

September 2024 Chalice Circle: Our Covenant

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting: In Our Time Together by Betty Jo Middleton

As we gather here together
May we be attentive one to another.
May we listen carefully, may we freely speak.
May we be respectful of one another.
May we be serious, yet not somber.
May we be light of heart
And full of good cheer.

As we gather here together
May we work toward common goals.
May we be mindful of our religious community
And aware of our responsibilities.
May we look into one another's eyes
And see ourselves reflected

As we gather here together
May we be attentive to one another
And to the task at hand.

Song: 8 UU Principles by Violet Vonder Harr (2022)
<https://youtu.be/VZmwEEWPGdo?si=YbUVzkcvIUQbtcGG>

Respect the worth and dignity of everyone
Be kind and fair to one another
Together we learn and together we grow wise
We search for the truth with curiosity as our guide
Share and listen to ideas and then vote and act on them
Always insist on peace and justice and freedom
Value and care for the Web of Life that connects to us all
Build a loving community free of racism, that is our goal
Let these eight UU principles be our guide
To live together in community and
To shine our light

Check-In and Introductions:

Without crosstalk or interruption,

briefly describe where you are in your life now,
and notice what needs to be shared in order to be fully present in our circle.

Reading 1: Multiple Intelligences Welcome by Dawn Skjei Cooley

The diversity of the human species is astounding. The fact that we can gather together for common experience is nothing short of a miracle. Today, let us celebrate some of those differences.

Let us celebrate those who worship best through music, for whom the holy speaks through rhythm and harmony, pitch and meter.

Let us celebrate the inter-personal worshipper, who finds the sacred in relationships and in community.

Let us celebrate those who worship best through the visual world, for whom the divine speaks through the aesthetics of a space.

Let us celebrate the verbal & linguistic worshippers, for whom words and languages, stories and poetry are sacred sources of joy and revelation.

Let us celebrate those to whom the divine might be found in logical reasoning, in mathematics, and through critical thinking.

Let us celebrate the intra-personal worshipper, those who experience the holy as they listen to the still, small voice within themselves.

Let us celebrate those who worship best through their bodies—those to whom the divine speaks through movement and physical action.

And let us celebrate the naturalistic worshipper, for whom the sacred is found in plants and animals, mountains and valleys, deserts and forests, oceans and streams.

Today, may we find a way to connect with the ultimate, each according to our own ways of understanding and experiencing the world. May we bring our whole selves to this worship service and celebrate the diversity amongst us.

Tentative Covenant

- We agree to make attendance at the Circle a priority in our lives, and to let the others know by email if we will not be able to attend a meeting.
- We will start and end on time. If we come in late, we will quietly enter and join the Circle in progress.
- What we say in the Circle will be held in confidence. This allows us to be open and share deeply.
- We acknowledge the right to pass or not share if that feels appropriate.
- During sharing time we will practice appreciative listening, without questioning, commenting, cross talk or advice. We will listen non-judgmentally.
- We will use “I” and “my” and “mine” when speaking, owning our own experience.
- We are all responsible for good group process and the character of the Chalice Circle.
- We will do our best to abide by our covenant, but know that we are fallible human beings, and be kind and forgiving with one another if we at times step out of line.

Questions to Consider:

1. Thinking about Reading 1, what kind of worshipper are you?
2. What does belonging to a group or community mean to you?
3. What questions or concerns do you have about setting a covenant with this group?
4. What changes, if any, should we make to the tentative covenant? Should anything be added or removed?

Sitting in Silence: We will sit in silence for 3 minutes. Take this time to reflect on the readings, questions, and covenant. Center yourself and consider what you want to share with the group.

Sharing/Deep Listening:

Please share your own experiences and thoughts about the topic with no crosstalk or interruption. Please ensure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to share.

Additional Thoughts/Crosstalk: After listening to others, do you have additional thoughts to share? Is the tentative covenant one that we can all agree to? (Do we all agree to any proposed changes? Do we all agree to accept it and follow it to the best of our ability?)

Checkout: What are you taking with you as you leave this circle? How can we support you in the month ahead?

Closing Words/Extinguishing the Chalice: The Work We Share by Krista Taves

It is our work, shared with each other in covenant,

That creates and sustains this beloved community.

We extinguish this chalice, but its light lives on

in the directions we have chosen today.

The light of this faith lives on in us, together,

in our hearts, minds, bodies and spirits.

Amen and Blessed Be.