

DRAFT

Chalice Circle #7 – Grace in Aging

Drawing on the wonderful wisdom that was shared by Peter, Bryna, Fran, Ginger and Hiroshi at the March 27th Sunday service, Aging with Grace, we'll explore our experiences with aging. As Betty Friedan says: "Aging is not lost youth, but a new stage of opportunity and strength." We also know it has its surprises and uncertainties. Sit back and open your hearts. How is it going for you?

Chalice Lighting

Becoming Present: Guided Meditation and Movement

Opening Reading:

The Way it Is by Lynn Unger

One morning you might wake up
to realize that the knot in your stomach
had loosened itself and slipped away,
and that the pit of unfulfilled longing in your heart
had gradually, and without your really noticing,
been filled in—patched like a pothole, not quite
the same as it was, but good enough.

And in that moment it might occur to you
that your life, though not the way
you planned it, and maybe not even entirely
the way you wanted it, is nonetheless—
persistently, abundantly, miraculously—
exactly the way it is.

Moment of Silence

Covenant:

These are the personal promises we make to each other – Please read out loud or silently:

- I will make a sincere effort to attend all sessions.
- I will notify the facilitator if I have to be absent.
- I will be considerate of my fellow members by arriving, starting, and ending on time.
- I will respect the confidentiality of the group.
- I will speak from personal experience and refrain from giving advice.
- I will participate and also self-moderate, so that others may speak.

I will honor the desire of anyone “to pass.”

I will be responsible for keeping the discussion “on track”.

I will strive to listen fully.

I will let the group know if I choose to leave the group.

I will do my best, with the help of everyone in the group, to assure that this Covenant is followed and affirmed in order to maintain a safe environment.

Check in:

What is the state of your Heart?

The Readings:

“Finally, I am coming to the conclusion that my highest ambition is to be what I already am. That I will never fulfill my obligation to surpass myself unless I first accept myself, and if I accept myself fully in the right way, I will already have surpassed myself.” Thomas Merton

“Hold on to the reins of Love and don’t be afraid. Hold on to the real behind the false and don’t be afraid.” Rumi

Sharing and Deep Listening:

Here are some questions for your reflection. Feel free to share your responses to these or other questions that have come for you.

1. What does aging mean to you?
2. What has been most surprising? Most challenging?
3. What are you doing when you feel most alive?
4. What have you let go of?
5. What would you like to do more of?
6. Has aging affected your spiritual life? How has it changed or stayed the same?

Review of this season’s Chalice Circles:

This is our last Chalice Circle. We will resume again in October. Your feedback will help us plan for next year.

1. Are you considering participating in a Chalice Circle again?
2. Would you be interested in being a facilitator?
3. Would your Circle like to continue or are you interested in creating some new circles or adding new members?
4. The seven topics this year were: Home – what it Means to You; Our Ancestors; Self-care and Self-compassion; Friendship; Love is A Verb; Spiritual Practices; and Grace in Aging. Were there some you particularly resonated with? Were there some you didn’t gravitate to?
5. What do you think about choosing topics that follow-up on Sunday sermons?

6. What other topics might you like to explore?
7. Any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Check out:

How did today's sharing work for you?

Extinguishing the Chalice

Closing Reading:

I Will Not Die an Unlived Life

I will not die an unlived life.

I will not live in fear

Of falling or catching fire.

I choose to inhabit my days,

To allow my living to open me,

To make me less afraid,

More accessible,

To loosen my heart

Until it becomes a wing,

A torch, a promise.

I choose to risk my significance,

To live so that which came to me as seed

Goes to the next as blossom,

And that which came to me as blossom, goes on as fruit.

Dawna Markova