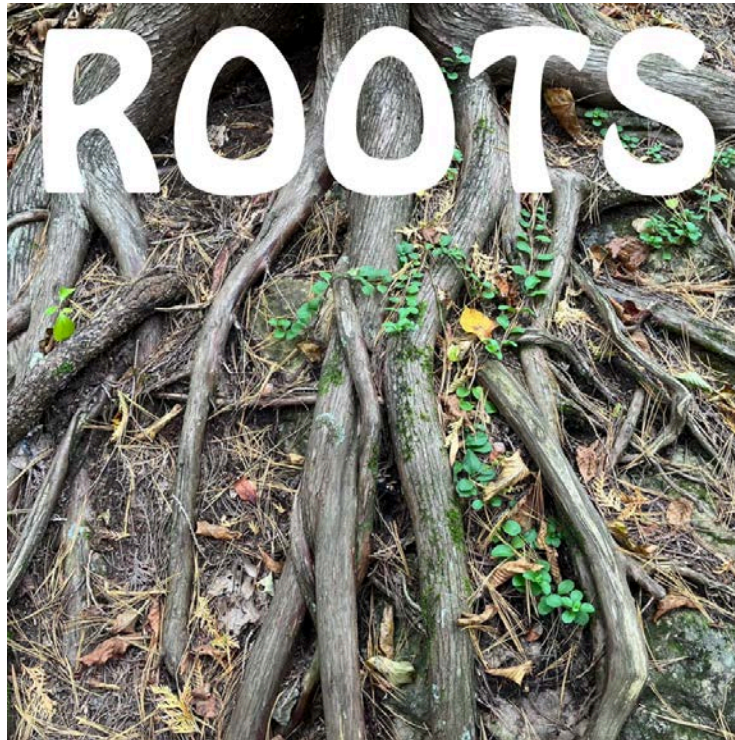


# Earth Teacher



FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
SOCIETY OF BURLINGTON



## JOURNALING PROMPTS

- **Relationship:** What is my current relationship with this Earth Teacher? What do I like about my current relationship? What do I want to change about it?
- **Widom:** What wisdom/caution/lessons does this Earth Teacher have to share with me? What do I need to do to be receptive?
- **Deep Time:** What relationship might this Earth Teacher have had with an ancestor of mine? What relationship might this Earth Teacher have with a descendant of mine?

# QUOTES

A tree without roots is just a piece of wood - Marco Pierre White



The greatest oak was once just a little nut who held their ground - unknown



Everything we attempt, everything we do, is either growing up as its roots go deeper, or it's decomposing, leaving its lessons in the soil for the next attempt. ~ adrienne maree brown



A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots. ~ Marcus Garvey



And don't think the garden loses its ecstasy in winter. It's quiet, but the roots down there are riotous... - Rumi

# POETRY

**God of Roots** by Ellen Bass

Meanwhile, the heat and light  
of a flaming star rush  
93 million miles to reach us,  
baby girls are born  
with their four hundred thousand

egg cells already formed, otters  
keep grooming their guard hair, whirling  
the water, working air into the deep  
underfur, beluga whales swim  
along the Earth's magnetic field,  
chicks pip a circle of holes counterclockwise  
around the blunt end of their eggs,  
pressing with their feet and  
heaving with their shoulders,  
larvae eat their way through the soft  
mesophyll of oak leaves, leaving a trail  
of dark feces in their wake, tart juice  
swells within the rinds of lemons,  
and under the Earth the god of roots  
goes on painting the lustrous fringe  
with a brush so delicate—  
only one sable hair—as though  
there were all the time in the world.



**These Days** by Charles Olson

Whatever you have to say, leave  
The roots on, let them  
Dangle  
And the dirt  
Just to make clear  
Where they come from.



**Roots** by Lucille Clifton

call it our craziness even,  
call it anything.  
it is the life thing in us  
that will not let us die.  
even in death's hand  
we fold the fingers up  
and call them greens  
and grow on them,  
we hum them and make music.  
call it our wildness then,  
we are lost from the field  
of flowers, we become  
a field of flowers.  
call it our craziness  
our wildness

call it our roots,  
it is the light in us  
it is the light of us  
it is the light, call it  
whatever you have to,  
call it anything.



**Seven of Pentacles** by Marge Piercy (excerpt)

Connections are made slowly, sometimes they grow underground.  
You cannot tell always by looking what is happening.  
More than half the tree is spread out in the soil under your feet.  
Penetrate quietly as the earthworm that blows no trumpet.  
Fight persistently as the creeper that brings down the tree.  
Spread like the squash plant that overruns the garden.  
Gnaw in the dark and use the sun to make sugar.

# MUSIC

["I Put My Roots Down"](#) by Beautiful Chorus

["No Roots"](#) by Alice Merton

["Roots"](#) by Etana

["My Roots Go Down"](#) by Sarah Pirtle, a song great for children and adults alike!

["Solid as a Rock,"](#) sung here by Movement Music (Matt Meyer & friends). My recommendation is to shift language to be more inclusive, substituting the word "feeling" for the word "standing."

["Rooted"](#) by Aisha Badru

["Put Your Roots Down"](#) (composer unknown; public domain)

# MEDITATION

When his health began to falter, Swami Ram Tirth retired to some remote ashrams along the Ganges. Dedicating his remaining energies to the study of the Vedas, he would sit cross-legged in contemplation for days on end, unconcerned about his body. When Puranji, one of this disciples, noted the absence of his characteristic laughter and vitality, he replied:

*"Puranji, the world is concerned only with my blossoms -- they taste me when I appear before them in my flowers. But they do not know how much I have to labor underground in the dark recesses, in my roots, to gather food for the flowers and the fruits. I am now in my roots. Silence is greater work than the fireworks of preaching and giving off thoughts to the world."*

-- Graceful Exits: How Great Beings Die, #29, p 57-9, Sushila Blackman





If you truly get in touch with a piece of carrot, you get in touch with the soil, the rain, the sunshine. You get in touch with Mother Earth and eating in such a way, you feel in touch with true life, your roots, and that is meditation. If we chew every morsel of our food in that way we become grateful and when you are grateful, you are happy. ~ Thich Nhat Hanh



## IMAGES FOR CONTEMPLATION











