

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
Chalice Circles

**Humans in God's Image or God in Human's Image?**

Kitsap Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Bremerton, WA, Rev. Liz Stevens, 2006-2007

**Opening Reading:**

**Psalm by Reed Whittemore**

The Lord feeds some of His prisoners better than others.  
It could be said of Him that He is not a just god but an  
indifferent god.

That He is not to be trusted to reward the righteous and  
punish the unscrupulous.  
That He maketh the poor poorer but is otherwise  
undependable.

It could be said of Him that it is His school of the germane  
that produced the *Congressional Record*.  
That it is His vision of justice that gave us cost accounting.

It could be said of Him that though we walk with Him all  
the days of our lives we will never fathom Him  
Because He is empty.

These are the dark images of our Lord  
That make it seem needful for us to pray not unto Him  
But ourselves.  
But when we do that we find that indeed we are truly lost  
And we rush back into the safer fold, impressed by His care  
for us.

**Discussion Questions:**

Do you believe that God created Humankind in God's image, or that God is a concept invented by human beings to help explain the unexplainable?

William Ellery Channing (19<sup>th</sup> Century Unitarian Minister) wrote in his sermon "Likeness Unto God,"

The divine attributes are first developed in ourselves, and thence transferred to our creator. The idea of God, sublime and awful as it is, is the idea of our own spiritual nature, purified and enlarged to infinity. In ourselves are the elements of the Divinity.

Do you agree or disagree? Discuss.

A joke: Pope John Paul II gets to heaven, and St. Peter suggests he wait for a while before passing through the pearly gates. "But why? I have waited so long to gaze upon the face of my Lord!" pleads the pope. St. Peter pulls him aside and says, "See, God is black, and She's a little ticked at you at the moment." Assuming that imagining God as a human being doesn't limit one

to the dusty, dry old man with a long white beard, if you were to put a face to God, what would God look like?

What are the gifts that come from anthropomorphizing God? What are the dangers?

In what ways does God manifest in us? In one another? In us for one another?

**Closing Reading:**

**A Physics by Heather McHugh**

When you get down to it, Earth  
has our own great ranges  
of feeling—Rocky, Smokey, Blue—  
and a heart that can melt stones.

The still pools fill with sky,  
as if aloof, and we have eyes  
for all of this – and more, for Earth's  
reminding moon. We too are ruled

by such attractions- spun and swaddled,  
rocked and lent a light. We run  
our clocks on wheels, our trains  
on time. But all the while we want

to love each other endlessly—not only for  
a hundred years, not only six feet up and down.  
We want the suns and moons of silver  
in ourselves, not only counted coins in a cup. The whole

idea of love was not fall. And neither was  
the whole idea of God. We put him well  
above ourselves, because we meant,  
in time, to measure up.