

# Connecting

*Connecting to deepened wisdom and deepened relationship*

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## Justice

### Chalice Lighting

Words of Cornel West: “We have a commitment to justice, since justice is what love looks like in public, just like tenderness is what love feels like in private.” (2015 Ware Lecture at UUA General Assembly)

### Check In

How is it with you today? How has the last month been? What’s one instance in which an injustice either harmed or benefited you?

### Justice in the Proposed U.U.A. Article II Bylaws

#### Section C-2.2 Values and Covenant

As Unitarian Universalists, we covenant, congregation-to-congregation and through our association, to support and assist one another in our ministries. We draw from our heritages of freedom, reason, hope, and courage, building on the foundation of love. Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love. Inseparable from one another, these values are: . . .

**Justice.** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive. We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Five other values are also named, with 2-3 sentences on each: interdependence, pluralism, transformation, generosity, and equity.

## OPENING QUESTIONS

*Which one or two of these questions most grabs you?*

1. The proposed Article II bylaws speak of justice as comprised of “diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive,” where “racism and all forms of systemic oppression” are dismantled, and decisions are made through “inclusive democratic processes.” Does this conception of justice leave out anything?
2. “Treat like cases alike,” is a deep-rooted and long-standing principle of justice. It gives emphasis to following precedent. But might the precedent be unjust? How would we know?
3. Are there universal, transcultural standards of justice that may be applied to all societies and times?
4. “Give to each what is due to each,” is another ancient principle of justice. Is this helpful at all?
5. The virtues tradition, going back to Aristotle in the West and Confucius in the East, emphasizes justice as an individual virtue (rather than a virtue of social institutions). What is justice as an individual virtue?
6. What does social justice mean to you?
7. Some thinkers draw a distinction between human rights (concerned with restraints on the exercise of power) and social justice (concerned with distributions of wealth and resources). Does this distinction hold up? If so, which one is more important?
8. If we have compassion, do we need justice? What does justice provide that compassion, if universally followed, would not?
9. What is the role of a faith institution in social justice? What is the role of UCDSM?
10. In one well-known study of animal perception of fairness, a capuchin monkey was happy with cucumber as long as the other monkey (visible in the adjoining enclosure) also got cucumber. If the other monkey got a grape, this made cucumber unacceptable. Why is this? Is this irrational? Is justice irrational?
11. Has the world gotten any more just in the last, say, 2,000 years? Martin Luther King (paraphrasing Unitarian minister Theodore Parker) said “the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” Does it?
12. “Justice is what love looks like in public” (Cornell West). What does this mean to you? What difference does (or would) it make in your life to live by these words?
13. What’s your question? Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what the theme is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it.

## READINGS

Read these pieces with a pencil in hand. Underline parts that seem worth remembering. Be ready to share in your group meeting what you underlined – and what those selected words mean to you.

### **Justice as a Virtue of Individuals** Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

The notion of justice as a virtue began in reference to a trait of individuals, and to some extent remains so, even if today we often conceive the justice of individuals as having some (grounding) reference to social justice.

Individual justice first and most readily regards moral issues having to do with distributions of goods or property. It is, we say, unjust for someone to steal from people or not to give them what he owes them, and it is also unjust if someone called upon to distribute something good (or bad or both) among members of a group uses an arbitrary or unjustified basis for making the distribution. Discussion of justice as an individual virtue often centers on questions, therefore, about property and other distributable goods, though the broader sense broached by Plato never entirely disappears. Still there is disagreement over whether the broader distributive questions associated with political morality have subordinated or obscured the earlier Greek concerns with justice as a virtue of individual character.

### **To Answer the Call of Justice: *Metanoia*** James Luther Adams

The characteristic accent of the Gospels, *metanoia* [“change of heart, mind, soul”] is lacking in liberal religion. We are an uncommitted and therefore a self-frustrating people. A sense of commitment requires a change of priorities. But as Unitarians we tend to assume we’re liberated already. Maybe this is a hangover from the Enlightenment, imagining that we are emancipated because we don’t accept the inerrant authority of the Bible, or something like that.

Let me put it autobiographically and say that in Nazi Germany I soon came to the question, “What is it in my preaching and my political action that would stop this?” Maybe it was an extreme judgment of myself, but I said, “If you have to describe me, you’d say I’m not really involved, for example, in combating anti-Semitism as it is in the United States.” It is a liberal *attitude* to say that we keep ourselves informed and read the best papers on these matters, and perhaps join a voluntary association now and then. But to be involved with other people so that it costs and so that one exposes the evils of society – in Boston we’re right across the tracks from poverty – requires something like conversion, something more than an attitude. It requires a sense that there’s something wrong and I must be different from the way I have been.

The function of a vital church would be *metanoia* as a continuing process. There should be increasing awareness, a raising of consciousness with regard to the evils around us. There should be moments of commitment, for example, in prayer as a prophetic form of spirituality.

## What is the Beloved Community? Freeman Wicklund<sup>2</sup>

How can we live in a way that allows all life to thrive? Although the idea behind the Beloved Community is timeless, the phrase was first used by philosopher-theologian Josiah Royce (1855-1916) who founded the Fellowship of Reconciliation. It was then popularized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) and the civil rights movement.

Here are four characteristics of the Beloved Community. In the Beloved Community:

1. conflict still exists, but it is resolved peacefully, nonviolently, and without hostility, ill will, or resentment.
2. we recognize the interdependent nature of all life, so we appreciate, recognize, and value the inherent worth of all people, animals, and ecosystems.
3. kindness, compassion, and love for all life motivates our actions. We work cooperatively to peacefully end hunger, prejudice, poverty, homelessness, climate change, environmental destruction, factory farming, and violence and injustice of all kinds.
4. the means we use to create change are just as kind and compassionate as the ends we seek. Our commitment to unconditional and all-inclusive kindness and goodwill allows the Beloved Community to become what Dr. King called "an engine of reconciliation."

In Dr. King's "Sermon on Gandhi," he explained both the strategic and ethical reasons why the Beloved Community must be the end goal of all efforts to create positive change:

"The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, so that when the battle's over, a new relationship comes into being between the oppressed and the oppressor.... The way of acquiescence leads to moral and spiritual suicide. The way of violence leads to bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers. But the way of non-violence leads to redemption and the creation of the beloved community."

For Dr. King, the Beloved Community is a practical, realistic vision that will naturally arise when "a critical mass of people are committed to and trained in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence." That's why the Southern Christian Leadership Conference during the height of the U.S. civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s conducted regular trainings in nonviolence and required all volunteers who planned to demonstrate to pledge "to resist without bitterness; to be cursed and not reply; to be beaten and not hit back." The more who did this, the more the Beloved Community manifested in the world.

All of us can do the inner work necessary to become members of the Beloved Community. This inner work refines our minds and hearts to let go of greed, prejudice, and blame, and teaches us how to unconditionally love, forgive, and offer compassion and kindness to ourselves and others. As we develop patience with ourselves and radically include all aspects of ourselves, even those parts we dislike, we become more able to love, forgive, radically include, offer compassion and kindness, have patience with, and be reconciled with others. Such change takes persistence, determination, and time, but it is the way out of our suffering, and the way to a more just, peaceful, and happy world.

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.boundlessloveproject.org/beloved-community>, adapted, abridged.

## Justice is Love, Embodied

Omid Safi<sup>3</sup>

Two streams nurture my soul. In one stream is Rumi, Hafez, medieval Sufism: the extraordinary tradition of Divine love that erupts onto humanity. In the other have been movements of social justice committed to redemption and liberation. That bookshelf features Malcolm X, Fanon, Edward Said, more recent works of feminism, Cornel West, and critiques of empire.

Those who connect love and justice touch my soul. Martin Luther King spoke beautifully about agape and redemptive suffering – and was moved to action in Montgomery and Albany, Selma and Riverside. Desmond Tutu was a moral compass for the anti-apartheid struggle – and embodied the power of forgiveness. Abraham Joshua Heschel beautifully and powerfully spoke of God’s love for the stranger and the marginalized – and said that as long as there is war, as long as African Americans are treated as they are, the synagogue and church are forbidden to us. Pope Francis washes the feet of inmates – and points out the foul stench of capitalism.

If we seek a life of the spirit, how do we confront social injustice, poverty, racism, sexism, living under occupation, and violence by both states and non-state entities? Where do we stand with respect to those who find themselves weak and vulnerable? Desmond Tutu said, “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

We have to love humanity not merely in the spirit, but also their bodies. We have to love every mother who holds a child tenderly, every father who lavishes love, every friend, every neighbor, every refugee, every stranger. This love shows up in our touch, through our skin. This love oozes out through our smiles, through the love-glances. It is the scent of my newborn baby and my momma’s cooking that convey this love.

Don’t ask me about my mystical practice if the citizens of Flint have brown, goopy water. Don’t go searching for a mantra if some of us are living under occupation or have bombs falling on them. Don’t talk to me about love if a fifth of our human population goes to bed hungry at night. We cannot fill each other’s hearts with love if our bellies are empty. If the dignity of human beings matters, then structures and institutions matter.

On April 15, 1960, student leaders of the sit-in movement met in Raleigh, North Carolina and articulated the purpose for SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee: “A social order of justice permeated by love.” We cannot speak of love without linking it to justice, nor of justice unless it is permeated by love. Martin King recognized the necessity of this linkage: “Love without power is anemic and sentimental. Power without love is reckless and abusive.”

“God commands you to love and justice,” says the Qur’an. “Justice is what love looks like in public,” says Cornell West. Faithful women and men have always insisted on bringing love into public spaces – on linking together love and justice.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://onbeing.org/blog/justice-is-love-embodied/>, adapted, abridged.

## Why We Need Religious Grounding for Our Justice Positions

Meredith Garmon

The Supreme Court recognized in *Walz v. Tax Commission* (1970) the place for the religious voice in public discourse:

“Adherents of particular faiths and individual churches frequently take strong positions on public issues including vigorous advocacy of legal or constitutional positions. Of course, churches as much as secular bodies and private citizens have that right.”

Religious liberals belong in the public sphere making a strong case for justice -- and grounding it in our religious principles. As Unitarian Universalists we are uniquely positioned to make arguments grounded in our theology.

Unitarian Universalists are committed to the values expressed in our principles, sources, and our congregational covenants. We not only believe that justice requires us to be concerned primarily for those who have least, but we believe so *as people of faith*.

One might argue: “Voter ID laws are an attempt to squelch the voting of certain populations, and that’s a violation of democratic process.” To be more clearly grounded in our faith, we could instead say: “As a Unitarian Universalist, ‘the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large’ is one of our principles, and Voter ID laws that attempt to squelch the voting of certain populations violate democratic process.”

There’s a secular argument that: “The way we’ve been treating immigrants ignores their inherent worth and dignity.” This becomes a religious grounded argument if we instead say: “As a Unitarian Universalist, the inherent worth and dignity of every person is a central principle – so I call for treatment of immigrants that recognizes their inherent worth and dignity.”

One might argue: “Our carbon emissions have reached the point that climate change threatens the interdependent web of life.” Or we could, instead, say: “Respect for the interdependent web of existence is a tenant of my Unitarian Universalist faith. It would be unfaithful of me to disrespect the interdependent web of existence by not doing all I can to encourage reduction of carbon emissions.”

If we give only secular reasons, we aren’t adding a distinctive voice to the public discourse. There are always plenty of folks making the secular arguments.

Moreover, as Paul Razor points out, “given the public dominance of conservative religious voices today, if religious liberals don’t speak up, no one else will know that there is another religious perspective.” Particularly on issues of reproductive justice, the public discourse draws heavily from religious groundings – and almost all of it is opposed to reproductive freedom. We need to be out there showing it isn’t just the irreligious who advocate for reproductive justice. We have deep religiously grounded reasons for standing up for access to birth control, education, and access to abortion.

Our positions gain a certain credibility and command greater respect when we make clear the depth of the spiritual convictions in which our positions are rooted.

We Unitarian Universalists have a distinctive voice. And our world so desperately needs to hear it.

## What is Social Justice? Five Principles

Kent State University, Master of Public Administration program

In the mid-1800s, the Italian Jesuit Luigi Tapparelli d'Azeglio (1793-1862) first introduced the term "Social Justice," as an economic concept for addressing the extreme levels of inequality and economic distress he saw caused by the social class system in Europe. Today, the concept of social justice centers on human rights and improving the lives of groups historically marginalized based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion and disability.

**Access to resources.** Unfortunately, in many areas of society, communities have had different levels of access based on factors such as socioeconomic status, education, employment and environment. Education, for example, is associated with better opportunities for employment, higher-paying jobs and economic advancement. Lack of access to quality, equitable education feeds the cycle of unemployment, low-wage occupations and poverty, limiting access for future generations.

In broad public policy terms, that could mean offering free public education for everyone, thereby eliminating the financial barriers created by economic disparities in the educational system. We could implement more equitable funding distribution for essential resources, improving the quality of education for students in disadvantaged communities.

**Equity.** It's easy to confuse the terms 'equity' and 'equality,' but those things which are equitable are not always equal. The effort and resources required for two different people to achieve a common goal can vary widely. For example, in order to complete a college degree, some students may need more support and educational resources than their peers do. To achieve social justice and ensure equal opportunities for success, it is important to provide equitable resources that focus on the specific needs of communities and the individuals within them.

Advocating for justice could mean promoting policies that address systemic barriers. Implementing policies for inclusive education and adding more educators for students, based on their needs, would be important first steps.

**Diversity.** Policies that address everyone's needs emerge when differences among individuals and among groups are recognized. Policy-makers must recognize and accept all factors that create barriers, then work on ways to overcome them. By understanding diversity and embracing cultural differences, we expand opportunities and access. We can improve access to healthcare by increasing diversity among administrators and requiring written resources in multiple languages. We can reduce employment discrimination by implementing policies that bar it when it's based on race, gender, gender identity, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, age, physical ability and a host of other human traits.

**Participation.** Social justice requires that individuals have the opportunity and platform to participate in making the policies that affect their well-being. Policies are often created by a select group of people in powerful government positions. Preventing this requires carefully considering who will be part of the decision-making process and actively seeking inclusion of advocates for groups not adequately represented.

**Human Rights.** Human rights and social justice are inevitably intertwined, and it's impossible to have one without the other. In this country, these rights are manifest in laws that grant freedom of speech, voting rights, criminal justice protections, and other basic rights.

## Five Channels for Justice Work

UUA Witness Ministries<sup>4</sup>

**Service** – directly helping those in need.

**Education** – because learning more about and finding ways to teach others about climate change and police procedure and the state of reproductive rights and the prison industrial complex and the military industrial complex and immigration and LGBT issues and so on is crucial for change.

**Advocacy** – marches, demonstrations, letter-writing, and lobbying for policy change.

**Organization** – Collaborating and partnering with other groups to work together on projects we agree on. We can do a little bit by ourselves. We can do a lot more as part of a coalition.

**Witness** – that is, publicity. Media coverage and advertising of our action is a part of the justice action itself, a part of making that action effective.

## Four Justices

Jeff Tomlinson

**Distributive (or Economic) Justice**, is about fairness in what people receive, from goods to attention. Its roots are in social order, and it is at the roots of socialism, where equality is a fundamental principle. If people do not think that they are getting their fair share of something, they will seek first to gain what they believe they deserve. They may well also seek other forms of justice.

**Procedural Justice**. The principle of fairness is also found in the idea of “fair play” (as opposed to the “fair share” of distributive justice). If people believe that a fair process was used in deciding what it to be distributed, then they may well accept an imbalance in what they receive in comparison to others. If they see both procedural and distributive injustice, they will likely seek restorative and/or retributive justice.

**Restorative Justice**. The first thing that the betrayed person may seek from the betrayer is some form of restitution, putting things back as they should be. The simplest form of restitution is a straightforward apology. Restoration means putting things back as they were, so it may include some act of contrition to demonstrate one is truly sorry. This may include action and even extra payment to the offended party. Restorative justice is also known as corrective justice.

**Retributive Justice** works on the principle of punishment, although what constitutes fair and proportional punishment is widely debated. While the intent may be to dissuade the perpetrator or others from future wrong-doing, the re-offending rate of many criminals indicates the limited success of this approach. Punishment in practice is more about the satisfaction of victims and those who care about them. This strays into the realm of revenge, which can be many times more severe than reparation as the hurt party seeks to make the other person suffer in return. In such cases 'justice' is typically defined emotionally rather than with intent for fairness or prevention.

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<sup>4</sup> *Inspired Faith, Effective Action*, <https://www.uua.org/files/documents/washingtonoffice/ifea.pdf>



## John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*

A 500-word summary of the 607-page 1971 masterwork

**Method.** Suppose you could decide the fundamental principles of justice for a society into which you will enter and live out your life. In this “Original Position” from which you decide the society’s principles, you have a general knowledge of the facts of life and society, and you have a basic capacity for moral reasoning. You do not, however, know what race, socio-economic class, biological sex, gender identity, sexual or affectional orientation, condition of disability, family connections, height, weight, IQ, talents, gifts, interests, personality characteristics, goals, or life projects you will have or develop in the society. Not knowing what type of person you will be screens out bias toward principles that favor some types of person over others. From behind this “Veil of Ignorance,” what principles would you choose?

**Result.** Not knowing what position you’ll land in, you’ll want the society to afford a fair chance to develop any talents and pursue any goals a person might have. Hence, you would not choose principles that allowed only people with specific talents to build lives they found worthwhile. Nor would you choose principles that favored any race, sex, etc. over any other, or that permitted discrimination. You would want your society to be bound by principles that provided basic protections for everyone.

“The roll of the dice”: It’s a matter of luck whether the talent and the economic class in which you land are high, middle, or low. As a rational chooser, you would be risk-averse in the Original Position and would not be a “high roller.” You would not choose principles that led to a highly unequal society, gambling that you land in one of the more privileged positions.

You would not choose utilitarianism as a public conception of justice. Maximizing the greatest good for the greatest number could permit a minority of people to be significantly disadvantaged as long as their disadvantage maximized the total good overall. You would not risk landing in such a disadvantaged group.

You would choose principles that would give you the best chance of living your dream to the best of your ability regardless of what that dream or that ability might be. You would want the social primary goods (“rights and liberties, income and wealth, and the bases of self-respect” – that is, the social resources beneficial to every life project) to be distributed equitably.

Thus, you would choose two fundamental principles of justice. First, liberty: each person has the right to the most extensive liberty compatible with the same liberty for all. Second, equality: inequalities in the distribution of the social primary goods are permissible only if (a) the inequality results from systems and processes that benefit the least advantaged members of society, and (b) all positions, and the share of social primary goods that goes with them, are open to all.

*Youtube has a number of videos explaining Rawls’ theory. Here’s a good one, not too long, for starters:*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUNDiVtFEho>

## JUSTICE QUOTATIONS

*Circle the ones that most speak to you.*

“The first duty of society is justice.” -- Alexander Hamilton

“Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit.”  
– Federalist Papers

“Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust.” — John Rawls

“In the absence of justice, what is sovereignty but organized robbery?” -- Saint Augustine

"But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." -- Amos 5:24

“Justice is what love looks like in public.” -- Cornel West

“No one needs justice until /They themselves are imprisoned. /Justice is not heresy, /It's the healing of the soul.” -- Archie Greenridge

“Although the courts think, /they decide the fate of the individual /it is inside the walls of prison /that really seals their fate.” -- David Harris

“Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything. If you're a man, you take it.”  
– Malcolm X

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”  
– Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Punishment is justice for the unjust.” -- Saint Augustine

“I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice.”  
– Theodore Parker

“It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.”  
– James A. Baldwin

“Fairness is what justice really is.” -- Potter Stewart

“Justice is not to be taken by storm. She is to be wooed by slow advances.” -- Benjamin Cardozo

“If you want peace work for justice.” -- Pope Paul VI

“True peace is not merely the absence of war, it is the presence of justice.” -- Jane Addams

“What humans want is not just happiness. They want justice; they want meaning.” -- Martin Seligman

“Death is the fairest thing in the world. No one's ever gotten out of it. The earth takes everyone - the kind, the cruel, the sinners. Aside from that, there's no fairness on earth.” — Svetlana Alexievich

“The cry of the poor is not always just, but if you don't listen to it, you will never know what justice is.”  
— Howard Zinn

“Justice means minding one's own business and not meddling with other men's concerns.” -- Plato

“Justice is a certain rectitude of mind whereby a man does what he ought to do in the circumstances confronting him.” -- Thomas Aquinas

“Pity for the guilty is treason to the innocent.”  
— Terry Goodkind

“In keeping silent about evil, in burying it so deep within us that no sign of it appears on the surface, we are implanting it, and it will rise up a thousand-fold in the future. When we neither punish nor reproach evildoers, we are not simply protecting their trivial old age, we are thereby ripping the foundations of justice from beneath new generations.”  
— Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

“To be wealthy and honored in an unjust society is a disgrace.” — Confucius

“We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"There is no crueller tyranny than that which is perpetuated under the shield of law and in the name of justice."  
-- Montesquieu

"Charity begins at home, and justice begins next door."  
-- Charles Dickens

“Justice? -- You get justice in the next world. In this one you have the law.” — William Gaddis,

“Never pray for justice, because you might get some.”  
— Margaret Atwood

“Human capacity for justice makes democracy possible. Human capacity for injustice makes democracy necessary.”  
– Reinhold Niebuhr

“Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are.” — Benjamin Franklin

“Nobody gets justice. People only get good luck or bad luck.” -- Orson Welles

“Justice is my being allowed to do whatever I like. Injustice is whatever prevents my doing so.” -- Samuel Johnson

“But men often mistake killing and revenge for justice. They seldom have the stomach for justice.” — Robert Jordan

Justice is about making them pay for his pain or her pain or their pain. Revenge is making them pay for yours.”  
— Erica O'Rourke

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

**DO ONE JUSTICE MAKING ACTIVITY THIS MONTH.** You choose what to do. It can be a continuation of activity with which you are already involved, or a new (for you) contribution.

Is there's a demonstration to take part in? You can write a passionate letter to a legislator about an issue you care about. If nothing else, you could write a check to a cause or organization that is slightly larger than what your first impulse would be. Or contribute in a similar way to UCDSM's Faith in Action partners. There are many opportunities and many possibilities.

After the experience, reflect. How do you feel about it? What did you notice about your experience? Did it change you? If the experience was in a group, what did you learn, positive or negative from the other group members?

### Check Out

From everything we've shared during this time together, what overall message stands out for you?

### Chalice Extinguishing

Words from Edward Everett Hale: "I am only one but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."



## FAMILY PAGE

This month, our children and youth will also consider what it means to be a community of justice. Check out these stories and questions they will encounter in class in October.

- *Say Something*, by Peter H. Reynolds
  - *When did you do or say something that made a difference?*
  - *When could you have made a difference by doing or saying something?*
- *Wake Up to Injustice*<sup>5</sup>, by Gail Forsyth-Vail
  - *When have you realized something was unjust in the world?*
- *Mistakes*, by Colleen M. McDonald, in *What if Nobody Forgave? and Other Stories* by Colleen M. McDonald
  - *How do we know when we're wrong?*
  - *What does it feel like?*
- *Aani and the Tree Huggers*, by Jeannine Atkins, illustrated by Venantius J. Pinto
  - *What does injustice look like for the environment?*
  - *What can we do about it?*
- *A Walk to the Store*, by Judeah Reynolds, illustrated by Darcy Bell-Myers
  - *What was a story that was important for you to share?*

*Connecting* is produced by the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines for use in small groups. Each month (ten months a year) explores a different theological or spiritual theme.

Next issue: 2023 Nov: Interdependence

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/wake-injustice>