

## Gathering for Belonging

*There are suggestions for Zoom sessions – speaking in turns, muting, and using Chat for the Words of the Day. Some sections use a timer / clock.*

**When you join the meeting** *Facilitators – do these for yourself first and help others.*

- Check that you are unmuted and have video, if you're using video. Check your volume.
- Make sure your picture box shows your "name tag." Use Rename to change if necessary.
- Make sure you have a copy of the Gathering available.
- **Words of the Day.** Use Chat to write the Words of the Day. Write "I feel a sense of belonging when I" and then complete the sentence.

**Chalice Lighting** "We'll begin by lighting the chalice." *Ask for a volunteer to read.*

O light of life,  
Be kindled again in our hearts  
As we meet together  
To celebrate the joy of human community  
Seeking a wholeness that extends beyond ourselves.  
*Samuel A. Trumbore, adapted*

**Words of the Day** "Now we'll read the Words of the Day from the Chat box." *People can't see Chat written before they joined the meeting, so you might want to read these yourself or ask people to read their own.*

**Sharing of Joys and Concerns** "We'll share joys and concerns." *Begin, and then either call on people or ask them to "chain" to the next person. Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

**Silence, holding each other in support** "Now a few minutes of silence" (2 or 3)

**Shared Readings** "I'll start the first Shared Reading." *Begin, and then either call on people or ask them to "chain" to the next person. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to read.*

Language, identity, place, home: these are all of a piece – just different elements of belonging and not-belonging. *Jhumpa Lahiri*

Art is my cure to all this madness, sadness and loss of belonging in the world & through it I'll walk myself home. *Nikki Rowe*

I didn't belong as a kid, and that always bothered me. If only I'd known that one day my differentness would be an asset, then my early life would have been much easier. *Bette Midler*

I do not belong anywhere. I have an accent in every language I speak. *Sholeh Wolpé*

The natural world is the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human. To damage this community is to diminish our own existence. *Thomas Berry*

The moment we cease to hold each other, the moment we break faith with one another, the sea engulfs us, and the light goes out. *James Baldwin*

When you know and respect your Inner Nature, you know where you belong. You also know where you don't belong. *Benjamin Hoff*

The only true belonging is the courage to stand alone and belong to ourselves. *Azriel ReShel*

Please accept my resignation. I don't want to belong to any club that will accept me as a member. *Groucho Marx*

You can't build a society purely on interests, you need a sense of belonging. *Valery Giscard d'Estaing*

## **Deep Listening and Sharing**

**Round 1. Deep Sharing.** "Now we share reflections on Belonging and the preparation." *Note the time available for each person and ask people to mute or remain quiet for each speaker..*

*Go first to model. Then ask people to raise their hand if they're ready to go next. Assist with un-muting if needed. Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

**Round 2. Responses and Comments.** *Note how much time is available for Round 2. People can unmute for freer exchange. Go first to model for the group.*

**Closing Circle** "We're going to say a word or sentence about what we are taking away from the session." *Begin, and then either call on people or "chain."* *Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

**Chalice** "We will extinguish the chalice." *Ask for a volunteer to read.*

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.

## **Bell or 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 responsibility for good process by watching how much time I take to speak, noticing what is going on for others, and considering problems if they occur
- 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, 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."