

### **Size**

Chalice Circles consist of seven to ten people, large enough to promote group interaction, and small enough to allow intimacy and equal participation

### **Commitment**

Participants commit to attend all meetings unless there are unexpected situations. Participation is vital so members can not only care for themselves but can also demonstrate caring for one another.

### **Meeting Times and Places**

Each group meets often enough for group members to create meaningful connections: a least once a month. Groups meet for about two hours, long enough to follow the format and engage in deep listening. Groups normally meet in members' homes. By sharing our homes with others, we share our stories and a little bit about who we are. However, since some groups may have special needs, church space is available as a meeting place.

### **Registration**

Online registration will open in September on the congregational website <http://www.uuctc.org/>. Assistance will be available in Fellowship Hall for several Sundays in September for those who need assistance. Each registrant will be placed in the time slot they requested on a first come, first served basis.

### **Questions Contact:**

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# Chalice Circles

Unitarian Universalist Church

Tippecanoe County

West Lafayette, Indiana

## The Vision

Modeled after the UU Small Group Ministries, our Chalice Circles provide participants the opportunity to know others while developing a deeper self knowledge through sharing their lives in small facilitated groups. The spirit of community radiates outward, fostering a sense of kinship and increasing connection to the congregation as a whole, and to the larger community.

## Elements of a Chalice Circle Gathering

Each Chalice Circle session plan is designed to permit deeper contact with one another by sharing responses on the topic of the meeting. The format always includes:

- ◆ Opening Words and Chalice Lighting
- ◆ Check-in
- ◆ Topic of the meeting
- ◆ Check-out
- ◆ Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice

## Covenant

Each Chalice Circle develops a covenant—a *list of ground rules*—to define the ways they commit to interact with each other. Members can contribute to the ongoing activities of the group by choosing the readings, hosting the gatherings, or reminding members of meeting times and place. Having clear expectations for communication, and shared responsibility for group activities, ensures that all members benefit from the Chalice Circle experience.

## Focus and Approach for Chalice Circles

- “ Chalice Circles encourage attentive listening, rational thought, empathy and compassion—*knowing self and others more deeply and with consideration*. The positive qualities developed by group members will spread into the wider congregation and community as group members engage with others using their new-found skills.
- “ The focus of each meeting is a topic that serves as a springboard into reflection on deeper issues of who we are and what gives our lives meaning. At the core of each session is deep listening. Topic questions are posed; each person responds in turn. The other participants provide the speaker with thoughtful attention. They do not ask questions or give advice, they listen deeply.
- “ Groups are encouraged to engage in service to the congregation or to the larger community. Serving together gives members an opportunity to connect differently, to understand others’ values and actions, and to develop synergy as a group of Unitarian Universalists, rather than as individuals.

## How will Chalice Circles work?

Chalice Circles meet regularly to nurture group members’ lives and to build community. Each group has two trained facilitators from our congregation.