

## **How Then Shall We Live: Who Am I?**

Facilitated by George Plumb, First Church of Barre Universalist, Barre, VT, February 2012

This gathering is based on the book, *How Then Shall We Live: Four Simple Questions That Reveal the Beauty and Meaning of our Lives*, by Wayne Muller. This is the first of a four part series. The other sessions are, #2-*What Do I Love*, #3-*How Shall I Live, Knowing I will Die?*, #4-*What is My Gift to the Family of the Earth?*

**Chalice Lighting:** “There is in all visible things....a hidden wholeness.” Thomas Merton

**Opening Words:** “In many spiritual traditions there is only one important question to answer, and that question is: Who am I? When we begin to answer it, we are filled with images and ideals-the negative images of ourselves that we wish to change and perfect and the positive images of some great spiritual potential-yet the path is not so much about changing ourselves as it is about listening to the fundamentals of our being.” Jack Kornfield.

**Thorns and Roses** - What not so good and what good things happened to you since our last gathering?

### **Business**

**Intro to Topic:** It is important to our lives that we come to as best an understanding as we can of who we really are.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

Talk for at least five minutes about who you are. Begin each sentence with the phrase, “I am.....”

After everyone has talked for five minutes answer the following questions:

How did you feel describing who you are?

Were there certain themes?

What predominant impressions do you come away with?

What seems most troubling?

What seems most accurate?

What is the single phrase that seemed most potent?

Do you feel that you are whole?

What role does Unitarian Universalism play in defining who you are?

What other questions could we ask about defining who we are?

Will this discussion change anything in your life? If so, what?

### **Likes and Wishes**

**Closing Words:** “Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of what you really love.”  
Rumi

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry  
**How Then Shall We Live: What Do I Love?**

Facilitated by George Plumb, First Church of Barre Universalist, Barre, VT, March 2012

This gathering is based on the book, *How Then Shall We Live: Four Simple Questions That Reveal the Beauty and Meaning of our Lives*, by Wayne Muller. This is the second of a four part series. The other sessions are, #1-Who Am I?, #3-How Shall I live, Knowing I will Die?, and #4-What is My Gift to the Family of the Earth?

**Chalice Lighting:** “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Jesus of Nazareth

**Opening Words:** “In many spiritual traditions there is only one important question to answer, and that question is: Who am I? When we begin to answer it, we are filled with images and ideals-the negative images of ourselves that we wish to change and perfect and the positive images of some great spiritual potential-yet the path is not so much about changing ourselves as it is about listening to the fundamentals of our being.” Jack Kornfield.

**Thorns and Roses** - What not so good and what good things happened to you since our last gathering?

### **Business**

**Intro to Topic:** In the previous session we talked about “Who Am I?” Who am I is defined in great part by what we love.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

What is love? What does love mean to you?

Talk for at least five minutes about what you love. Begin each sentence with the phrase, “I love.....”

After everyone has talked for five minutes answer the following questions:

Where do you actually give your time and attention? Has this changed over the years?

Would you like to give more time and attention to these areas?

What would you need to do to give more time and attention to these areas?

What role, if any, does Unitarian Universalism play in defining what you love?

What other questions could we ask about what we love?

Will this discussion help change anything in your life? If so, what?

### **Likes and Wishes**

**Closing Words:** “Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of what you really love.”  
Rumi

## **How Then Shall We Live: How Shall I Live, Knowing I Will Die?**

Facilitated by George Plumb, First Church of Barre Universalist, Barre, VT, April 2012

This gathering is based on the book, *How Then Shall We Live: Four Simple Questions That Reveal the Beauty and Meaning of our Lives*, by Wayne Muller. This is the third of a four part series. The other sessions are, #1-Who Am I?, #2 – What Do I love?, and #4-What is My Gift to the Family of the Earth?

**Note: for this session each participant is asked to bring a photograph of someone who they loved who has died.**

**Chalice Lighting:** “Life is like stepping onto a boat which is about to sail out to sea and sink.”  
Jesus of Nazareth

**Opening Words:** “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life.” Henry David Thoreau

**Thorns and Roses** - What not so good and what good things happened to you since our last gathering?

### **Business**

**Intro to Topic:** Feel free to participate to the degree that you are comfortable with this challenging topic.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

What is death? What does death mean to you? Is there life after death?

Tell us about the person in the photograph that you brought with you and what their life and death means to you. How did that person live?

Talk for at least five minutes about the above questions.

After everyone has talked for five minutes we will discuss these questions:

You could die today. Do you think about your own death? If so what thoughts do you have?

What legacy do you hope to leave?

How would you like to be remembered in your memorial service?

Have you made any preparations for death? If so what? If not, why not?

Knowing that you will die how would you like to live?

What role, if any, does Unitarian Universalism play in helping you think about death?

What other questions could we ask about how shall I live, knowing I will die?

Will this discussion help change anything in your life? If so, what?

### **Likes and Wishes**

**Closing Words:** “To attain knowledge, Add things every day.  
To attain wisdom, Remove things every day.” Tao Te Ching

## **How Then Shall We Live: What Is My Gift to The Family of The Earth??**

Facilitated by George Plumb, First Church of Barre Universalist, Barre, VT, April 2012

This gathering is based on the book, *How Then Shall We Live: Four Simple Questions That Reveal the Beauty and Meaning of our Lives*, by Wayne Muller. This is the fourth of a four part series. The other sessions are, #1-Who Am I?, #2 – What Do I Love, and #3-How Shall I live, *Knowing I will Die?*

**Chalice Lighting:** “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Jesus of Nazareth

**Opening Words:** “There is a light in this world; a healing spirit more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force when there is suffering and too much pain. Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who hear a call and answer it in extraordinary ways. Mother Teresa

**Thorns and Roses** - What not so good and what good things happened to you since our last gathering?

### **Business**

**Intro to Topic:** This is the last session and perhaps the most challenging one.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

What does giving mean to you?

Do you find it easy or difficult?

Do you give more than you receive?

Talk for at least five minutes about giving.

After everyone has talked for five minutes answer the following questions:

What do you have to give?

What giving have you done that you feel best about?

Is there a connection between giving and receiving? If so what is the connection?

What role, if any, does Unitarian Universalism play in defining what you give?

What other questions could we ask about what about giving?

Will this discussion help change anything in your life? If so, what?

### **Likes and Wishes**

**Closing Words:** “The fragrance always remains in the hand that gives the rose.” Gandhi