

1. What is HumanLight?



Humanists join in the joy of the holiday season with their celebration of HumanLight, a new humanist-oriented winter holiday that has been celebrated around the country since 2001. Humanists are secular, non-religious people who believe in promoting human needs and interests in the here and now, and who believe in moral virtues, tolerance, compassion and reason...rather than miracle stories or supernatural concepts. Thus, HumanLight was created to celebrate the ideals of reason, hope, compassion and humanity.

2. What is life? (life...something we Humanists like to celebrate)

Life

Robert Green Ingersoll

BORN of love and hope, of ecstasy and pain, of agony and fear, of tears and joy -- dowered with the wealth of two united hearts -- held in happy arms, with lips upon life's drifted font, blue-veined and fair, where perfect peace finds perfect form -- rocked by willing feet and wooed to shadowy shores of sleep by siren mother singing soft and low -- looking with wonder's wide and startled eyes at common things of life and day -- taught by want and wish and contact with the things that touch the dimpled flesh of babes -- lured by light and flame, and charmed by color's wondrous robes -- learning the use of hands and feet, and by the love of mimicry beguiled to utter speech -- releasing prisoned thoughts from crabbled and curious marks on soiled and tattered leaves -- puzzling the brain with crooked numbers and their changing, tangled worth -- and so through years of alternating day and night, until the captive grows familiar with the chains and walls and limitations of a life.

And time runs on in sun and shade, until the one of all the world is wooed and won, and all the lore of love is taught and learned again. Again a home is built with the fair chamber wherein faint dreams, like cool and shadowy vales, divide the billowed hours of love. Again the miracle of a birth -- the pain and joy, the kiss of welcome and the cradle-song drowning the drowsy prattle of a babe.

And then the sense of obligation and of wrong -- pity for those who toil and weep -- tears for the imprisoned and despised -- love for the generous dead, and in the heart the rapture of a high resolve.

And then ambition, with its lust of pelf and place and power, longing to put upon its breast distinction's worthless badge. Then keener thoughts of men, and eyes that see behind the smiling mask of craft -- flattered no more by the obsequious cringe of gain and greed -- knowing the uselessness of hoarded gold -- of honor bought from those who charge the usury of self-respect -- of power that only bends a coward's knees and forces from the lips of fear the lies of praise. Knowing at last the unstudied gesture of esteem, the reverent eyes made rich with honest thought, and holding high above all other things -- high as hope's great throbbing star above the darkness of the dead -- the love of wife and child and friend.

Then locks of gray, and growing love of other days and half-remembered things -- then holding withered hands of those who first held his, while over dim and loving eyes death softly presses down the lids of rest.

And so, locking in marriage vows his children's hands and crossing others on the breasts of peace, with daughters' babes upon his knees, the white hair mingling with the gold, he journeys on from day to day to that horizon where the dusk is waiting for the night. -- At last, sitting by the holy hearth of home as evening's embers change from red to gray, he falls asleep within the arms of her he worshiped and adored, feeling upon his pallid lips love's last and holiest kiss.



3. Here is a poem about being thankful for this life:

Thanksgiving

O let us give thanks for the glorious spasm
that spurted atoms on an endless quest
for the far edge of everything, let's
praise the ancient heave and buckle,
the burn, blister, and boil
that birthed our blue-green planet,
be grateful for the lucky spark
that seasoned our primal soup,
and honor the ultimate sacrifice
of the creeping pioneers
who dragged us up onto dry land.
Let's be thankful for the heroism
of all those fallen fathers
who bequeathed to us these novelties,
our clever arms and legs,
thankful too for the company
of moles and manatees, sloths and seals,
horses and hedgehogs — and thankful for
the monkeys, gibbons, and gorillas
who once upon a time set off
on gambles of their own, aping our long,
long hunger, vines
choking trees to reach the sun,
predators lurking at water holes.
Now, somewhere out there, the atoms race on,
still searching for the edge of everything,
but here, snug in our tundra and grassland,
our forest and savanna, let us thank
the furry ancestors who brought us
along this way, and now stay at our side
as we press on to some great adventure
just beyond our dreams.

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4. A suggestion about how to live your life:

"I have a creed for this the only world of which I know anything:

1. Happiness is the only good.
2. The way to be happy is to make others so.
3. The place to be happy is here.
4. The time to be happy is now."

~Robert G. Ingersoll

(Here is the link to buy T-Shirts with the Ingersoll Creed)

http://www.zazzle.com/ingersoll_creed_shirt-235890419358442848

**5. (back to the party...
to re-introduce the pianist/vocalist Vance Villastrigo)**

Music expresses feeling and thought, without language; it was below and before speech, and it is above and beyond all words.

~**Robert G. Ingersoll**