

2022 April Chalice Circle



Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Mo.

Renewing Promises

“Human beings, individually and collectively, become human by making a commitment, by making promises. The human being as such, as Martin Buber says, is the promise-making, promise-keeping, promise-breaking, promise-renewing creature. The human being is the promise maker, the commitment maker.”
~ from *“The Five Major Ingredients of Covenant”* by James Luther Adams

Facilitators - Please read aloud the quote on the cover before the Opening Words below.

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

Renewing Promises - You Are Beloved and You Are Welcome Here

By [Joan Javier-Duval](#)

Voice 1: You are beloved and you are welcome here

Voice 2: Whether tears have fallen from your eyes this past week, or gleeful laughter has spilled out of your smiling mouth

Voice 1: You are beloved and you are welcome here

Voice 2: Whether you are feeling brave or broken-hearted; defiant or defeated; fearsome or fearful

Voice 1: You are beloved and you are welcome here

Voice 2: Whether you have untold stories buried deep inside, or stories that have been forced beyond the edges of comfort

Voice 1: You are beloved and you are welcome here

Voice 2: Whether you have made promises, broken promises, or are renewing your promises,

Voice 1: You are beloved and you are welcome here

Voice 2: Whatever is on your heart; however it is with your soul in this moment

Voice 1: You are beloved and you are welcome here

Voice 2: In this space of welcome and acceptance, commitment and re-commitment, of covenant and connection, let us worship together.

[About the Author](#)

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Check In *Briefly share where you are in your life now.*

Song - Hymn. no. 389 Gathered Here

*Gathered here in the mystery of the hour.
Gathered here in one strong body.
Gathered here in the struggle and the power.
Spirit draw near.*

Reading One

Excerpt from: Beloved Community, Covenantal Relationships and Restoring Connection By [Jan Christian](#), [Pacific Western Region of the UUA](#)

Establishing and maintaining Beloved Community depends on establishing and maintaining covenantal relationships. The covenant is our *sacred promise of meaningful relationship*, which we mutually develop by inquiring into our deeply held values as a community. We also develop a set of restorative practices as a resource for the inevitable times when we depart from covenant, so we have a clear path to restoring relationships and returning to our shared values when disconnection occurs.

Returning to the Covenant

As a “promise making, promise breaking” people, one inevitable result of entering into covenant with others is that eventually one or more of us will depart from our covenantal relationship. Rather than treating this as a problem, seeing something wrong, or wanting to fix or punish anyone, we can see it as an opportunity to return to our shared values with authenticity, curiosity and compassion.

Song Spirit of Life (YouTube)

Leader to link to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWMcVdQ1WKQ>

Reading Two

2022 UUCC Covenant

CONGREGATION: We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, welcome you into the membership of this community of faith. We are grateful for your commitment to our life together.

We renew our covenant with each other:
to seek meaning and truth in love,
to respond to the calling of justice,
and to be strengthened by our life together.

We now extend this covenant to you. Welcome.

NEW MEMBERS: I freely enter into membership in the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, accepting all of the rights and responsibilities therein.

As I am able, I promise to bring my whole self to this congregation and to give and receive in the spirit of gratitude and hope.

I join in this community's covenant:
to seek meaning and truth in love,
to respond to the calling of justice,
and to be strengthened by our life together.

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ALL TOGETHER: Having affirmed one another and renewed our covenant, we now dedicate ourselves once more to our faith of courageous love and our community of radical welcome and deep connection.

Sitting in Silence - *Take this time to center yourself and formulate what you want to share with the group. We will sit in silence for 2-3 minutes.*

Sharing/ Deep Listening

Please share your experience and thoughts on the reality of living with our covenants. Do you have other examples of renewing promises in your life that you can share?

Additional Thoughts --What came up for you while listening to others?

Checkout – Final thoughts/ appreciation, etc.

Closing Words/Extinguishing the Chalice -

Excerpt from: We pray today to be renewed in the love that never faileth. **By [Earl K Holt III](#)**

"Love never faileth." (1 Cor 13:8 KJV)

We pray today to be renewed in the love that never faileth. We would be renewed in confidence that the long littleness of our life serves no small purpose, that the words and deeds of our days have meaning beyond themselves, that the highest purposes of life may be served even in the humblest of acts....

"To know justice and live justly is to become just; to know love and so to live is to become loving." Everything avails. Like footsteps on the sands of time all that we attempt and all that we do makes its impression. We do not live wholly to ourselves nor do we die wholly to ourselves. We are each part of a wholeness, part of a unity moving through time and through space, a wholeness to which we belong, bound together by the mystery of love. We feel its power sometimes with profound personal emotion. At other times we know its reality in the radiant peace of a winter sunset: the hint and reminder of the love that moves the sun and the other stars -- the love in whose fullness we know that even in our deepest loneliness we are never alone -- the love that never faileth. Amen.

Note: The May 2022 Chalice Circle will be "Celebrating the Good"