



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Unitarian Universalism

Love is the spirit of this church,
and service its law.

This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
To seek the truth in love,
And to help one another.

- James Vila Blake, *Singing the Living Tradition Hymnal* #473

Opening and Chalice Lighting

We gather this hour as people of faith
With joys and sorrows, gifts and needs.
We light this beacon of hope,
sign of our quest for truth and meaning,
in celebration of the life we all share together.

- Christine Robinson, *Singing the Living Tradition Hymnal* #448

Quiet Reflection

Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
- Stephen Covey

The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I
thought, and attended to my answer.

- Henry David Thoreau

Sharing/ Check-In

*Take two or three minutes to share what's meaningful in your current life. How you
are spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. You can speak or you
can pass. We want to know how you are in this moment.*

Topic Readings

We Unitarian Universalists have inherited a magnificent theological legacy. In
a sweeping answer to creeds that divide the human family, Unitarianism
proclaims that we spring from a common source; Universalism, that we share
a common destiny. That we are brothers and sisters by nature, our Unitarian
and especially our Universalist forebears affirmed as a matter of faith:
Unitarianism by positing a single God, Universalism by offering the promise
of a shared salvation. – *Forrest Church, Universalism: A Theology for the
21st Century, UU World*

Through our direct experience, we ... may discover a profound sense of wonder
about the gift of life and be led to gratitude, renewal of the spirit, and openness to the
forces that create and uphold life. "Belief is many things," said one of our modern
leaders, A. Powell Davies, "and so is disbelief. But religion is something that
happens to you when you open your mind to truth, your conscience to justice, and
your heart to love." In Unitarian Universalist congregations, we do not try to make
one another fit a given pattern of experience. But we do discover together that there
are religious dimensions in all our varied human experience.

For us, religious experience is direct and personal. It may be joyous – a transformative moment of awakening like being present at a child’s birth. Or it may be as painful as the birth itself or as wrenching as grief. . . Part of all authentic experience is deeply inward – beginning to trust what Channing calls “the power of God within.” But often it is dependent on the agency of others whose insight, courage, and love helps us expand our idea of what human life can be.
- *A Chosen Faith, John A. Buehrens*

**Break/Quiet
Contemplation**

**Re-gathering
Music**

Listen once, then sing together once.
Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea, move in the hand,
giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close, wings set me free,
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.
- *Carol McDade, Singing the Living Tradition Hymnal #123*

**Sharing/Deep
Listening**

Everyone once before anyone twice! Speak about this topic in any way that is comfortable to you. If you choose to use the questions, focus on just one or two, as this will allow you to go deeper into the topic.

- How did you first find Unitarian Universalism?
- Has Unitarian Universalist church made a difference in your life? If so, how?
- How do you act on Unitarian Universalist values?
- Have you had disagreements or disappointments with Unitarian Universalism?
- Has Unitarian Universalism helped you face or transcend the Big Questions or life crises? If so, how?

Discussion

This is a time to supportively respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.

**Checkout/
Likes & Wishes**

What did you like about this meeting? What would you like to see change at future meetings?

**Closing Reading/
Extinguish Chalice**

Blessed are those who yearn for deepening more than escape: who are not afraid to grow in spirit.

Blessed are those who take seriously the bonds of community; who regularly join in celebration and learning; who come as much to minister as to be ministered unto.

Blessed are those who bring their children; who invite their friends to come along, to join in fellowship, service, learning, and growth.

Blessed are those who support the church and its work by their regular, sustained, and generous giving; and who give of themselves no less than their money.

Blessed are those who know that the church is often imperfect, yet rather than harbor feelings of anger or disappointment, bring their concerns and needs to the attention of the church leaders.

Blessed are those who when asked to serve, do it gladly; who realize that change is brought about through human meeting, who do the work of committees, and stay till the end.

Blessed are those who speak their minds in meetings, who can take and give criticism; who keep alive their sense of humor.

Blessed are those who know that the work of the church is the transformation of society; who have a vision of Beloved Community transcending the present, and who do not shrink from controversy, sacrifice, or change.

- John Buehrens, Singing the Living Tradition Hymnal #728