

Milestones Circle: Sharing Our Lives Now

24 May 2026 Topic: Passing Your Wisdom to the Younger Generation

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 Milestones Circle Covenant Statement: (as adopted October 26, 2025)

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.
5. We will speak for ourselves and respectfully listen to others during sharing time. (This is not the time for giving advice.)
6. We will monitor the length of our speaking to ensure there is sufficient time for all to share.
7. We will fully and gladly welcome new members to the group.
8. 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:

Senegalese poet Birago Diop, in his famous poem *Breaths* (originally, in French, *Souffles*), set to music by Ysaye Barnwell of Sweet Honey in the Rock, writes,

*Those who are dead are never gone
They are in the darkness that grows lighter
And in the darkness that grows darker.
The dead are not down in the earth;
They are in the trembling of the trees....*

Song: Find on YouTube Music the above song

Check-in: Please briefly state how you are doing now.

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

Today's topic: Passing Your Wisdom to the Younger Generation

Reading: Excerpts from an essay by Rev. Dr. Michael Tino (UU minister)

Last night, I attended a reunion of a group I met with regularly in my last ministry (with the permission and blessing of their current minister). We gathered for dinner because a long-time member of the group had died and we thought it would be a nice way to memorialize him.

As we remembered Phil over dinner, one member of the group reflected that if, at his memorial service one day someone were to remark that he was half as nice as Phil, he would consider that high praise. The group agreed that "half as nice as Phil" was indeed a worthy life goal.

Phil, of course, was not just nice. He was kind, generous, willing to pitch in when anyone needed a hand, adventurous, funny, and smart. And yet, it seemed a fitting way to remember him by setting our course by his star.

And so, I've been called to wonder what kind of ancestor I would like to be.

Hopefully, I have a good bit of time left before people eulogize me (though I am clear that I have little control over the truth of that). And so I have an opportunity to live in the present like the kind of ancestor I hope to one day be.

We each have that opportunity, right here, right now. We each are called to think about what our very best qualities are and how we can let those qualities shine into the world.

It is not just our substance and our energy that survives our death, recycled in the substance and energy of all life. It is also our being. It is our legacy.

Today I invite you to strive to be half as nice as Phil, or, better yet, all the way as wonderful as yourself.

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

Questions you might want to consider:

1. Consider how you would want to be remembered. Share your thoughts.
2. How do you define “wisdom”?
3. Do you have a talent or a skill you would like to teach (or are teaching now) to a younger person?
4. Might you (now) be “passing on” a **quality** that you hadn’t considered?

Sharing/Listening round our Circle. Choose one or more questions to answer or choose to speak on a related topic. We will first go around our Circle to ensure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to speak.

Version 2 of Sharing: 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.

Version 3 of Sharing: Possible further information? As time allows, please share your recommendations of books, movies, writers, websites, etc. that offer more on today’s theme.

Check Out: This would be the time to share a last word or to make a request of the Circle friends for tangible care from one another.

Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice:

Because of those who came before, we are;
In spite of their failings, we believe;
Because of, and in spite of the horizons of their vision, we, too, dream.

~ by UU Barbara Pescan

Next meeting will be on Sunday, June 28, 2026

Topic: Planning for the 2026-2027 Church Year