

Simple Pleasures

by David O. Rankin, *Dancing in the Empty Spaces*

I prefer the modest joys, the understated incarnations, the distilled moments of simple pleasure that are sneaky blessings to everyone:

The capacity to play and to be renewed by a restful sleep, the whole range of tastes from sweet to bitter and the mysteries in between, the delicate slender fingers of an infant child, the color of sky and sea and the vast complex of hues that melt through the eyes, the sheer wonder of sound shaking the inner soul with tones of depths and heights, the tender remembrance of times that were good and whole, the rustic places that lunged out and lodged in the heart, the persons who shared their secret loves in moments beyond all measuring, the coming of day and the sureness of the return of night, the loyalty of a pet when humans forget to dare, the aloneness of solitude that stirs the mind in new directions, the muted meanings that each of us finds in the cycles of life and that hold fast through the fearful rhythms, and all of the subtle and lumbering awarenesses that pulse in us —

For which our hearts sing their joyful
“Amen!”



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH
OF SAN JOSE

Finding Summer Adventure at Home

Adventure is not outside man; it is within.
~ *George Eliot*

A [person] practices the art of adventure when he breaks the chain of routine and renews his life through reading new books, traveling to new places, making new friends, taking up new hobbies and adopting new viewpoints. ~ *Wilfred Peterson*

At this time of year the summer air can be oppressive, sapping our energy and weighing us down. Perhaps it's trying to tell us something.

In this labor-driven, multi-tasking society, it sounds like heresy to suggest that we pull back a little bit. But in these days a lot of sound and fury on our parts may well signify nothing. Perhaps we truly can accomplish more by doing less — by heeding the message in the [summer] wind. ~ *Brian Nelson*

Preliminaries *Announce upcoming church events; get a volunteer to light the chalice and one to do opening reading.*

Centering

Opening / Chalice Lighting
~ *Bets Wienecke, 1997 UUMA Worship Materials*
May this flame,
symbol of transformation since time began,
fire our curiosity,
strengthen our wills,
and sustain our courage
as we seek what is good within and around us.

Check-in *Take a minute or two to share briefly the high and low points in your life since we last met.*

Reading *See back of this order of worship.*

Sitting in Silence

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

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
~ *Hymnal #401*
Today we're singing a song familiar to anyone who has ever attended summer camp. Sing as many verses as your group agrees on. Harmonize!

Kum ba yah, my Lord, kum ba yah!
Kum ba yah, my Lord, kum ba yah!
Kum ba yah, my Lord, kum ba yah.
O Lord, kum ba yah

Someone's singing ...

Someone's laughing ...

Someone's weeping ...

Someone's praying ...

Repeat first verse.

Extinguishing the Chalice *Join hands or link arms and sing together:*

~ *Natalie Sleeth*
Go now in peace,
Go now in peace,
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere
Everywhere
You may go.