

UUCMC Covenant Circle Session

April 2019: Wholeness

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!

~ Jellaludin Rumi, translation by Coleman Barks

Reminder of our Covenant

Check-In (3-4 minutes each)

Topic with Readings

Word Roots

Our understanding of “whole” comes through the old Germanic and Norse languages: hal, haila which give the sense of entire, unhurt, uninjured, safe; healthy, sound; genuine, straightforward, undamaged, complete. Our word for health has similar roots.

Wise Words

My father is a professor and I learned from him that you don't really know something until you teach it to another. We don't really know our own wholeness until we see the wholeness of another or work to serve wholeness in our world. Wholeness, a sense of our own fullness, a spiritual realization of our own strength and beauty, is given when we give of ourselves... We heal our own aches by healing the aches in others. We put back the pieces of our own souls by helping others redeem their own wholeness.

~ Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Caring for others completes us. ~ Rev. Scott Tayler

We are each of us angels with only one wing, and we can only fly embracing each other.

~ Luciano De Crescenzo

He drew a circle that shut me out-
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle and took him in!

~ Edwin Markham

One cannot live in the world; that is, one cannot become, in the easy, generalizing sense with which the phrase is commonly used, a "world citizen." There can be no such thing as a "global

village." No matter how much one may love the world as a whole, one can live fully in it only by living responsibly in some small part of it. Where we live and who we live there with define the terms of our relationship to the world and to humanity. We thus come again to the paradox that one can become whole only by the responsible acceptance of one's partiality. ~ Wendell Berry

Wholeness does not mean perfection: it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life. Knowing this gives me hope that human wholeness — mine, yours, ours — need not be a utopian dream, if we can use devastation as a seedbed for new life. ~ Parker Palmer

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment. ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

'Finding yourself' is not really how it works. You aren't a ten-dollar bill in last winter's coat pocket. You are also not lost. Your true self is right here, buried under cultural conditioning, other people's opinions and inaccurate conclusions you drew as a kid that became your beliefs about who you are. 'Finding yourself' is actually returning to yourself. An unlearning, an excavation, a remembering who you were before the world got its hands on you.

~ Emily McDowell

It is easier to live through someone else than to become complete yourself. ~ Betty Friedan

If I am to let my life speak things I want to hear, ... I must also let it speak things I do not want to hear and would never tell anyone else! My life is not only about my strengths and virtues; it is also about my liabilities and my limits, my trespasses and my shadow. An inevitable though often ignored dimension of the quest for 'wholeness' is that we must embrace what we dislike or find shameful about ourselves as well as what we are confident and proud of. ~ Parker Palmer

Happiness is just one part of our existence, wholeness is to embrace all that is within us. It's to embrace our shadow qualities, to embrace our self-doubt, fear, anxiety, as well as the brightness, joy, and curiosity. It is all welcome. ~ Dan Putt

You need only claim the events of your life to make yourself yours. When you truly possess all you have been and done...you are fierce with reality. ~ Florida Scott-Maxwell

As a Unitarian Universalist, I have come to see that universal salvation is not just for all of us but for all of me. There is no crevice inside of me that love cannot touch.

~ Paula Goldade, UU and Wellspring participant

Sometimes I think I have organized the inner crowd. For a brief, breathtaking moment, I feel completely whole. I understand that I am comprised of many selves that make up a single chorus. To listen to the music this chorus makes, to recognize it as music, as something noble, varied, patterned, beautiful — that is the work of a lifetime. ~ Dani Shapiro

Here is the ultimate irony of the divided life: live behind a wall long enough, and the true self you tried to hide from the world disappears from your own view! The wall itself and the world

outside it become all that you know. Eventually, you even forget that the wall is there — and that hidden behind it is someone called “you.” ~ Parker Palmer

In many shamanic societies, if you came to a medicine person complaining of being disheartened, dispirited, or depressed, they would ask one of four questions: When did you stop dancing? When did you stop singing? When did you stop being enchanted by stories? When did you stop finding comfort in the sweet territory of silence? ~ Gabrielle Roth

One Body ~ Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Unless you can feel it,
the one sinew running through our breath,
the one nerve in which we all throb,
unless you know in the worst terrorists
yourself,
and see in the most foreign face
your own heart looking out at the world,
unless you know in your gut
the demagogue, the refugee, the infidel
as part of yourself,
unless you feel in the loveless the Beloved
surely as in you,
you do not yet inhabit your body
and can't yet be
the one
we already are.

Remember ~ Joy Harjo

Remember the earth whose skin you are:
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth
brown earth, we are earth...
Remember that you are all people and that all people are you...

Silent Reflection

Questions to prompt discussion (choose ones that work for you)

1. When were you first invited into a circle that helped you feel whole? How does that story still direct you today?
2. Is wholeness for you a solitary or relational journey?
3. When did you first discover that repairing the world is one of the best ways to put yourself back together?

4. In what space or place do you feel most whole? How often do you spend time there?
5. Who taught you that wholeness does not mean perfection? Who helped you with the work of embracing brokenness, rather than trying to fix or hide it? How have you passed on that lesson? Does someone in your life need that lesson now?
6. How has your understanding of wholeness changed with age?
7. What was your proudest moment of maintaining and standing up for your wholeness?
8. Was it ever easier for you to live through someone else than to become complete yourself?
9. Can you name the three most prominent aspects of your shadow side? What are you learning about accepting and embracing them? If your child or a significant young person in your life asked you about facing their shadow, what advice would you give?
10. When was the last time you felt “most me”? Did you promise yourself anything in that moment? Did you tell yourself something to never forget?

Housekeeping Details How goes your service project plans? Do you need ideas? Lisa, Michelle or Virginia are happy to help!

Check-out

Closing Words

You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop. ~ Rumi