As a UU, I struggle with how to convert our principles in actions. I find the poem "This Is My Voice" provides me some clarity in how to live out the second principle, "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations." This poem was written by acclaimed, Canadian, spoken-word poet, Shane Koyczan. Allow me to share it with you.

THIS IS MY VOICE by Shane Koyczan

This is my voice there are many like it but this one is mine and it's a fine line when you're trying to define the finer points of politics politics being a latin word poli meaning many tics meaning bloodsucking bastards but too many live in countries where it's bullets instead of ballots where gavels fall like mallets when held in the hands of those whose judgments can be bought as easily as children can be taught to covet and the only ones willing to speak up are forced to live so far beneath the radar that the underground is considered above it this is for the ho chi mihn's

and the michael collins. for the Marquis de Sades and the muted gods

this is my voice there are many like it but this one is mine and this time it's for the sons and daughters who watch their mothers and fathers drown in shallow waters While panning for the american dream in a polluted creek called the mainstream. this is for the homeless people sleeping on steam vents, making makeshift tents out of cardboard and old trash trying to catch 40 winks in between the crash of car wrecks risking their necks by surviving another day so they can starve so that famine can carve their body into a corpse before their heart stops beating so that men in a board room meeting can make it harder for them to get welfare or health care, it's no wonder some of them pawn off their own wheelchair and every time I walk by I can't help but feel at fault that maybe I didn't search myself hard enough for the control alt s so I could save the world. I've got to cash in my reality checks So I can drop the world some spare fantasies because the most valuable thing I ever learned is to believe people when they say please So don't tell me there are no heroes this is for them the women and the men for helen keller who against all odds found a voice for the choice veronica guerin made for martin luther king who stayed just long enough to share a dream with us it came true one day on a bus for sister rosa parks this for the joan of arcs who believe even in the face of sparks becoming flame. this is for the game that Louis Riel refused to play this is for the day the dali lama finally goes home for dr. jeffrey wigand who alone stared down big tobacco for Nelson Mandela who continues to go the extra mile this is for the trial that finally found a man guilty of shooting medgar evers dead. this is for everything malcolm x said remembered by athletes who left the olympics double-fisted. for arthur miller blacklisted for calling a witch hunt what it was. for galileo locked up because he said the earth revolves around the sun for anyone who was told to be quiet but instead had their say And imagine if we could still hear john lennon play

this is for the someone who stood up today and said No for edward r murrow who shut down McCarthy This is for salmon rushdie

mahatma ghandi, you me this city this country we will always have a choice So when you stand up to be counted tell the world this is my voice there are many like it but this one is mine