

Milestones Circle: Sharing Our Lives Now

26 July 2026 Topic: Are you spiritual and what does that mean to you? i.e. Humanist vs. Deist, etc. Facilitated by Kathie Bergman and Tom Southall Additionally, a discussion --How might we change the structure of the Milestones Circle? Let's talk about ideas. Facilitated by Barbara Boshard

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: Connected Through the Web of Life

We light this chalice, symbol of our purpose to bring more love and justice into the world.
We light this chalice, knowing our congregation as a church dispersed across communities, not bound by walls but connected through the web of life.

~By Jennifer Gracen

Song: TBA

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: Are you spiritual? What does that mean?

Spirituality isn't just about religious belief—it's about connecting with something outside of yourself that brings meaning and connection to your life. Spirituality can help reduce stress and improve mental health. Practicing gratitude and mindfulness are effective ways to explore spirituality.~**Author: Elizabeth Scott, PhD**

Definition of Theology from the dictionary:

The meaning of THEOLOGY is the study of religious faith, practice, and experience; especially : the study of God and of God's relation to the world.

Reading: A Theology of Worship

It's Sunday morning.

Who's in the room and what are they bringing with them?

When Unitarian Universalists gather each Sunday, we build up the congregational body for its work in the world, even as we strengthen our relationships with each other, across our many differences and across the generations.

From an institutional standpoint, worship affirms the congregation's power and vision.

For the individuals attending—each person carrying a unique set of questions, gladness, longings, and sadness—worship is a wellspring of hope, a container for grief, and a laboratory for meaning-making.

Worship is an emotionally-driven spiritual experience, not an intellectual exercise. The purpose of worship isn't to convey information or to prove how "intellectual" we are.

(taken from the UUA.org website "A Tool Kit for Worship Leaders by Erika Hewitt)"

Consider the definitions provided by Tom

Meditation/Quiet Reflection: We will 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. Do you identify with one of the definitions offered by Tom? Why or why not?
2. What are the BIG questions that you answer with your choice of Theologies?
3. How do you practice your spirituality?
4. Is what we do here worship?

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. Please be cognizant that this is not the time for “crosstalk.”

Sharing part 2: 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 and respond to each other, respectfully.

Sharing part 3: 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:

Feel that?
Each breath, every inhale, exhale
We are living, breathing, connected.
We are the whole, complete, beautiful selves
that we were born to be.
Feel that?

~ By Gwen Matthews

How might we change the structure of the Milestones Circle? Let’s talk about ideas.

Facilitated by Barbara Boshard

Next meeting will be on Sunday, August 23, 2026

Topic: Discussion of gender differences Facilitated by Jeanne Murphy