



Chalice Home

Deep Listening

October 2020



This Family Worship Packet was developed by *Soul Matters* and is available to all UUCSW families as a spiritual resource.

Welcome to Chalice Home's Celebration of Deep Listening

Welcome to Chalice Home for October. With this month's theme of Deep Listening as our guide, we explore the idea of listening for and remembering wisdom with two rituals: a Remembrance Ritual and a Practice of Powerful Pauses Ritual.

Our Remembrance Ritual invites us to listen for wisdom from loved ones we've lost, particularly the elders we have lost. Our elders have many years of life experience. Listening to their journeys helps us navigate our own. Grandparents are among our most treasured elders. They often are sources of wisdom and comfort for children. And adults too! When I went through my divorce after 32 years of marriage, my grandmother's spirit came to me in a dream. I had been struggling with what new last name to use. I didn't want my married name, and I didn't feel like a "maiden" name fit anymore. My grandmother had always emphasized dignity and freedom to me as a child. She had struggled with the role of women and gleefully whispered that she "didn't wear a bra, just Grandpa's undershirts," and she wore Grandpa's shoes, she was so done with women's shoes. Quite the quiet revolutionary! And so, in my dream, my grandmother told me I should become "Katie Covey," which was her family name. She also told me I would become a famous mystery writer, but I figure a curriculum writer is close enough. And so, Katie Covey I became. Her wise presence in that dream helped me listen to my heart and chart a new path.

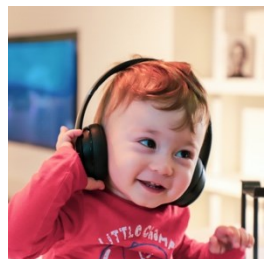
Because of this story, I'm especially grateful for the remembrance ritual we offer in this month's packet. I can still hear my grandmother's wisdom and guidance even though she has died. This is true for all of us. Deep listening transcends time and space. This ritual of remembrance invites us to think about how memory can be a form of listening - a form of listening that allows us to hold on to those we love. The pictures of loved ones we add to our Chalice Home will help us remember this, and them.

In the second ritual, Practice Powerful Pauses, we listen for wisdom as well - the wisdom of those who call us to justice. Our faith especially lifts this up in our second UU source which calls us to listen to the wisdom found in the "words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love." With this ritual, we invite an exploration of listening to such prophetic voices. Part of listening to challenging voices involves learning the mindful practice of pausing and non-defensiveness. These "Powerful Pauses" are an important part of anti-racism work. The object you choose to symbolize the Powerful Pauses will help us remember to be mindful.

We also want to lift up excitement about the mindfulness moment song/video in this packet called "Listening." It's by a wonderful singer/songwriter Lea Morris. We've commissioned her to write original songs and mindfulness discussion videos for October – February's themes. Her melodies add so much to our Chalice Home experience. We can't wait for you to experience them.

Finally, know that you are not listening alone this month. Other UU families from across the country are doing Chalice Home too! It's a reminder that listening doesn't just lead to healing and wisdom; it leads to connection too. May that feeling of being a part of a larger whole bless you and your families throughout the entire month.

- Katie



Family Worship Guide

On Deep Listening

Here's the ritual for engaging our monthly theme of Deep Listening. As always, treat the script as inspiration not rigid instructions. Adapt and enhance as best fits your family!

A Personal Story to Start Things Off

Instead of jumping right into family worship and formal ritual, we suggest that parents begin by telling a personal story related to the monthly theme. This helps put the worship into context and reminds your children that this family worship is connected to the wider theme exploration that your entire church is doing this month. Keep it simple. Just start out by explaining that "Everyone from our church is talking about the idea of deep listening this month" and then transition by saying something like, "When I think of deep listening, I remember a time when..." You can invite others to share a bit about what deep listening means to them, or you can simply transition into the worship service.

Centering Sound

Move from "regular time" to "sacred time" by sounding your bell, chimes, ringing bowl or ringing glass.

Optional words to go with your centering sound:

*"To this quiet place of beauty, we come from busy things
Pausing for a moment for the thoughts that quiet brings."*

Chalice Lighting

Two options, pick one or write your own...

As we light this chalice,
May its warmth help us feel the love we share for each other.
May its light help us remember all the people that guide us on our way.
May the chalice that holds the candle make us think about our church community that makes room for us and celebrates everyone.

May the light we now kindle
bring us to our center.
May its soft warmth calm our hearts
and help us listen to the voices within,
voices that remind us who we are
and how we are called to help others.

Light your chalice.



Centering Music

The below video was made for Soul Matters families. So not only does it include a family-friendly song but it also contains a family discussion after the song about the monthly theme. Be sure to watch the whole video so you get to hear them both. Afterward, have a similar family discussion of your own!

- Listening by Lea Morris
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qb_jHR2c1NQ&feature=youtu.be

A few more songs about listening in case you want to expand this time of connecting to the theme through music:

- Listen, Listen, Listen to My Heart's Song
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJe-W_pD_6Y<https://vimeo.com/415943314>
- STLT #401 Kum Ba Yah
(sing and sign in ASL) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwnWo_6FgRM
- #1051 We Are
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWaw-tQ4W7w>

The Giving Bowl

Remember that money is not the only way we are generous to others. So in addition to or instead of money, consider writing down on small pieces of paper ways you can support others or special organizations this month. Be sure to bring in the monthly theme by talking about how the organization you are supporting helps you listen to needs greater than your own.

Ritual words:

“We drop our coins (papers) in and fill the bowl. Serving others makes us whole.”

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Invite each family member to pick up a rock and share something they are thankful for about the past week while dropping the rock into the bowl of water. The aim here is to make room to notice the good things all around us even though times are hard.

After this first round of joys, invite each family member to choose another rock and share something or someone they have a concern for - someone or something they are holding in their hearts and prayers. This is a way to bring the struggles of others into our hearts.

And don't forget that the rocks love being used in this ritual and they can be pulled out of the water and used as “double rocks” if there are more joys and concerns. :-)

Ritual Words:

“We listen to each other; it is a holy act.
To share our joys and sorrows, with grace it flows on back.”



Celebrating Deep Listening with a Remembrance Ritual

Each month we will use our monthly theme to direct us to a symbolic object/token to add to our chalice home. This month we invite you to honor the way we seek to listen to those who have died: elders, pets, family friends. While these loved ones are no longer with us physically, they live on in our hearts through our memories as well as the wisdom they shared with us. We “hear” them “speak” to us still through the stories we tell of them.

In addition to telling stories about your loved one, you will also add a photo or a memorabilia of them to your chalice home. May these photos be your family’s way of hearing them say, “Listen up! I’m still speaking!”

Reflect:

Share family memories about people and pets who have died. Tell beloved memories but also invite reflection on what wisdom they literally shared with you or what the story of their lives “says” to you.

Here are some thoughts as you consider how you want to introduce this activity to your family:

For us UU’s, late October can be a time for remembering those who have passed on, recently and a long time ago. UUs are not the only ones that use this time of year to think about those who have died. For instance, Halloween was born from Samhain, an ancient Pagan holiday, when the boundary between the living and the dead grows thin. And the Day of the Dead is a holiday celebrated throughout Mexico and Mexican communities in the United States to remember and honor ancestors who have died.

Remembering those who have died is a way of listening to and letting their voices live on. It’s a way of saying “Their light never fully goes out.” That’s part of why we light candles for those who have died.

When we offer a memorial service to someone who has died, we often share stories of how that person lived their life. These stories can be sad, and they can also be joyous, or moving. We listen to the stories and learn how to live our own lives in a better way, in honor of the person who has died. We also remember special things about that person. One grandfather loved Snickers Bars. And so, the family made sure to have a big bowl of Snickers Bars available after the memorial service so everyone could remember their grandfather. Another elder loved flowers, and so the family provided Forget Me Not seed packets to everyone who attended her memorial picnic.

Adding Your Symbol:

Find a photo or memorabilia of the people you remembered and add them to your Chalice Home.



Bless Your Object(s):

“Thanks for the memories of all the loved ones that have left us so much. May we keep listening for their voice. May their whispers escape from our hearts. And may their wisdom and love live on in the way we treat and care for others.”

Setting an Intention

As you bring your family worship to a close, pause for a moment to think ahead about the coming weeks and make a deep listening related intention/promise for how you want to act, what you want to remember or how you want to treat others.

Here’s the intention/promise statement, for everyone to say. Each person states their intention, one at a time.

“In the coming weeks, I will try to let the life of my loved ones speak through me by....”

Extinguishing the Chalice

“We gather the warmth of love,
the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts.
We return to the world of do and say,
Carry it forward into the dawning day.
Go Now in Peace, Amen.”

Instructions: Use your hands in a gather/cupping gesture and bring them to your heart. Repeat after the “warmth of love,” “the light of truth,” and the “energy of action.” View Katie’s YouTube video demonstrating how to add gesture to these words:

<https://youtu.be/GEF4Hdm08oM>



Celebrating Deep Listening with a Practice

Powerful Pauses Ritual

This time of Deep Listening is also a time when we listen to the voices of [BIPOC](#) people. The [Eighth UU Principle](#) encourages us to affirm and promote ““journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.” When it comes to deep listening, leaders have lifted up the importance of [decentering whiteness](#), listening to BIPOC voices and placing those BIPOC voices at the center of our storytelling and discussions. Our faith has taken up this work and called white UU’s to be especially vigilant about the work of listening to and centering BIPOC voices. So what’s one of the ways our faith guides us into becoming a people of deep listening? It says, “White UU’s, listen to BIPOC voices and actively work to bring them into the center of our faith!” Your Chalice Home can be a center for anti-racism work.

So, in addition to the elder ritual of remembrance above, consider adding this Powerful Pause ritual to your family worship this month. It may be too much to do this ritual on top of the remembrance ritual above, so consider having two family worship services this month with this ritual at the center of your second one. Use all of the same components that are in this script, simply substitute this ritual for the Remembrance Ritual above.

Reflect: Start by having a family discussion about moments when you first were aware of racism. One way to dismantle racism is to learn to listen deeply. Regardless of one’s age, a white UU can say things that [exclude or hurt the feelings](#) of a BIPOC person. When a BIPOC person says, “You hurt my feelings,” a white person might feel defensive and want to argue back or speak AT them rather than listen to them.

So if you are white person, you need to learn the practice of taking a pause and deep breath so you can listen better instead defensively responding back.

If you are a BIPOC person, it helps to remember to take care of yourself by practicing a pause so you can decide which way of responding will feel safest and best to you. (Here’s a good article that teases this out: <https://pulse.seattlechildrens.org/unraveling-microaggressions/>)

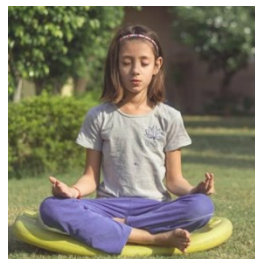
Either way, learning to pause so we can better listen to others or listen to our own needs is a very important tool. Pausing, reflecting, and moving into silence gives us a moment to catch our breath. This mindfulness ritual teaches families about this “Practice of Powerful Pauses.”

Centering:

I invite you to move into a meditation position. Sit comfortably in your chair or on the floor. Put your hands on your lap or on your knees. Sit up nice and tall. Focus your eyes in front of you. Find your breath moving in your body by taking in one breath through your nose and then slowly breathing it out through your mouth.

Mindful Moment Instructions:

Here are two great options from [Magination Press](#) to help your family learn about “powerful pauses:”



Option #1: Counting the Breath

“Like computers, at times our “operating systems” can benefit from a reboot. How many breaths does it take to reset your nervous system? Begin with five breaths in and out.

Inhale for one count; exhale for one count. (For very young children, start with “breathe in, breathe out” until they grasp the meaning of inhale and exhale.)

Inhale for two counts; exhale for two counts.

Inhale for three counts; exhale for three counts.

Inhale for four counts; exhale for four counts.

Inhale for five counts; exhale for five counts.”

Option #2: Take 5

“A YogaKids classic, this exercise has your child lift one finger with each full breath, until all five fingers are extended. Then, if desired, count backward while lowering one finger at a time with each breath.

Kinesthetic learners can use their hands for a more tactile version of Take 5. Have your child trace one hand with the opposite index finger. Ask him to begin at the base of the thumb, inhaling as he traces up the thumb, then exhaling down the opposite side of the thumb. Continue breathing up and down each finger. When he finishes on the pinkie finger, he will have taken the “magic five” full breaths.

Option #3: Counting Objects

Another kinesthetic variation is to count objects. Marbles, balls, pebbles, candy—there’s no limit! Pick up one on the inhale; place it down in a new pile on the exhale.”

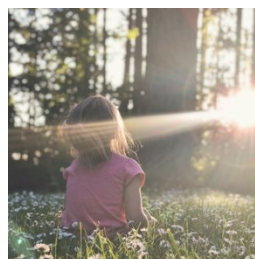
Turn It Into A Symbol: Decide on an object to represent your Powerful Pauses. Some ideas to consider:

- Trace your child’s hand on a sheet of paper with a marker and add that paper to your chalice home (“Take 5”)
- Put your marbles in a bowl and add that.
- Something that represents time, like a watch.
- Place the number “5” to symbolize 5 breaths, maybe in the form of a number “5” birthday candle.

Name what it symbolizes to help you listen deeply to others. Add it to your Chalice Home to remind you to take Powerful Pauses.

Blessing: Use these words to honor the new learnings and powerful pauses:

“We are held by the silent pause and grateful for the wisdom we receive when we find moments of listening deeply.”

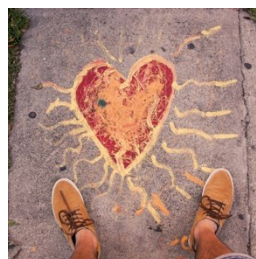


Setting an Intention

As you bring your family worship to a close, pause for a moment to think ahead about the coming weeks and make a *deep listening-related* intention/promise for how you want to act, what you want to remember or how you want to treat others.

Here's the intention/promise statement, for everyone to say. Each person states their intention, one at a time.

“In the coming weeks, I will try to practice powerful pauses by”



Cover Photo: The Inside Scoop

This packet's cover photo is of Katie Covey's personal Chalice Home. Katie is one of the authors of Chalice Home.

The playful doors are an imaginary congregational threshold which she hopes will open to a bright future for all the UU families creating a Chalice Home.

Her orchid was a birthday gift 7 years ago from Rev. Emily Conger and Rev. Jaelyn Pema Scott, back in the "old days" of SpiritJam and Day Camp at Boulder Valley UU Fellowship, Lafayette, CO. It has bloomed twice a year ever since.

The photos are of her son, Brett, who is an ER nurse and of her brother, Ian, who was evacuated from Nigeria and is home safe.

The bike light and patch kit represent the cycle tours she and her husband love to ride together, since they met online on Cycling Singles.com.

The chalice was made for Katie by her father, Del Tweedie, from a Juniper branch.

The wooden Giving Bowl is another of Del's creations on the lathe.

The glass container is a recycled spice bottle! The striped rock bowl is an olive oil dish from Barcelona which their daughter brought home for them.

The school bell was given to her father for his service on the Tredyffrin/Easttown School Board in Devon, PA.



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