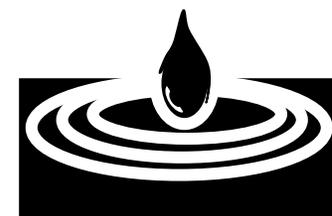


I don't think the "Unity" in the word "Unitarian" speaks to many people; rather, it is seen more as a historical remnant, a trace of our past. When people call themselves atheist, agnostic, or humanist, the concept of one God is not primary in the way they talk about their religious foundations—nor would it speak to most Buddhists. Let's not forget the pagans and Hindus among us, too, who would rather talk about a diversity of manifestations of the spirit than just one! I call myself a panentheist. For me, everything is holy, and talking about Oneness is a reminder that everything is interconnected and interrelated. Contemplating subatomic particles that work the same way in all matter brings me to awe. Manifestations of Oneness range from the micro to the macro. Just trying to talk about it boggles my mind—and it brings me back to Awe, which to me is a primary religious response. ~ *FUCSJ Congregant*

The interconnected web of all existence: that we really are all made of the same stuff, bear and tree, cactus and butterfly, human and stone ... Yes, we have different elements, and I can't know whether or where we share this particular thing we humans call "consciousness," but we are all stardust, after all, and we share this planet. Our destinies are bound up in each other. Historically, the unity in Unitarian referred to "One God"—one all-encompassing Ultimate source and foundation. I think that now it refers to our common commitment to a way of being that honors all, that grows compassion, and that seeks justice. ~ *FUCSJ Congregant*

Does oneness imply some sort of sameness? How different can we be and still be One? Are we one with some people some of the time, and with other people at other times? My sense of oneness with the whole universe comes from an awareness that I cannot really separate myself from anyone or anything else. We truly are interdependent, and the boundaries between myself and the universe are fuzzy. I also see each sentient being as a part of the universe, and in some sense each is an expression of the universe waking up to itself, becoming aware of itself, and falling in love with itself. Our sense of human separation from the universe is fundamentally illusory. We are the universe. I am the universe. ~ *FUCSJ Congregant*



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
OF SAN JOSE

Oneness/The Unity in Unitarian

When I think of oneness I feel a connection, like our holding hands at the end of a service. That in the perfection of life, one's action is a ripple through a community. That when I experience sadness or loneliness, others have, too. That when I know joy at the birth of a child, others have known it too. That all of us are connected. To me, that connection is the divine. Evil is the isolation of depression, of fear, and anger that separates us from what we need: each other.

~ *FUCSJ Congregant*

I think this theme reflects not only our oneness among others, but the oneness we can find within ourselves. I believe part of feeling whole is understanding how your spiritual, physical, and mental being work together as one. Keeping each part in balance and in good health leads to the health over your overall being. ~ *FUCSJ Congregant*

There is one God known by many names, described in many ways, understood in many different ways. ~ *FUCSJ Congregant*

Preliminaries *Get volunteer to light the chalice.*

Centering *See Leader Notes.*

**Opening /
Chalice
Lighting**
~ Bruce
Southworth For the gift of this day and for our community of
spiritual nurture and compassion, we give thanks. We
light this chalice as a symbol of our faith. May our many
sparks meet and merge in communion of heart and soul.

Check-in *How goes thy spirit? What do you need to leave behind
in order to be fully present here and now?*

Readings *Going round the circle read the readings on the front
and back cover*

**Sitting in
Silence**

**Sharing/Deep
Listening** *Speak the thoughts and feelings that arose as you did
the preparation for this session. Sharing should be
about five minute per person.
Deeply listening, without response or thought of
response at this time, is the gift we give and receive as
we share our thoughts.*

Discussion *This is a time to supportively respond to something another
person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have
occurred as others shared.*

Singing
#318, *Singing the
Living Tradition*

We would be one as now we join in singing
Our hymn of love, to pledge ourselves anew
To that high cause of greater understanding
Of who we are, and what in us is true.
We would be one in living for each other
To show to all a new community.

We would be one in building for tomorrow
A nobler world than we have known today.
We would be one in searching for that meaning
Which binds our hearts and points us on our way.
As one, we pledge ourselves to greater service,
With love and justice, strive to make us free.

**Closing/
Extinguishing
Chalice**
~ Ean Huntington
Behr

*Join hands or link arms as you read the closing words
together.*
You are in the story of the world.
You are the world coming to know itself.
May you trust that all you will ever say or do
Belongs in the story of the world.