



Light in the Darkness

Covenant Group Session

Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina

Revised by Pam Stevenson, May 2022

Chalice Lighting: *In this place together, we light this candle in honor of the light within each of us, the light among us, and the light we bring into the world.*

Opening Words

Without darkness, there can be no light. Claire Fraser, *Outlander*.

Personal Check In: In what ways have you experienced LIGHT and/or DARKNESS in your life recently?

Readings from the Common Bowl (see below)

Questions for sharing and for discussion:

1. What do the ideas of “light” or “dark” times mean to you?
2. How do we share our light with others who may be experiencing a dark time? What help do you long for when you are experiencing a dark time?
3. How does the experience of deep knowing or of joy influence our dark experiences?
4. Everyone has a “shadow side” as well as a “light side.” How do we balance and embrace both?
5. What can we do to hold onto our inner light, or joy, when we feel we have lost hope?

Sharing -This is a time to speak without interruption and for deep listening. Deep listening means no interrupting, no fixing, no saving, no advising, and no setting each other straight. Please share responses to one or more of the session questions or readings.

Breathing together in silence for two minutes.

Open Discussion -This is a time to respond to something another person said about the topic or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared their thoughts on this topic. Continue to practice deep listening.

Closing reading:

“That which causes us trials shall yield us triumph: and that which makes our hearts ache shall fill us with gladness. The only true happiness is to learn, to advance, and to improve, which could not happen unless we had commerce with error, ignorance, and imperfection. We must pass through the darkness to reach the light.” ~Albert Pike

Announcements / Plans

Personal Check out: As we close today, how are you feeling now?

Extinguish the Chalice

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we meet again.

READINGS FROM THE COMMON BOWL

In a profound sense every man has two halves to his being; he is not one person so much as two persons trying to act in unison. I believe that in the heart of each human being there is a "child of darkness" who is equal and complementary to the more obvious "child of light."

~Laurens van der Post

"You can't have a light without a dark to stick it in." ~Arlo Guthrie

A sensible man will remember that the eyes may be confused in two ways - by a change from light to darkness or from darkness to light; and he will recognize that the same thing happens to the soul. ~Plato

"In the beginning there was nothing. And God said, "Let there be light!" And there was light. Then there was still nothing, but you could see it a whole lot better." ~Ellen DeGeneres

"Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark."

~Rabindranath Tagore

"One thing that comes out in myths is that at the bottom of the abyss comes the voice of salvation. The black moment is when the real message of transformation is going to come. At the darkest moment comes the light." ~Joseph Campbell

"Beautiful light is born of darkness, so the faith that springs from conflict is often the strongest and the best." ~R. Turnbull

"As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light of meaning in the darkness of mere being." ~C. G. Jung

"My darkest moments, my most fearful times, when faced, became my bravest. The light does come. At your weakest, you end up showing more strength; at your lowest you are suddenly lifted higher than you've ever been. They all border one another, these opposites, and show how quickly we can be altered."

~Cecelia Ahern, in *Thanks for the Memories*

"How may one live a moral and compassionate life when one finds darkness not only in one's culture but within oneself? There are simply no answers to some of the great pressing questions. You just continue to live through them, inside the mystery, making your life a worthy expression of leaning into the light."

~Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams*

"I read and walked for miles at night along the beach, writing bad blank verse and searching endlessly for someone wonderful who would step out of the darkness and change my life and bring me into the light. It never crossed my mind that that person could be me."

~Anna Quindlen.