Rev's Reflections

This is the time of year when there are so many demands on our time, that it's sometimes hard to remember to breathe.

Call me Captain Obvious. I'm sure everyone thinks the same thing every day of the Halloween-to-New Year season I call Pumpkinspice.

Holidays are meant for enjoyment *and* reflection, yet we scarcely get time for either between the shopping, decorating, and planning; fall cleanup and winter decorating; and worrying about global chaos and violence. The irony is that so many of our holidays are remembrances of oppression. Even Christmas. But we don't really get time to think about it.

What I love about the UU way of celebrating during this time of year is that we make it n effort to reflect. We take time to ponder our values and the covenant that binds us together in faith. We pay attention to the sights and sounds of suffering and celebration in the world. We light a chalice at home every evening for a week of *luminescence* that embraces darkness, shines a warm glow on the faces of our loved ones, and reaffirms our commitment to dwell together in peace, seek the truth in love, and help one another.

It's a good time to remember that even in our congregational covenant, the one we recite together every Sunday, Love is at the center.

I'd like to encourage you to take time with your family in the coming week to light a chalice at home in the evening. If you don't have one you can improvise by putting a teacup or empty tuna can on top of a small glass. Reflect on our covenant and your beliefs. Imagine the world you want to live in.

This is a great opportunity to create family traditions that relate to Unitarian Universalism and the unique characteristics of your family. Lee Cowan, your Director of Religious Education, has included here in this newsletter a list of traditions for the season: things we've been doing as a

congregation, and things you may want to consider for yourself and your family.

You may just want to take a moment each day to quietly contemplate your gratitude for this faith, this congregation, and the people you love. Hopefully, that moment of reflection and breathing can add depth and richness to your life, rather than stress.

One more thing we hope will alleviate some of the pressure of the season: an affordable, fun, nutritious and delicious dinner on Friday, December 8 at 6 pm in the Sanctuary, our quarterly Congregational dinner. We'll be featuring Mediterranean-inspired fare (falafel, among other things) and cake and ice cream. See details below.

In Peace,
Rev. Denis