

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

Finding & Bringing Joy

First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, Delaware, by Rev. Michelle Collins, 2013

Chalice Lighting, by Carl Seaburg

Let there be joy in our coming together. Let there be truth heard in the words we speak and the songs we sing. Let there be help and healing for our disharmony and despair. Let there be silence for the voice within us and beyond us. Let there be joy in our coming together.

Check In

Reading: from *Theology Ablaze*, by Tom Owen-Towle

In Egyptian mythology, shortly after death, we'll be confronted by the god Osiris with a quiz that must be answered honestly. After forty-two rather routine questions concerning how the deceased has lived, Osiris asks one crucial question that has two parts: first, "Did you find joy?" and, second, "Did you bring joy?"

Note the emphasis of Osiris isn't on our products or our possessions, not even on our creative talents or our noble works, but on the basic purpose of our earthly journey, namely: Did you locate joy and did you spread joy during your lifetime? We can't lie to Osiris, and a lot's at stake. If we answer these questions affirmatively, we're given back a measure of continued existence. If not, we're lugged off and forthwith eaten by a hippopotamus.

Discussion & Sharing Questions:

- How do you define joy? What brings you joy?
- When have you found the most joy in your life?
- A recent study found that adults laugh only 25 times a day (in comparison to children, with 400 laughs). How do you fit into this? Are you more joyful, less, or about the same as the average adult? How is humor different than joy anyways?
- What would be the opposite of joy?
- How have you brought joy to others? How much joy have you spread in the world?
- How central do you feel that joy is to the basic purpose of our earthly journey?

Closing Thoughts

Extinguishing the Chalice