Rev's Reflections

Chalice Days Are Coming Fast

There are innumerable reasons we light a flame within a chalice each time we gather, and each Sunday we articulate at least one of those reasons. The flame symbolizes commitment and passion, while the chalice itself symbolizes the covenants we make with each other our association of congregations and the world, and for many, it even symbolizes the covenants they make with the creative force of the universe, the divine, even God.

The Flaming Chalice is meaningful both communally and personally. Yet, most of us never light a flame within a Chalice at home. I live in a home with two UU ministers, both of us having devoted our lives to this shared and ever-evolving faith, yet even we rarely engage at home in this sacred act.

That's why Chalice Days are so important. The first full week of December (this year from the 1st to the 8th) is a chance to slow down, remember how the values and commitments of this faith matter to us, and bring a bit of the rituals and traditions of our congregations home with us. It's a time to really embody Unitarian Universalism in every aspect of our lives.

In our family, we place a small mirror under the chalice we light each evening, to help us remember to reflect on our faith. We eat simple meals featuring beans to be in solidarity with the people of the world who count on legumes as their primary (sometimes only) source of protein. We construct a massive seven-pointed star, studded with twinkling lights and forest greens on the front of our house, as a symbol of the seven values we espouse as UUs: Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence, Gratitude and Love. We make small gifts to share with friends and family as tokens of our appreciation. Weeks earlier, we plant narcissus bulbs to bloom indoors as a reminder to be kind to ourselves when so much is expected of us during the bustling holiday season.

Here at UUCSC, Lee and I are doing our best to make this a holiday packed with traditions we can take home with us and share with our children so that they have tangible, fun, and joyous symbols of this faith.

We hope they will grow into and share Chalice Days with their families in the future, because of their connections.

I hope you'll take some time daily during Chalice Days to light your own chalice and reflect on the values we share, and perhaps even adopt some of these traditions — or better yet, make your own! It's time to start planning and preparing, so during the Month of November, we'll be taking some time during and after services to help you prepare, making simple chalices, seven-pointed stars and paper narcissus flowers to take home.

May this season of dwindling light be filled with the brightness of our many small flames.

In Peace,
Rev Denis