

# ALL SOULS

## UNITARIAN CHURCH

---

### December Theme Hope

#### **Opening Reading/ Chalice Lighting**

I have learned two lessons in my life: first, there are no sufficient literary, psychological, or historical answers to human tragedy, only moral ones. Second, just as despair can come to one another only from other human beings, hope, too, can be given to one only by other human beings. Eli Wiesel

**Check-In** How goes thy spirit? What do you need to leave behind in order to be fully present here and now? 2-3 sentences

#### **Business**

#### **Revisit the Covenant**

**Claim time for Deeper Listening** Deeper listening is a time at the end of our meeting where you can be listened to uninterrupted for what is essentially an extended check in if you have more you need to say than the initial check in. You are encouraged to claim time ranging between 3-5 minutes.

**Centering** Take a moment to breathe, feel your feet on the floor and your body in the chair. After a few minutes of breathing, find your heartbeat (either by listening to your ear or placing your fingers on your pulse). See if you can hold the attention of your heartbeat and listen to the sounds in the room. (1-2 minutes) Our goal would be to bring this sense of calm and way of listening to the readings and to one another, keeping our attention toggling between self and what you are listening to.

**Readings** (Read through readings and questions twice, one time per facilitator, with reflection space in between followed by Quaker Style sharing. Try to stay in I statements and personal stories and not shift into

third person and facts. Try to leave space between speakers.)

**Hope Rev. Craig Schwalenberg**

**Hope is quiet.  
She is easily overlooked.  
And while she goes to all the parties,  
loves crowds and gatherings,  
she is rarely seen.**

**People often forget to invite her,  
and just as often forget she was present.  
But Hope doesn't mind.  
She likes the hustle and the bustle.  
She likes doing small things  
while people aren't looking.  
Straightening pictures on the wall.  
Carrying empty dishes to the kitchen.  
Little assistance, rarely noticed.**

**When she was a child,  
Hope had an unfortunate experience  
with a game of Hide and Seek.  
When her cousin Fear had been found,  
the girl they were playing with  
stopped looking for Hope.  
As a young adult,  
Hope had numerous relationships.  
But they rarely lasted – her lovers held her too tight.  
They were really in love with her cousin,  
but were too afraid to say so.**

**Hope and Fear are both best friends with Change,  
and they often go traveling together.**

**With Hope** We see the world differently...

There is no blame or shame; life is experienced without hard judgment.

**With Hope**

There is caring compassion and curiosity for understanding and learning

**With Hope**

There are no enemies, resistance is approached merely as information

**With Hope**

There is an appreciation for what's working, and a respect for what's not.

**With Hope**

Trust and connection are generated, many more futures become feasible.

**With Hope**

Life expands, not contracts; there is room to approach, explore, and grow.

**With Hope**

One looks through the eyes of what can happen, not merely what has happened.

**With Hope**

One focuses on commonalities rather than differences, yet respecting the latter

**With Hope**

Life is entered and the moment is stepped into with an appetite for what is possible.

**With Hope**

There is a respect for realism and pessimism, yet no further need to lead with it.

## **Questions**

**What gives you hope?**

**What is the difference between faith and hope? Gratitude and hope?**

**What is the relationship between fear and hope?**

**Can you think of a time when you lost hope and regained it? Tell your story.**

**Has your definition of hope changed over your lifetime?**

**What did you hope for as a child? A young adult? An adult? As a parent? A grandparent?**

**Who inspires you to hope? What is their story?**

**Have you ever encouraged someone who was without hope? How do you share your hope with other people?**

**What are some of the practices or habits in your life that might keep you hopeful?**

**Deeper Listening** If time is claimed by an individual, group listens to speaker uninterrupted for that designated time. It is best to have a timer of sorts so that facilitator can listen fully as well.

### **Check Out**

One sentence about where you are now that we have been together for the past hour and a half. (How did you show up? Would you share more or less? Would you do anything differently? Focus your likes and dislikes on your own behavior)

### **Closing reading/Chalice Extinguishing**

If you want to build a ship, don't herd people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea. Antoine de Saint-Exupery