

Chalice Lighting

For the sun and the dawn which we did not create;
For the moon and the evening which we did not make;
For food which we plant but cannot grow;
For friends and loved ones we have not earned and cannot buy;
For this gathered company which welcomes us as we are, from wherever we have come;
For all our free churches that keep us human and encourage us in our quest for beauty, truth
& love;
For all things which come to us as gifts of being from sources beyond ourselves;
Gifts of life and love and friendship we lift up our hearts in thanks this day.

- Richard M. Fewkes

Check-In: What's going on in your life? What is something you are grateful for?

Readings:

If the only prayer you say in your whole life was "Thank You," that would suffice.

- Meister Eckhart

Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.

- Native American Prayer

The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.

- Oprah Winfrey

Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn, whatever state I may be in, therein to be content.

- Helen Keller

Gratitude is heaven itself.

- William Blake

Questions:

1. What spoke to you (or didn't speak to you) from the readings?
2. If you have started the spiritual practice, how is it going for you?
3. Are you as grateful as you would like to be?
4. In what ways do you practice gratitude?
5. What gets in the way of experiencing gratitude?
6. How have you found ways to be grateful for the ways that life turned out, rather than the ways you expected it to be?

Check-Out: One sentence on "likes and wishes" from the session.

Closing:

Just as millions of snowflakes pile up to create a blanket of snow, the "thank yous" we say pile up and fall gently upon one another until, in our hearts and minds, we are adrift in gratitude.

- Daphne Rose Kingma

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark
Spiritual Practice - **GRATITUDE**
November 2014

In speaking with others about gratitude, I have seen some great practices. Some people pray daily as a way to express their gratitude; families have a shared time of giving thanks before their evening meal; many write cards or notes for others. Is there anything you do in your life to help cultivate a feeling of thankfulness?

An opportunity for you to join with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark community is with our shared spiritual practices. Each month I introduce a spiritual practice which fits the ministry theme. Each month the practice will be different - an invitation for all to experience the monthly theme on a deeper, personal level.

Gratitude includes thanking those around us. Our spiritual practice is to do just that. During the month of November, reach out and say thank you to people who have done something for you, either big or small. Try to say it in person or send a physical note. As a goal, aim for 3 “thank yous” a week, or a total of 12 for the month. (You may always reach higher.) I am already excited with the knowledge that our congregation will help to promote a feeling of thanks - if 50 of us send 3 cards a week, that’s 2,400 pieces of good cheer and positive energy going out into the world! We are definitely promoting a compassionate world.

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If you are interested in other ideas of embodying thankfulness in your lives and cultivating an “attitude of gratitude” here is a link with additional practices:
<http://tinyurl.com/gratitude2014>