

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
“Importance of Myth”
Covenant Group Curriculum, River of Grass Unitarian Universalist
Congregation, Davie, FL

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

Opening Words:

“We should consider myths as... meditations upon events that touch every life and affirm the value of life in the face of its realities. One day when I was home sick with the flu, I noticed how, when viewed up close, there appeared to be no order to the quilt that my mother had made; for years I had appreciated its neat pattern from the perspective of the whole. The little patches on the quilt had value only as part of the overall pattern. Thus, as myth teaches us, meaning is derived from taking the parts and seeing a whole. Seeing that one has a role in the cosmos automatically conveys a sense of purpose and place; this is what it affirmed in myth.”

- J. F. Bierlein

Check-in/Sharing

Topic/Reading:

“To discover {the meaning of myth}, we must live with the sacred stories, pray over them, and ponder them in our hearts. For example, The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11). The story goes like this: everyone spoke the same language and cooperated together well. Then someone got the idea to build a great city with a tower so they could make a name for themselves and wouldn't be scattered all over the earth. God sees what they're doing and decides to confound their language so that there are many languages and they will not be able to act as one. The result is the people stop building the city and relocate all over the earth according to the languages they speak.

The story itself is an etiology, that is, a story told to answer a question of origin. The Tower of Babel is the story that answers the questions of how people came to speak different languages and how it is people live all around the earth. But the purpose of the story isn't necessarily the *meaning* of the story. And the meaning will change from person to person, and situation to situation. The Tower of Babel might mean to one person that vanity (the desire to make a name for oneself) is to be avoided. To another the story may speak to the fear of leaving home (it's okay to be "scattered" all over the earth). Still another may find comfort and hope in the notion that God loves diversity. In other words, meaning comes from where we are in life.

So, how do we find meaning in Sacred Stories? Listen to your heart. Ponder the story, read and re-read it. What is the story saying to *you* and *your* life?”

From: www.hcna.us-- the online resource of the House Church Network Association

Questions for consideration:

Name the myths and sacred stories that are most important in your lives. When do you find yourself turning to them or remembering their teachings? What's the difference between literal truth and religious truth? Why is sometimes the word “myth” used with derision?

Likes and Wishes/Feedback

Closing Words:

“The universe is made up of stories, not atoms.”

- *Muriel Rukeyser*

Amen. May you go in peace. May you live in blessing.