

## Joy

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stony Brook, NY, May 2013

Rev. Margie Allen and Rev. Dr. Linda Anderson

### Opening Words

**Quote:**

Music... will help dissolve your perplexities and purify your character and sensibilities, and in time of care and sorrow, will keep a fountain of joy alive in you. ~Dietrich Bonhoeffer

**Video** (5.41 minutes): 6:00PM, May 19, 2012 in Sabadell, Spain

[Spoiler Alert: This carefully choreographed "flash mob" in Sabadell's Plaça de Sant Roc, produced in celebration of the 130th anniversary of the Spanish banking giant Banco Sabadell, includes performers from the Vallès Symphony Orchestra, the Cor Lieder Camera, Amics de l'Opera de Sabadell, and Coral Belles Arts. Sabadell is the second largest city in the *comarca* ("county") of the Vallès Occidental in Catalonia, Spain. It is on the River Ripoll, 20 km north-west of Barcelona.]

LINK=

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=GBaHPND2QJg#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=GBaHPND2QJg#!)

### Chalice Lighting and Silence

#### [Covenant Review]

**Check-in:** An open check-in about your life and spirit or reflect on this question: What feelings, images, memories or insights did the video we watched evoke in you at this particular moment in your life?

### Topic Introduction

Joy is an emotion. Emotions can function as message flags that let us know that an important need of ours is being met or is not being met. Joy is the emotion evoked by experiences of needs being met—of well-being, success, good fortune, pleasure, the prospect of possessing what one desires or of seeing another's desires realized. Joy is an intense distillation of happiness, an vivid ecstatic or exultant essence, that can make our world seem particularly generous and beautiful for moments or for days. The truly enlightened among us have learned to live in a nearly uninterrupted state of joy that embraces and reframes human difficulties and sorrows.

We think of joy as connected to major celebrations, breakthroughs, and surprises, but joyful moments happen all the time. They can happen when you're eating breakfast with your kids, and laughter breaks out. They can happen when you're walking to work, basking in the sunshine or feeling the sweet, cool breeze or the rain on your face. They can happen when you're sipping your morning coffee, taking a few quiet moments for yourself.

In this Sharing Circle session, we invite you to explore, in good company, your own relationship to joy.

## Quotations

### Questions for Group Reflection

1. What feelings and images come to mind when you think of the word “joy?”
2. What brought you joy when you were a child?
3. Can you remember a time when you were filled with great joy? Tell us the story of that experience.
4. Who has served as a model of joyful living in your life, a model and inspiration to you? Have there been people in your life who stifled or spoiled your joy?
5. Share the story of a time when an act of service gave you great joy.
6. What have you observed about the relationship between joy and sorrow?
7. What will be your legacy of joy to the generations that follow yours?
8. What regular habits and practices might create more joyfulness in your heart, home and community?

**Likes and Wishes** (Likes: celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met; and Wishes: mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)

**Closing Words**      Welcome Morning (Anne Sexton)

There is joy  
in all:  
in the hair I brush each morning,  
in the Cannon towel, newly washed,  
that I rub my body with each morning,  
in the chapel of eggs I cook  
each morning,  
in the outcry from the kettle  
that heats my coffee  
each morning,  
in the spoon and the chair  
that cry "hello there, Anne"  
each morning,  
in the godhead of the table  
that I set my silver, plate, cup upon  
each morning.

All this is God,  
right here in my pea-green house

each morning  
and I mean,  
though often forget,  
to give thanks,  
to faint down by the kitchen table  
in a prayer of rejoicing  
as the holy birds at the kitchen window  
peck into their marriage of seeds.

So while I think of it,  
let me paint a thank-you on my palm  
for this God, this laughter of the morning,  
lest it go unspoken.

The Joy that isn't shared, I've heard,  
dies young.

~ Anne Sexton ~

## Chalice Extinguishing

UUFSB Sharing Circles

“Joy”

(May 2013)

### Quotations

The beating heart of the universe is holy joy. ~Martin Buber

We have God's joy in our blood. ~Frederick Buechner, *The Longing for Home*

From joy I came,  
For joy I live,  
and in Thy sacred joy  
I shall melt again. ~Paramahansa Yogananda

Joy to the world, all the boys and girls. Joy to the fishes in the deep blue sea. Joy to you and me. ~ Three Dog Night (*The Big Chill*)

Give not over thy soul to sorrow; and afflict not thyself in thy own counsel. Gladness of heart is the life of man and the joyfulness of man is length of days. ~Ecclesiastes

[This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.](#) ~George Bernard Shaw

I cannot believe that the inscrutable universe turns on an axis of suffering; surely the strange beauty of the world must somewhere rest on pure joy! ~[Louise Bogan](#)

[The joy of a spirit is the measure of its power.](#) ~Ninon de Lenclos (1620 - 1705)

‘Without pain, how could we know joy?’ This is an old argument in the field of thinking about suffering. Its stupidity and lack of sophistication could be plumbed for centuries but suffice it to say that the existence of broccoli does not, in any way, affect the taste of chocolate.” ~[John Green](#), *The Fault in Our Stars*

There is an alchemy in sorrow. It can be transmuted into wisdom, which, if it does not bring joy, can yet bring happiness. ~[Pearl Buck](#) (1892 - 1973)

Joy and sorrow are inseparable. . . together they come and when one sits alone with you . . remember that the other is asleep upon your bed. ~[Kahlil Gibran](#)

Joy is the holy fire that keeps our purpose warm and our intelligence aglow. ~Helen Keller

Joy can be real only if people look upon their life as a service, and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness. ~Leo Tolstoy

Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day. ~Henri Nouwen

I want a life that sizzles and pops and makes me laugh out loud. And I don't want to get to the end, or to tomorrow, even, and realize that my life is a collection of meetings and pop cans and errands and receipts and dirty dishes. I want to eat cold tangerines and sing out loud in the car with the windows open and wear pink shoes and stay up all night laughing and paint my walls the exact color of the sky right now. I want to sleep hard on clean white sheets and throw parties and eat ripe tomatoes and read books so good they make me jump up and down, and I want my every day to make God belly laugh, glad that he gave life to someone who loves the gift. ~[Shauna Niequist](#)

Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy. ~[Thich Nhat Hanh](#)

There are random moments - tossing a salad, coming up the driveway to the house, ironing the seams flat on a quilt square, standing at the kitchen window and looking out at the delphiniums, hearing a burst of laughter from one of my children's rooms - when I feel a wavelike rush of joy. This is my true religion: arbitrary moments of nearly painful happiness for a life I feel privileged to lead. ~[Elizabeth Berg](#), *The Art of Mending*

To find joy in another's joy; that is the secret of happiness. ~George Bernanos

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. ~[Rabindranath Tagore](#)