

Milestones Circle: Sharing Our Lives Now

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?

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: Like the strings before the concert begins, fall is tuning up its oncoming beauty. Birds are singing their traveling songs as their southward migration begins. Autumn rain (finally) adds a soothing rhythm to some of our days. Evening campfires crackle, and our community gathers to sing and grieve and be together. ~ excerpt from Rev. Molly's message in the October newsletter

Song:

Come, Come, Whoever You Are
*Come, Come, Whoever you are. Wanderer, worshiper,
lover of leaving, ours is no caravan of despair.
Come, yet again, come.*

Check-in: Please briefly state how you are doing now and consider answering the following question: *What was your favorite Halloween costume or tradition?*

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

Today's topic: finding a way to be grounded in today's unbalanced world

Reading:

We are in the midst of a wrenching and traumatic disintegration of the regional cultures that have sustained humanity for millennia. In our anxious postmodern age, there is no universal myth to believe in, no one true religion, no 1950s-style American dream, no god of science to rescue us from life's problems.

Yet amid the bewildering confusion of belief systems lies the riches of an entire planet's knowledge. Our age calls us to integrate the vast number of worldviews and cultures into a new synthesis that can usher in a whole new era of human civilization. This invitation can feel overwhelming, yet it is also tremendously exciting.

Living our daily lives in harmony with values that unite us with one another rather than divide us from one another — like those embodied in our Unitarian Universalist principles — brings us serenity. Perhaps the revelation of this apocalypse is that the eternal quest that unites us is far greater than the individual differences that divide us.

To love life unconditionally is our greatest challenge. Serenity does not arise from the permanent absence of anxiety, but from the habit of constantly transmuting anxiety into love. Each time we choose to transform anxiety into love it becomes fuel for our spiritual growth and enables us to see life more clearly. "Perfect love casts out fear" — a phrase inscribed by my father in my childhood Bible — contains a secret that can guide us unerringly toward serenity.

~excerpt from Finding Serenity in an Age of Anxiety by Robert Gerzon, a licensed mental health counselor at gerzon.com

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

Questions you might want to consider:

1. What does your inner voice tell you about life?
2. When you are feeling like the world has gone out of control, what helps you regain your balance?
3. What are ways you can/do manifest your love?
4. What daily habits support your health and self-esteem?

Thoughts and Questions: 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. Participants may speak in no particular order.

Sharing/Listening round our Circle 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.*

Open Discussion/reflections We will 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:

Our faith, like a light,
illuminates the path before us
so that we can
face hurt with love,
cultivate compassion,
live humbly in community,
and confront despair
with the awe of life.
Though our flame is extinguished,
our faith shines bright before us.

By James Galasinski

Next meeting will be on Sunday, November 23, 2025
Topic: What makes life meaningful for you?