

“Death”

Covenant Group Curriculum, River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Davie, FL
(slight adaptation)

Opening Meditation/Music/Silence/Chalice Lighting (whichever one(s) you choose to do)

Opening Words:

1. All Souls (May be read responsively.)

An end, Oh, an end, to love and mourning!

What has been once so interwoven cannot be raveled, nor the gift ungiven.

Now the dead move through all of us still glowing.

Mother and child, lover and lover mated, are wound and bound together and enflowing.

What has been plaited cannot be unplaited—only the strands grow richer with each loss

And memory makes kings and queens of us.

Dark into light, light into darkness, spin. When all the birds have flown to some real haven.

We who find shelter in the warmth within, Listen, and feel new-cherished, new-forgiven,

As the lost human voices speak through us and blend our complex love, our mourning without end.

- May Sarton

2. To live in this world you must be able to do three things: To love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; And, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.

- Mary Oliver

Check-in/Sharing

Topic/Reading: (May be read responsively.)

We Remember Them

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them.

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we remember them.

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends, we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

- From Roland B. Gittelsohn (Adapted)

Exercise: (Adapted from original session plan by Helen Zidowecki.)

1. Reflect on the opening reading by May Sarton. How does someone who has died still influence you?
2. Death is a time when a relationship change from tangible presence to memories. Share the change when someone close died. How would you explain the change that comes with death to someone, including a child?
3. How is the pending change that comes with death for you? What does it mean for your how you live?

Likes and Wishes/Feedback

Closing Words:

1. One revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

- William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, IV, i

2. Psalm 23
You are my shepherd.
I shall not want.

*You cradle me in green pastures.
You lead me beside the still waters.
You restore my soul.*

You guide me in paths of
righteousness for You are righteous.

*Thou I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death, I fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff comfort me.*

You spread a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You soothe my head with oil; my cup runs over.

*Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the
days of my life and I will dwell in Your house forever.*

- Congregation Beth El, Sudbury, MA

Amen. May you live in blessing.