



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF
SAN JOSE

Our Place in Nature

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

- John Muir, In Nature

"There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed. "

- Mohandas K. Gandhi

Preliminaries Select chalice lighter and opening reader. Discuss whether to do a one-time environmental project as a group. If the group wishes to, choose a project from the list provided or another source.

Chalice Lighting
- Albert Einstein (adapted)
A human being is part of a whole, called by us the "Universe," a part limited in time and space. Humans experience themselves, their thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest -- a kind of optical delusion of their consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

Check-in Take 1 or 2 minutes to share briefly the high point or low point of your life since the time we last met.

Reading
- Edna St. Vincent Millay, "God's World"
O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
 They winds, thy wide grey skies!
 Thy mists, that roll and rise!
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag
And all but cry with colour! That gaunt crag
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!
World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,
 But never knew I this:
 Here such a passion is
As stretcheth me apart, -- Lord, I do fear
Thou'st made the word too beautiful this year;
My soul is all but out of me, -- let fall
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

Sitting in Silence

Deep Listening

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.

Reading
- Henry David Thoreau, Walden
The indescribable innocence and beneficence of Nature, -- of sun and wind and rain, of summer and winter, -- such health, such cheer, they afford forever! and such sympathy have they ever with our race, that all Nature would be affected, and the sun's brightness fade, and the winds would sigh humanely, and the clouds rain tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in midsummer, if any man should ever for a just cause grieve. Shall I not have intelligence with the earth? Am I not partly leaves and vegetable mould myself?

Singing
"Wake Now My Senses," Hymnal #298
Wake now, my senses, and hear the earth call;
feel the deep power of being in all;
keep with the web of creation your vow,
giving, receiving as love shows us how.

Wake now, my vision, of ministry clear;
brighten my pathway with radiance here;
mingle my calling with all who will share;
work toward a planet transformed by our care.

Closing/ Extinguishing the Chalice
Stand and link hands or arms as we read the closing words together.

- attributed to Chief Noah Sealthe,, Hymnal #550
This we know. The earth does not belong to us;
 we belong to the earth.
This we know. All things are connected,
 like the blood which unites one family.
All things are connected.

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons and daughters of the earth.
We did not weave the web of life; we are merely a strand in it.
Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.