

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
Chalice Circle Session - **MYSTERY**  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark, DE, Rev. Andrew Weber, April 2015

**Chalice Lighting**

The living tradition we share draws upon direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.

- First of Unitarian Universalist Six Sources

**Check-In:** What's going on in your life? How have you encountered mystery this week?

**Readings:**

Mysteries are not to be solved. The eye goes blind when it only wants to see why.

- Rumi

Lean back with your eyes closed, your arms opened wide. Be there with all of life's mysteries. Welcome them into your life.

- Rabbi Terry Bookman

There are no answers to the wonder of Creation...

- Madeleine L'Engle

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.

- Albert Einstein

Religious plurality... is the homage which the finite mind pays to the inexhaustibility of the infinite.

- Stanelly Samartha, One Christ-Many Religions

Mysteries abound where most we seek for answers.

- Ray Bradbury

**Questions:**

1. What spoke to you (or didn't speak to you) from the readings?
2. How did the spiritual practice go for you? Do you prefer childlike or adultlike wonder?
3. How has your experience of mystery changed from when you were a child?
4. Where and how do you experience our first source, "transcending mystery and wonder"?
5. Are there mysteries that you, nevertheless, live by? Do you have faith in something unprovable?
6. Is there a comfort for you in mystery? A comfort in knowing?

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

**Closing:**

Everybody's wonderin' what and where they all came from  
Everybody's worryin' 'bout where they're gonna go when the whole thing's done  
But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me  
I think I'll just let the mystery be

-

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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark  
Spiritual Practice - **MYSTERY**  
April 2015

“Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?” These words make up the title and first phrase of one of our hymns (#1003 in “Singing the Journey”). These words actually come from Paul Gauguin, a 19<sup>th</sup> century French Post-Impressionist painter. His painting, “Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?” was the inspiration for our hymn expressing transcending mystery and wonder in the world. The painting can be seen and read about on-line at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston: <http://tinyurl.com/gauguin2015>. Gauguin painted this piece in order to express his thoughts of the beginning and end of life. It is these questions into the meaning of life which we all live with.

In our hymnal the questions are answered, albeit in the Unitarian Universalist fashion of opening doors rather than closing them. The answer is, “Mystery. Mystery. Life is a riddle and a mystery.” At the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark we are delving into mystery as our April worship theme. The concept of “mystery” is easily overwhelming and nebulous - by definition. So there will be opportunities to approach the eternal questions from different sides.

Our spiritual practice for the month is to look at your different experiences of mystery. Through our lives we approach mystery and wonder with different expectations. One large difference is when we are children versus when we are adults. I invite you to explore what “child-like” and “adult-like” wonder mean for you and which (if either) you prefer. Here is a link with more information on this exercise: <http://tinyurl.com/wonder2015>

Engaging with the topic of wonder and mystery can be difficult and nebulous. Just sitting with the unknown can be very powerful. As a short introduction to living with mystery, please visit the following link from the Spirituality and Practice website: <http://tinyurl.com/wonder2015a>