

# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

## Poet or Prophet?

BY DAN AND RUTH

He winded along the sidewalk, his boots instinctively hugging the edge of the circle sandwiched between Schewel and Snidow before his feet gave a hard turn, descending him ever closer to the university chapel, with Chaplain Nathan Albert excitingly keeping step and chatting away, matching stride for stride. British poet Jay Hulme simultaneously carried with him an air of confidence and humility, his stature unassuming, his presence exhilarating.

We eagerly greeted him with smiles and nods. He entered the sanctuary where “All means ALL” banners hung proudly in full color at the front of the stage, along with the motto “Todos quiere decir TODOS” intentionally fixed along the face of the raised altar in bright pinks and purples. We, Church of the Covenant, felt honored to have such a special guest share his time with us at the 11 o'clock hour on Sunday morning, the very hour that Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had once called the “most segregated hour in America.” Jay smiled warmly back as he was received by several from our local queer and trans Christian community, as well as by several from our ever-growing diverse church family.

After a time of music and prayer had passed, we eagerly waited to hear what words of encouragement Jay would bring us. So, after making his way to the front to join the colorful banners that beckoned him, we braced ourselves for the wave of words that were sure to follow; for poets speak to be heard, and we were there to listen.

He began his message with a simple, sobering reality evidenced through Scripture: “Every one of us has a tiny part of God in us...a reflection of God... and every time a human being kills another human being, they kill a reflection of God... and every time a human harms another human, they harm the very reflection of God.” His message was clear and succinct: When we hurt one another, we hurt God. Maybe these were the words we needed to hear. We needed, in that moment, to understand the stakes of bringing harm to others. And the stakes are extremely

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high. Even God can feel the effects of our human-on-human hate resonating throughout our hurting world.

The next night, Jay continued his message when he spoke in the same sanctuary at the same spot, but this time as the Shumate lecturer. He carried on the same words of simple hope by pulling on threads from his own story: "I couldn't love others until I could love myself... and I knew I had to love myself before I could love God." Jay Hulme let us know, albeit with a kind and gentle voice, that the source of our hate toward God or our hate toward others correlates directly with our own hate toward ourselves. His journey as a transgender man confirmed our greatest fears as human beings – that we often hate ourselves to death, as well as hate others to death. But, at the same time, we can change this trajectory.

In fact, if we learned anything over these past few days with Jay, it's that loving ourselves, accepting ourselves fully and completely, is essential to then being able to love others, and in so doing, being able to even love God.

## Upcoming Interfaith Holidays

March 8

Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)

## Dates to Remember

Weekly on Sundays in Snidow Chapel:

- 11 a.m. Worship with Church of the Covenant
- 4:30 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass (No Mass on March 10 and March 17)



March 9-17  
SPRING BREAK

For more information about the Spiritual Life Center, including info on our student groups, go to our webpage - link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linkt.ree (Link is in email).

