

## Milestones Circle – May 26, 2024

**Sharing Our Lives Now -- Led by Ruth Milledge and Kathie Bergman**

### **Opening Words and Chalice Lighting:**

One of the old ones stood up into the morning light and spoke to those who had come back to the river:

"Now we have come again to this place; it is a good thing. My life apart from you is not as strong.

"Yes, I have danced and I have told the stories at my own fire and I have sung to all the six directions.

"But when I am with you, my friends, I know better who it is in me that sings."

--The Rev.Barbara J. Pescan, a retired UU Minister

### **Song (TBA)**

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#### **Welcome & Introductions: The what, who, and why of the Milestones**

**Circle.** Older adulthood is a time to take stock of one's journey and to affirm that which is of most importance. It can be a rich time in the lives of adults- a time when we are often open to new learning and discovery, a time of deepening friendships and relationships, a time of theological reflection as we explore questions of meaning and purpose. The Milestones Circle is an open, drop-in small group for older adults to meet, share thoughts and concerns, and receive support and friendship in a UU setting.

**Our proposed Covenant Statement:** *(to be read silently and discussed if there are questions or concerns.)*

- We will use "I" statements when speaking and avoid interrupting others while they are speaking.
  - What we say in this Circle will be held in confidence so that we all will feel free to share our truth openly.
  - We will listen with compassion and empathy because we understand that all human beings are fallible and need the kindness offered in friendship.
  - We acknowledge the right to pass or not share, when that feels appropriate.
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## **First Reading:**

If we understand “spirit” to mean the animating or vital force within each person - “spirit: from the Latin “spiritus” meaning soul, courage, vigor, breath - then the spirit is our vital center or our core. And the spiritual are those things which support that center: those things which enliven us and give us a sense of courage or heart for our living. Spiritual experiences are those events in life and moments in relationships which attune us to that vital or animating force within and which give greater meaning and depth to our day to day living.

--The Rev. Jennifer L. Brower, UU Minister Emerita of the UU Congregation  
at Shelter Rock, NY

**Check-in:** State your name and briefly describe where you are in your life now.

## **Second Readings:**

A friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

The public is full of people—yet that does not automatically make a community. Relationships of trust, and the ability to rest and be in full safety are also necessary. Building relationships requires the risk of being open and curious. Sometimes it requires affirming another person for who they say they are—and not who you want them to be. It requires time, presence, and calm.

—Melissa Jeter, student minister affiliated with First Unitarian Church of  
Toledo.

**Quiet Reflection:** *Take this time in silence to reflect on the reading, and the questions to consider which are below. (It is recommended that the song be repeated here.)*

## **Questions to Consider:**

1. What is my vision of a vital and healthy older age?
2. How does one support that vision?
3. How does one make new friends as we age and as we change our environments?

**Sharing/Listening round our Circle** *We will first go around our Circle to ensure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to speak. You may wish to address one of the questions above or you may wish to offer your own unique thoughts on the theme of “Sharing our lives now.”*

**Open Discussion/reflections** *We will share additional thoughts on our theme, this time in no particular order.*

**Last thoughts/Check Out** *As time allows, we are invited to give expression to appreciations on the sharing that has been offered or offer our own final thoughts.*

## **Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice:**

### **To the Blessings of this Season**

To the blessings of this season,  
may our senses be alert  
and our hearts take heed,  
for in a busy and sometimes tragic world,  
beauty is often the comfort most sure.

To the blessings of warm, accepting human relationship,  
may our hearts be open  
and our minds take heed,  
for in a lonely and sometimes frightening world,  
friendship is often the support than upholds us.

--Rev. Kenneth “Ken” W. Sawyer, UU minister deceased 2022.

Next meeting will be on Sunday, June 23, 2024  
Topic as scheduled: Staying Connected to Your Communities