

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
SMALL GROUP MINISTRY
This I Believe
Main Line Unitarian Church, Devon, PA

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting:

I KNOW that it is illogical to put children on school buses without seatbelts.
I KNOW that I should not send high school seniors on trips to countries that have lower drinking ages than my own country with chaperones who look the other way.
I KNOW that I should not send children to fight my wars, and that countries should not kill each other's children for what a few say they BELIEVE..
I KNOW that I should demand a reliable tally of my vote.
I KNOW that if votes and special interest dollars are the same thing, then I must do more than just vote.
I KNOW that I should not burn our earth in the engine of my car.
I KNOW that I should not allow old men to hasten the end of my children's world in the name of God.
I KNOW that my mom quietly held her breath while her children wandered the mountains alone, so that we would grow like trees.
I KNOW that I can most always tell if someone is truthful by knowing the bottom line.
I KNOW that the money and the bottom line will usually be found in the same place.
I KNOW that I am strong and whole - except for a few body parts..
I KNOW that the powerful wish me to BELIEVE that I do not KNOW what I KNOW.
I BELIEVE that every time I ask God what I can do, the answer is, "You already KNOW."

~ Deborah, guest on "This I Believe," National Public Radio

Check-in / Sharing: What's on your mind today?

Focus Reading:

'This I Believe', based on the popular 1950s radio series hosted by Edward R. Murrow, is an international project engaging people in writing, sharing, and discussing the core values that guide their daily lives. These short statements of belief, written by people from all walks of life, are archived and broadcast on NPR (www.thisibelieve.org).

Sample of every-day and spiritual values expressed on the broadcast

I believe in: the power of perfume, following the laughter, the power of silence, the power of individual voices to be a uniting force, free speech, perseverance, that I don't have all the answers, that my word is my bond.

I believe: in God, in no God, in miracles, in science and reality, in Hell, in the power of belief, that faith is a choice, that it is not our religion that changes the world but our actions, that there is part of God in everyone.

Focus Questions:

1. What are some of the every-day values that guide your life?

2. Jesus inspires Christians; what inspires Unitarians? Rather than what a Unitarian does not believe, what do they believe? What are the common beliefs among Unitarians?
3. Spiritually, what would you say to 'This I believe'?
4. How have your values and beliefs changed over the years? What are some of the events or people who changed your values and beliefs?
5. How do your core values relate to your spiritual beliefs? How are they demonstrated in your life?

Check-out/Likes & Wishes: How are you feeling after this session?

Closing Words & Extinguishing Chalice:

Connect the dots by family, by skin color, by religious belief, by politics, by degrees of Kevin Bacon, by whatever method you choose. I believe that each and every human being on this planet is tied to every other human being on this planet in one way or another. As a result, any decision we make, no matter how seemingly small or insignificant, could have a ripple effect on any of the rest of us. One small act by one person could, and often does, profoundly affect the lives of others.

~ Melissa, guest on "This I Believe," NPR

I believe that good is stronger than evil. I have found that if applied with complete faith, it can obliterate evil. Knowledge like this gives one great strength in time of oppression or tyranny. I believe that hatred is destructive. It is not always easy or possible to love people, nations, or ideas, but at least, I say to myself, 'Do not hate them: try to turn thoughts toward God.' Someone once said, "It is better to love the good than hate the bad."

~ Dame Edith Evan, English actress, 1888-1976