

Milestones Circle: Sharing Our Lives Now

28 September 2025

What's your source of inspiration? How can you keep spirit/creativity alive? What is most important for you to do right now?

A covenant is a list of the ways the group agrees to be together. The idea is central to Unitarian Universalism. In our Milestones Circle we agree to engage each other in a covenantal relationship. We commit to honoring a purpose, method and format for our group meetings so that we can find meaning and connection. It is the means by which the community is held together. Therefore, we will read and reread our Covenant Statement (below) once every few months in order to remind ourselves of our promises.

Milestones Circle Purpose: The Milestones Circle is an open, drop-in small group for older adults to meet, share thoughts and concerns on a prearranged topic, and receive support and friendship in a UU setting.

Our proposed Covenant Statement: (as adopted in 24-25)

1. We will use "I" statements when speaking and avoid interrupting others while they are speaking. (Crosstalk will only be permitted during the Open Discussion portion of the meeting)
2. What we say in this Circle will be held in confidence so that we all will feel free to share our truth openly.
3. We will listen with compassion and empathy because we understand that all human beings are fallible and need the kindness offered in friendship.
4. We acknowledge the right to pass or not share, when that feels appropriate.

Proposed Additional Optional statements:

- a. We will speak for ourselves and respectfully listen to others during sharing time. (This is not the time for giving advice.)
- b. We will monitor the length of our speaking to ensure there is sufficient time for all to share.
- c. We will fully and gladly welcome new members to the group.
- d. Between meetings, we will keep each other in our thoughts and hearts, reaching out to each other as needed in tangible ways to ensure that we are a caring community for one another.

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting: No. 436 (responsive reading)

We come to this time and this place

To rediscover the wondrous gift of free religious community;

To renew our faith in the holiness, goodness, and beauty of life;

To reaffirm the way of the open mind and full heart;

To rekindle the flame of memory and hope; and

To reclaim the vision of an earth made fair, with all her people one.

UU David C. Pohl

Song Hymn. 131- Love Will Guide Us

“Love will guide us, peace has tried us, hope inside us will lead the way

on the road from greed to giving. Love will guide us through the hard night.

If you cannot sing like angels, if you cannot speak before thousands, you can give from deep within you. You can change the world with your love.

Love will guide us, peace has tried us, hope inside us will lead the way

on the road from greed to giving. Love will guide us through the hard night.”

Check-in: Please briefly state any joys or concerns in your life now and consider answering the following question: If I had Aladin’s lamp, I’d rub on it and wish for

(Following the check in, If deemed necessary, the group will split into two for today’s discussion.)

Today’s topic: Sources of Inspiration; Keeping our spirits alive

Meaning of “inspiration”-- Mental stimulation

1) a mental state of being stimulated to think or act, often resulting in creative ideas or a strong motivation to achieve something.

2) inspiring influence: source of creative thought or action, such as a person, experience or idea that motivates someone

3) Sudden insight: a good idea or burst of understanding that leads to new creative approaches

4) motivation: a feeling of enthusiasm and excitement that gives someone the drive to act or achieve a goal.

Examples of inspiration: Witnessing acts of kindness, creating art, listening to music, overcoming a personal challenge, learning something new, experiencing nature, or even reading about the lives of inspiring people.

Reading: Today a man rang my doorbell and left me a postcard that tells about his qualifications to become a judge in our state. I spoke to him through the glass in my door because, as a woman, I’ve been taught not to take the risk of opening the door to a stranger. His smile was genuine and he didn’t hesitate to set his postcard outside where I

could pick it up – safely- later. He was walking around the neighborhood in over 80 degree temperatures and going door to door to ask for votes. This is what it means in a democracy to ask for grassroots support. His postcard says he believes in defending democracy – ensuring a fair application of justice; believes in one justice system for all – committing to upholding equality under the law regardless of your bank account; and believes in enhancing judicial efficiency . These are things I also believe in... but this man is putting action to his beliefs. This is something that inspires me. I want to and plan to support him. ~ Kathie Bergman

Note: Inspiration is a subjective experience, meaning what inspires one person may not inspire another, but it generally involves a stimulus that mentally engages someone to feel or do something, often with a creative or goal-oriented outcome.

Quiet Reflection: Take a few minutes in silence to reflect on the reading, and the questions to consider. You might want to use the back side of this paper to jot down your thoughts.

Questions you might want to consider:

1. Share a story illustrating a time you have been inspired.
2. Who has been an inspiration in your life? Why?
3. When you feel inspired, what actions do you or might you take to express it?
4. How can you renew feelings of inspiration? What steps might you suggest?
5. Do you have a creative or artistic outlet?

Sharing/Listening round our Circle: You are invited during this time to verbalize the questions or comments in your heart and mind that may spark discussion on our monthly theme. We will first go around our Circle to ensure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to speak. *Please be mindful to allow time for everyone to share.*

The second period of sharing is an open discussion: share additional thoughts on our theme, this time in no particular order

Possible further information? As time allows, please share your recommendations of books, movies, writers, websites, etc. that offer more on today's theme.

Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice:

"The timeline of your life is not a straight line after all; it is a series of ebbs and flows, backs and forths, heres and theres. You are nowhere and everywhere all at once and that means that most of the time, the best you can do is be present to the moment, be open to the unlearning and the learning, and trust that you're doing the work of Love."

Excerpt from In Living Resistance, by Kaitlin B. Curtice

Next meeting will be on Sunday, October 26, 2025

The October 26 Milestones Circle will be reflecting on the topic: Are you feeling off balance because of the current popular culture and political climate? How can we maintain our grounding in the present that we find ourselves in?