

Aug. 24, 2025 UUCC Milestones Circle

Using our Time and Energies Wisely

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

How rare it is, how lovely, this fellowship of those who meet together.

~ Psalm 133

Song: Hymn # 360, "Here We Have Gathered"

Check-in: State your name & briefly describe what you are dealing with in your life now.

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 Covenant Statement:

- 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.

Reading

Once the structure of career or raising a family changes, many people find themselves at risk of drifting. Those who thrive after retirement don't just fill their days with random activities - they focus on activities that give them meaning. Purpose can look different for everyone; the point is that it pulls you out of bed each morning with a sense of anticipation. Research has shown that people with a strong sense of purpose have lower rates of cognitive decline, better emotional well-being, and even a longer lifespan. It's a kind of fuel you can't buy, but you can create.

After 60, thriving people are intentional about maintaining and deepening their relationships. It's not about having hundreds of friends; it's about having people in your life you can count on and who can count on you.

Thriving after 60 means keeping curiosity alive. People who keep learning keep their brains sharp and adaptable.

We all know physical health matters, but thriving individuals tend to approach it in a more integrated way. They move their bodies often. They pay attention to sleep, hydration, and balanced nutrition. And they listen to their bodies, making adjustments as needed instead of pushing through fatigue.

Thriving people know that it's easy to drift off course without realizing it. That's why they periodically pause to reflect on what's working, and what's not. This might mean reviewing their goals every few months, checking in on whether they're living according to their values, or journaling about recent experiences. Reflection creates awareness, and awareness creates the opportunity for change.

from Jeannette Brown.net - People who Thrive after 60 Usually have these 7 Habits in Common

Sitting in Silence: *Take this short 2-3 minutes time in silence to reflect on the reading, and the questions to consider which are below.*

Question to Consider:

- 1) Do you try to have a consistent schedule or structure to each day? Why or why not?
- 2) Do you have specific goals for this part of your life? How do you prioritize your goals?
- 3) Do you feel pressure to keep busy?
- 4) Do you have less energy than you used to? How do you adapt to this?

Sharing/Listening around our Circle

Speaking without interruption or crosstalk, 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 day's theme.

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:

Setting goals after retirement isn't about filling time; it's about creating moments that matter. It's not about the quantity of activities, but the quality of experiences that shape our later years. . . . Meaning takes effort - it's something you create through action, reflection and connection. Ask yourself, "What do I want to contribute in this next phase?" from *Nine fulfilling Goals to Set for Life after Retirement*, by Jeannette Brown

Recommended reading:

"Fatigue After 60 - What's Normal and What's Not," Knowridge.com, "Fatigue After 60

"What is a Bucket List?" - med.stanford.edu/letter/bucketlist

File 2025_08 Milestones Circle materials

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