

PROPHECY

UU Community Church of Santa Monica
Heart to Heart Circles August 2017

Chalice Lighting

Avoid the bad habit of domesticating the prophet of your choice, turning him into a cheerleader for your way of thinking and way of life. Remember that all the great prophets were courageous and outrageous folks who railed against the powers-that-be, challenged self-satisfied posit, threatened the prevailing social order, and would find you falling short in some significant ways. ~ *Parker Palmer*

Sharing Silence (3 minutes)

You may wish to bring your attention to your breath, or move a bit until you have found a comfortable seat. If silence is not a familiar experience to you, three minutes may seem long. If you are accustomed to silence, it may seem short.

On Our Hearts

On Our Hearts is a practice of sharing and listening that invites us into connection with one another by sharing what is really going on for us as we come into the circle. Some months you will come to the group with wonderful news or a heavy heart, and it will be important for the group to know what's going on with you. Please share the major highs and lows, the things you'd like everyone to keep in their hearts or in their prayers for you.

Covenant and Ground Rules

Our covenant includes a description of how we want to be with each other, ground rules for our time together, and our expectations for members of the group. Adapted from *Heart to Heart* by *Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins*

I commit myself:

- to give attendance at meetings a real priority knowing that my presence is important to the group;
- to let the leader know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others;
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others;
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart;
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, problem solving, or giving advice;
- and to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn.

Readings

Prophecy: Greek - *prophēteia*: the gift of communicating and enforcing revealed truth; *pró*, "before" and *phēmí*, "make clear, assert as a priority, what is clarified beforehand. Hebrew – *nabi*: from a root meaning "to bubble forth, as from a fountain," hence "to utter."

Every man is hero and an oracle to somebody, and to that person, whatever he says has an enhanced value. ~ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Prophets help us connect the dots between the world, as it is, and the world as it might be.
~ *Krista Tippett*

The ones we call the prophets were the ones jailed and driven into the desert.
~ *Noam Chomsky*

The prophetic liberal church is the church in which all members share the common responsibility to attempt to foresee the consequences of human behavior (both individual and institutional), with the intention of making history in place of merely being pushed around by it. Only through the prophetism of all believers can we together foresee doom and mend our common ways.
~ *James Luther Adams, UU theologian*

The words of the prophets are
Written on the subway walls
And tenements halls
And whispered
In the sounds of silence.
~ *Paul Simon*

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
~ *1 Corinthians 13:2*

Questions for consideration:

1. Who has been a prophetic oracle to you? Whose voice has influenced, and thus, predicted your future? Is it still doing so?
2. What are you willing to be driven into the desert for?
3. Have you domesticated your prophets? Is your "cloud of prophetic witnesses" really just an echo chamber? (*Avoid the bad habit of domesticating the prophet of your choice, turning him into a cheerleader for your way of thinking and way of life.* ~*Parker Palmer*)
4. Which Martin Luther King Jr. do you celebrate? (In his lifetime, Martin Luther King Was a Radical, not the Saint many people have made him since his assassination.)

5. What's your wave? (*It is a mistake to see [the prophet] as an isolated, heroic individual. It is better to see him/her as the crest of a wave. -Rev. Dr. Rebecca Ann Parker*)
6. Is your prophetic engagement with or without love? (*See Corinthians 13:2, above*)

Sharing 60 minutes

Reflecting On Our Time Together

Please share anything that would otherwise be unsaid as you leave our time together. Do you wish you had shared something more, less, different? How are you feeling as you leave? Feeling words are ok, such as sad, mad, glad, peaceful, powerful, joyful.

Closing Words

It may be that when we no longer know what to do, we have come to our real work, and when we no longer know which way to go, we have begun our real journey. ~ *Wendell Berry (American novelist, poet, environmental activist, cultural critic, and farmer)*