout the land that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land.

So the Earth itself belongs to God, while human deed-holders only own what the land produces:

If you sell land to any of your own people or buy land from them, do not take advantage of each other. You are to buy from your own people on the basis of the number of years since the Jubilee. And they are to sell to you on the basis of the number of years left for harvesting crops. When the years are many, you are to increase the price, and when the years are few, you are to decrease the price, because what is really being sold to you is the number of crops.

Leviticus was talking about an agrarian economy. If you wanted to apply this today, you might generalize to something like this: *The Bible does not support private ownership of the means of production.* The owner owns the product, not the means of production.

Taking Leviticus 25 seriously would force a sweeping re-visioning of the economic system. That would be a lot of work, and cause a certain amount of distress for the people who own property under our more free-trading definition. Why go to all that trouble? Unless you think this the Word of God or something.

[Reprinted with the author's permission from the 16 July 2012 instalment on his website, *The Weekly Sift* (www.weeklysift.blogspot.com). Doug Muder is a PhD mathematician who has co-authored a number of 'computing for dummies' books as well as professional manuals. He now lives in Nashua, New Hampshire, speaks in various UU churches and writes for the weekly *UUWorld* web magazine.



The Weekly Sift is an analysis of political and other news from all over the country, though it also contains occasional book reviews. Doug's other website is *Free and Responsible Search* (www.freeandresponsible.blogspot.com), for religious and philosophical topics, and other articles of his can be found on *The New Humanist* (www.thenewhumanist.org).

HISTORIC MERGER OF TRANSYLVANIAN AND HUNGARIAN CHURCHES

[From the *iNews*, weblog of the UUA's International Resources Office.]



After being persecuted throughout four hundred years for believing differently, and finally being cut up in parts in its organization by the treaty of Trianon in 1920 [under which Transylvania was transferred from Hungary to Romania], the conditions of the European Union in the 21st century brought new possibilities for the structural unification of the Unitarians in the Carpathian basin.

Benefiting from these national and international chances, and being encouraged by the heritage of the 450 years of their history, the authorities of the Unitarian churches in both Transylvania (Romania) and Hungary decided to unify their organizations to recreate the institutional and spiritual unity of the Hungarian Unitarian Church. In this appellation, Hungarian is not a reference to a country, but rather the description of its members' ethnicity, language and culture.

On June 28, 2012 the Synods of both the Transylvanian Unitarian Church and the Unitarian Church in Hungary will meet in a solemn session in Kolozsvár to officially declare the act of the reunification. A new, unified and integrated Church Constitution, as well as a new series of Bylaws and other regulations will be recognized that will manage the operations and supervise the organization of the united church. The current officers of the regional units in both Romania and Hungary will keep their mandate for the next two years, until the general elections planned for late 2014.

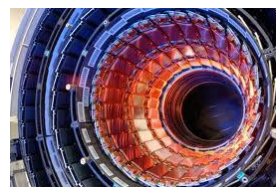
The new church constitution, entering into force following the session of the Synod, calls the Headquarters of the denomination being located in Kolozsvár, while the offices in Budapest will serve as headquarters of the district in Hungary. The territorial unit in Hungary will be the 7th district of the church organization, retaining some functional, organizational, financial and economic preferences compared to the other six districts. Its clerical leader called vicar and lay leader called lay president will be in the executive committee of the denomination. The seat of the one bishop, and two lay presidents, will continue to be in Kolozsvár.

On June 28, the meeting of the Synod will be opened by a business session aiming to adopt the new church legislation. In the evening, a special worship service will be held in the First Unitarian Church to celebrate the event. On June 29 and 30, the General Assembly of the new church will hold its first annual meeting, evaluating the activities of the last year, and planning the upcoming events of the following year.

[Transylvania was an independent Hungarian principality when the Unitarian church was formed in 1568. The denomination quickly spread to Hungary proper, but it was stamped out by the Counter-Reformation and re-emerged in the mid-1800s. Today, Hungary has 25,000 Unitarians in 12 churches and 21 fellowships, compared to 60,000 members, 125 churches and about 30 fellowships in Transylvania.]

THE LARGE HADRON RAP

Twenty-seven kilometers of tunnel under ground
Designed with mind to send protons around
A circle that crosses through Switzerland and France
Sixty nations contribute to scientific advance
Two beams of protons swing round, through the ring they ride
'Til in the hearts of the detectors, they're made to collide
And all that energy packed in such a tiny bit of room
Becomes mass, particles created from the vacuum
And then...



(Chorus)

LHCb sees where the antimatter's gone
ALICE looks at collisions of lead ions
CMS and ATLAS are two of a kind
They're looking for whatever new particles they can find.
The LHC accelerates the protons and the lead
And the things that it discovers will rock you in the head.



We see asteroids and planets, stars galore
We know a black hole resides at each galaxy's core
But even all that matter cannot explain
What holds all these stars together – something else remains
This dark matter interacts only through gravity
And how do you catch a particle there's no way to see
Take it back to the conservation of energy
And the particles appear, clear as can be

You see particles flying, in jets they spray
But you notice there ain't nothin', goin' the other way
You say, "My law has just been violated – it don't make sense!
There's gotta be another particle to make this balance."
And it might be dark matter, and for first
Time we catch a glimpse of what must fill most of the known 'Verse.
Because...



(Chorus)

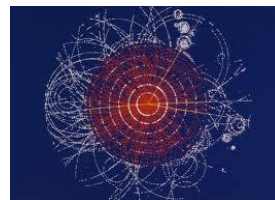
Antimatter is sort of like matter's evil twin
Because except for charge and handedness of spin
They're the same for a particle and its anti-self
But you can't store an antiparticle on any shelf
Cuz when it meets its normal twin, they both annihilate
Matter turns to energy and then it dissipates



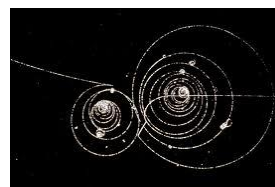
When matter is created from energy
Which is exactly what they'll do in the LHC
You get matter and antimatter in equal parts
And they try to take that back to when the universe starts
The Big Bang – back when the matter all exploded
But the amount of antimatter was somehow eroded
Because when we look around we see that matter abounds
But antimatter's nowhere to be found.
That's why...

(Chorus)

The Higgs Boson – that’s the one that everybody talks about.
And it’s the one sure thing that this machine will sort out
If the Higgs exists, they ought to see it right away
And if it doesn’t, then the scientists will finally say
“There is no Higgs! We need new physics to account for why
Things have mass. Something in our Standard Model went awry.”

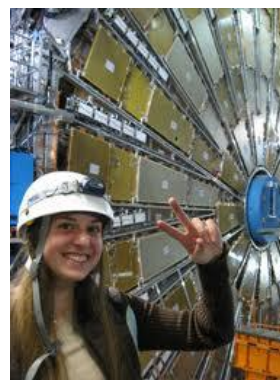


But the Higgs – I still haven’t said just what it does
They suppose that particles have mass because
There is this Higgs field that extends through all space
And some particles slow down while other particles race
Straight through like the photon – it has no mass
But something heavy like the top quark, it’s draggin’ its ***
And the Higgs is a boson that carries a force
And makes particles take orders from the field that is its source.
They’ll detect it....



(Chorus)

Now some of you may think that gravity is strong
Cuz when you fall off your bicycle it don’t take long
Until you hit the earth, and you say, “Dang, that hurt!”
But if you think that force is powerful, you’re wrong.
You see, gravity – it’s weaker than Weak
And the reason why is something many scientists seek
They think about dimensions – we just live in three
But maybe there are some others that are too small to see
It’s into these dimensions that gravity extends
Which makes it seem weaker, here on our end.
And these dimensions are “rolled up” – curled so tight
That they don’t affect you in your day to day life
But if you were as tiny as a graviton
You could enter these dimensions and go wandering on
And they’d find you...



(Chorus)

Kate McAlpine (2008)

This was just too topical to forego the opportunity. Katherine McAlpine is an American physicist-cum-journalist working for ATLAS E-News at CERN (*Centre Européenne pour la Recherche Nucléaire*) in Geneva. The lyrics were put to music by Will Barras, a PhD student in linguistics at the University of Edinburgh, and you can see their performance of it by searching the title on YouTube (www.youtube.com).

The chorus refers to a number of experimental arrays being used at different points along the Large Hadron Collider: LHCb (‘b’ for ‘beauty’, another name for the bottom quark) is where discrepancies in the production of matter and antimatter are being sought; ALICE is A Large Ion Collider Experiment; CMS is the Compact Muon Solenoid; and ATLAS is A Toroidal LHC Apparatus.

Just for the record, the results from Geneva that you have probably read about confirmed the existence of a hitherto unknown particle that has at least some of the properties predicted by Dr. Peter Higgs in 1964. Most significantly, both CMS and ATLAS established its mass at close to $126 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ (about 135 times the mass of a proton!) – the most massive particle ever found, which is why it took such a powerful accelerator to produce it. (Masses of subatomic particles are expressed in terms of energy under the $E = mc^2$ principle.)

While other evidence had been found as far back as 2010, the most recent data confines the error range to five standard deviations; i.e., only one in a million chance of being wrong. It’s all terribly complicated because the boson exists for such a brief time that it can only be identified from the particles it decays into. Dr. Higgs is delighted, as he never expected confirmation of his theory to be obtained in his lifetime, though subsequent work may find that the new boson is something not predicted by the Standard Model. And then...

COMMITTEE NEWS

The next Committee meeting will be held on 25 September 2012. If members have any matters which they would like to be placed on the agenda for discussion, they should contact the Secretary on 0423 393 364 or email: michael_j_spicer@yahoo.com.au.

CHAD VINDIN SAYS 'GOODBYE'

I have been the Music Director of the Sydney Unitarian Church for several years, playing for services almost every Sunday since 2009. I have always enjoyed playing for the church and regret to say that, by the time this article is in print, I will have played my last service. In August, I will be moving overseas to pursue further musical studies.

In January of this year, I flew to London with my girlfriend, Lisa, to help set her up for a year-long placement with the Southbank Sinfonia Orchestra. While I was there I also did some auditions for the Royal Academy of Music, the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. In a stroke of good fortune, it turns out I was accepted into all three.

After much deliberation, I decided to accept a place at the Royal Academy of Music, starting in September this year. I will be studying a Masters in Accompaniment under the guidance of Malcolm Martineau, one of the best pianists performing today and one of my favourite musicians. I was lucky enough to be able to page-turn for him in a recital with Susan Graham recently, and I am very excited that I will soon have the chance to work with him on a regular basis.

I am pleased to announce that the next music director will be Kaine Hayward. He should be familiar to the church as both a singer and a pianist, having performed in several services over the past few years. While in London I will be sure to send word of my progress across the seas, and I look forward to seeing you all again in the years to come!

Membership renewals for 2012 should be paid before the Annual General Meeting. Those wishing to join can use this form by way of application but should not send payment until their membership is accepted.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

I, (name) _____

of (address) _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone(s): (home) _____ (other) _____

Email: _____

I apply to join/renew membership in (delete one) the Sydney Unitarian Church and agree to abide by the rules as set down by the Constitution and management of the church.

Signature: _____ Fee enclosed: \$ _____*

Cheques should be made payable to: Treasurer, Sydney Unitarian Church. Membership will be valid for the calendar year 2012.

* Annual membership is \$20 and includes the SUN journal; subscription to the SUN only is \$15.