

Gathering for Prayer

Words of the Day

A practice in my life that might be called prayer is ...

Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice to shine on our time together. In its light we celebrate the relationships and understanding we are creating in this place and time. May our sharing be deep. (*Light chalice*)

The Basket

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Silence, holding ourselves and each other in silent support.

Shared Readings

It is a personal matter, an intimate aspect of our living, and not the public proof of our righteousness. Prayer begins in the heart, that secret place within us all. Other living traditions have taught me that prayer is an honest expression of how we are in the very depths and doubts of our souls.

Rev. Daniel Budd

Prayer cannot bring water to parched land, nor mend a broken bridge, nor rebuild a ruined city, but prayer can water an arid soul, mend a broken heart, and rebuild a weakened will.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel

Love is our doctrine, the quest for truth is our sacrament and service is our prayer.

Unitarian Universalist affirmation

The Prophet Muhammad was once asked what was the one essential quality for prayers to be valid Muhammad's answer was: Presence in the heart. It is not so much presence of God.

God is always present. It is we humans who are absent from our own heart. *Omid Safi*

My sense of God has changed throughout my life, as I imagine it has for you, and yet something I've noticed is that my use of prayer has hardly changed at all. *Rev. Judith Meyer*

Prayer for me is an act of intimacy, and I leave space for something to break through, to break me open, call it insight, clarity, or God. *Rev. Joseph Boyd*

What I'd really like is for my life to be a prayer, an offering of thanksgiving. I could do it if I were always present, but I'm not. *Sylvia Boorstein*

The purpose of Buddhist prayer is to awaken our inherent inner capacities strength, compassion and wisdom rather than to petition external forces Buddhist prayer is a form of meditation.

Roy Melvyn

After all, prayer is a way to gather power together, to name some deeper truths and to put words to the collective and personal yearnings of people. *Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd*

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round 1: Share your reflections on prayer and the preparation materials.

Round 2: Share additional thoughts or reflect on what others have shared.

Closing Circle

Extinguishing the Chalice

We extinguish this flame and we remember the warmth of our community, the light of our wisdom, the generosity of our sharing. We keep these in our heart until we meet again.

(Extinguish the chalice.)

Song/Chime

Announcements

The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the facilitator know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the facilitator the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, or giving advice, or advocating a specific view
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn and to stay on the "I-message."