

## **Gathering for Widening the Circle** (February theme) - **Welcoming**

*There are video session suggestions – speaking in turns, using Chat. Some sections use a timer / clock.*

**When you join the session** *Facilitators – do these for yourself first and help others.*

- Check your volume and video, if you are using video. Check your “name tag.”
- Make sure you have a copy of the Gathering available.
- **Words of the Day.** Complete this sentence:  
“I go to this church because ... ”

**Chalice Lighting** “We’ll begin by lighting the chalice.” *Ask for a volunteer to read.*

El amor es el espíritu de esta congregación.

El servicio su ley principal.

Esta es nuestra gran promesa:

Vivir juntos en paz,

buscar la verdad a través del amor,

y ayudarnos mutuamente.

Love is the spirit of this church,  
and service is its law.

This is our great covenant:

To dwell together in peace,

To seek the truth in love,

And to help one another.

*Unitarian Universalist covenant by James Vila Blake, Español translator unknown*

**Words of the Day** “Now we’ll share the Words of the Day.” *If you’re using Chat, people can’t see chat written before they joined, so the facilitator can read. Or people can read their own.*

**Sharing of Joys and Concerns** “We’ll share joys and concerns.” *Begin, and then either call on people or ask them to “chain” to the next person. Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

**Silence, holding each other in support** “Now a few minutes of silence” (2 or 3)

**Shared Readings** “I’ll start the first Shared Reading.” *Begin, and then either call on people or ask them to “chain” to the next person. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to read.*

Those at the edge of any system and those excluded from any system ironically and invariably hold the secret for the conversion and wholeness of the group’s soul. *Richard Rohr*

Microaggressions are like death by a thousand paper cuts. *UU Rev. Leslie Takahashi*

All of us are put in boxes by our family, by our religion, by our society, our moment in history, even our own bodies. Some people have the courage to break free. *Geena Rocero, transgender activist*

Our willingness to extend welcome – seeing the humanity and divinity in another, honoring their culture, identities, stories and deeply held truths – is part of what it means to embody this faith.

*UUA Welcoming Guide*

If we don't open our mouths and think and push and say, "We exist. Let's sing in Spanish. Let's do something to show that we exist in the denomination," we are not mentioned. *UU Rev. Lilia Cuervo*

If you don't see color, you don't see me. *Claudia Rankine*

Black people tend to become a part of UU congregations because of their theology, not because of the community. *from a survey by Black Lives UU*

I know there is strength in the differences between us. I know there is comfort where we overlap. *Ani DiFranco, Overlap*

If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together. *Attributed to aboriginal rights activist Lilla Watson*

Our true church exists in the bond between us. *Rev. Angela Herrera*

## Deep Listening and Sharing

**Round 1. Deep Sharing.** "Now we share reflections on welcoming." *Note the time available for each person. Go first to model. Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

**Round 2. Responses and Comments.** *Note how much time is available for Round 2. People can unmute for freer exchange. Go first to model for the group.*

**Closing Circle** "We're going to say a word or sentence about what we are taking away from the session." *Begin, and then either call on people or use "chaining."*

**Chalice** "We will extinguish the chalice." *Ask for a volunteer to read.*

We extinguish this flame and we remember the warmth of our community, the light of our wisdom, the generosity of our sharing. We keep these in our heart until we meet again.

## Bell or Chime

## Announcements

## The Covenant

### I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the facilitator know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share responsibility for good process by watching how much time I take to speak, noticing what is going on for others, and considering problems if they occur
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, giving advice, or advocating a specific view
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn and to stay on the "I-message."