



## **22-23 CHALICE CIRCLES**

Unitarian Universalist Church  
of Columbia, Missouri

# **Community**

### What a Chalice Circle is Intended to Be

A way to deepen our spirituality through a shared practice.

A way to share our thoughts on life's big questions.

A way to connect across age, gender, ethnic, economic and other differences.

A way to be engaged, included, and heard in a safe, nurturing environment.

A way to bring together the newer and the longtime members in our community.

A way to deepen our practice of shared UU principles.

A way to practice service from within a small community.

A way to develop our connections with the rest of the congregation.

### **OPENING; Lighting the Chalice**

We gather around this flame that symbolizes:

the truth we know  
and the truth we seek,  
the community we share  
and the community we aspire to,  
the learning that enables us  
and the mystery that encompasses.

Here we speak the languages  
of memory and hope.

Here we are welcomed,  
our journeys embraced and shared.

### **Meditation: Center Yourself** (Reading)

#### **Check-in**

Briefly introduce yourself and mention what is uppermost in your life just now.

#### **Reading: *We are the light of the world.***

When we treat our neighbors with respect,

*We are the light of the world.*

When we look for the good in other people and in ourselves,

*We are the light of the world.*

When we speak our minds firmly and gently in the face of prejudice,

*We are the light of the world.*

When we fight despair within ourselves and side with hope,

*We are the light of the world.*

When we use our powers justly in the service of humanity,

*We are the light of the world.*

### **Sitting in Silence**

Take a few minutes to reflect your experiences of and hopes for community.

### **Sharing/ Deep Listening**

As the spirit moves you, please share what has been coming to light for you in these moments of silence.

### **Second Sharing**

This is an opportunity to say what has now been brought up for you or to acknowledge the experience of another.

### **Our Covenant**

Now, please express what are the qualities of a community that would help you to flourish? What do we promise to each other in our gatherings? (Appoint a recorder to document the important points that will be included in our Chalice Circle covenant this year.)

### **Responsive Reading**

We clasp the hands of those that go before us,  
*And the hands of those who come after us.*

We enter the little circle of each other's arms  
*And the larger circle of lovers whose hands are joined in a dance.*

And the larger circle of all creatures,  
*Passing in and out of life, who move also in a dance.*

To a music so subtle and vast that no ears hear it  
*except in fragments. ~ Wendell Berry*

### **Extinguishing the Chalice**

Each day we must hold out the chalice of our being to receive, to carry, and to give back.

– Dag Hammerskjold

## Reading for Meditation: Come Back to Center

Come back to center, that place in you that is still, calm, quiet, and connected.

Your center is a place you can trust. It connects the body, mind, heart, and soul. It connects truth, your inner voice, and the Divine. Your best work comes from there. Your most loving times come from there. Your insights, awarenesses, and guidance come from being there, at that place. Your best decisions and finest moments come from that place.

Your center is a place that is quietly confident, unassuming, spontaneous, and free. It is gentle and kind, but it has the power to defend instinctively against attack.

Your center is a place that is naturally joyful and at peace. It is accepting, nonjudgmental, and it channels the voice of your heart. It knows perfect timing. It knows the rhythm of the universe, the rhythm of all creation, and it delights in its connection to that rhythm.

If you must leave your center to learn a lesson, feel a feeling, or experience something new, do that. Take all the side trips you are called to. But come back to your center when you're done.

And go to your center first, before you go anywhere else.

*Excerpt from Journey to the Heart by Melody Beattie*