

# 2022 May Chalice Circle



Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Mo.

## Celebrate the Good

### Opening

People  
Is  
Or

Pride

sometimes

a

a

### Words

ask:  
protest  
party?

And  
Of  
Yes.

the

answer

is  
course

And why not?

Why  
Rejoice  
Dance

as

we

as

we

demand

Celebrate as we create community that delights in  
All of who we are?

delights

not  
resist  
change

So  
With you [today].

bring

all

of

that

Bring  
Bring  
Bring  
Bring

your

policy

demands  
glitter  
heart  
socks

your

your

supreme

court

broken

your

rainbow

Bring the emptiness you feel  
For our siblings gone too soon.

Bring your Gloria Estefan remix  
Bring your tender hope for change  
Bring your most garish eyeshadow  
Bring your spirit, tattered and battered  
By a world that seems insistent on  
Choosing fear and hate.

Gather up all these things  
And bring them here  
To a place where we don't  
Have to shoulder these burdens  
Or celebrate these joys  
Alone.

Come, let us worship  
Together.

By Hannah Roberts Villnave

### Chalice Lighting

You can prepare but still it will come to you by surprise  
crossing through your doorway, calling your name in greeting...  
it will astonish you how wide your heart will open in welcome  
for the joy that finds you so ready  
and still so unprepared.

—Jan Richardson, in “For Joy”

### Song:

*Now let us sing, sing, sing*                      *Sing to the power of the faith within.*  
*Now let us sing, sing, sing*                      *Sing to the power of the faith within.*  
*Lift up your voice, be not afraid;*              *Lift up your voice, be not afraid;*  
*sing to the power of the faith within.*        *sing to the power of the faith within.*

*Sing to the power of the hope within ...*

*Sing to the power of the love within. ...*

*Sing to the power of the joy within. ...*

#368 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

**Check-in:** Take this time to share what's going on in your life right now. What do you need to say in order to be fully present with our circle? What is good? What can you celebrate?

## Reading 1

Celebrate everywhere to make change everywhere

As people committed to working for social justice it might seem difficult to celebrate everywhere because as people committed to working for social justice we see, think about or feel the pain of injustice. It may seem inappropriate to spread our love, worship with joy or dance and sing when we witness injustice, even more sore when the injustice is felt. Yet, celebration transforms: when we celebrate we lift up a vision of justice and fairness in human relations, the injustices and inequities of today are seen in relief, the way forward becomes clear. When we celebrate we are reaching out to others, welcoming them to join and add to a vision of justice and peace. To celebrate everywhere in our daily life – and especially when it is hard – is exactly what we must try to do to make the change happen that we wish to see in the world.

Sometimes celebration can seem impossible – it felt so for me during most of my life – for to celebrate in the face of injustice needs something that comes from within. That something is faith.

During most of my life I did not have faith – I believed I did not need it – so I could not see that my ability to celebrate in the face of injustice was compromised. Often when I experienced unfairness I'd get angry and spread my upset in the world. Usually when I witnessed injustice to others I'd grumble about it to myself and walk away. I thought injustice and unfairness was the human condition – and that my not loving the human condition was a rational response to a bad reality.

I did not see that the human condition is enveloped in a greater reality and built upon deeper truths, and I kept my love for myself, shared my anger with others, and – not surprisingly – brought myself to an impasse where happiness was impossible. During this time, when the unfairness of life seemed so overwhelming and unbearable that I wondered how I was surviving it at all, I accepted I that I must look outside of myself for answers. I began a meditative spiritual practice which led me recognize deeper truths of the human condition, and which led me to faith in the universality and immutable nature of those truths, and of love, in an impermanent universe.

Faith enables me to see how fortunate I am, faith energizes me to reach out to others with love and compassion, faith empowers me to the purpose of making the human condition better, and faith steels my resolve to respond when I witness injustice or unfairness. From faith comes desire and need to celebrate the human condition as it is today, and as people committed to social justice will make it tomorrow.

I invite you to join me in celebration by living with awareness of the 7 Principles of Unitarian Universalism and mindfulness to put them in action, by standing on the side of love in the face of injustice, and by simply reaching out with love to the people around you. By [Ted Resnikoff](#)

## Reading 2

We are here to abet creation and to witness it, to notice each thing so each thing gets noticed.

Together we notice not only each mountain shadow and each stone on the beach but we notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature so that creation need not play to an empty house.

—Annie Dillard, "The Meaning of Life"

### Questions

1. What is your experience with celebration?
2. What does it mean to you to "celebrate the good"?
3. Is celebrating the good something that you're able to do? How? If it's hard for you, why? Has this always been so?

**Sitting in Silence:** *Take this time to center yourself and think about what you want to share with the group. We will sit in silence for 4-5 minutes.*

**Sharing/Deep Listening:** Take this time to share deeply from your own thoughts and experiences of celebrating the good, answering the questions if you wish.

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

**Check-out:** Final thoughts? How are you feeling?

### Closing Words

Let us go out into the world singing.  
We know these songs. They vibrate through time, in our very souls.  
They are the songs that give us life.  
They are the songs that give us meaning.  
They are the songs that give us purpose.  
Now it is our turn, to take these life-giving songs out into the world.

Let us go now—singing these songs with voices deep and strong.  
And may the world join us in praise and in celebration and in love.

Amen.

- The Rev. [Dawn Skjei Cooley](#)

### Extinguishing the Chalice

In times of joy, we light a candle of celebration. Spirit of light, as we extinguish this light help us find what we need this evening.

Prepared by Crystal Buffaloe