

May I attend with my spouse/partner?

We have at least one group available to couples who want to experience a Chalice Circle together. However, the UUA model prefers and suggests that you each participate in a different Chalice Circle. This will allow you to speak freely of concerns you might find difficult to share with your life partner.

What type of topics are discussed?

Most topics will consider questions of spiritual development and personal growth. Some typical topics are: being alone without feeling lonely, letting go of fear, guilt, bitterness, and perfectionism, how habits can work for and against us, living more consciously in the present, feeling okay about risk and failure, deepening our feeling of spiritual connection with one another.

What does the facilitator do?

Chalice Circle facilitators make sure the group begins and ends on time or delegate someone to do so. They remind people of the next meeting and contact group members who miss a meeting. During the meeting, they read from the session plans that have been determined by the Steering Committee.

When do signups begin?

Signups begin in early September. Your times of availability and where you live in the Greater Cincinnati area will determine the makeup of Chalice Circle groups. Group size will be limited to between six and eight participants.

How do I join a group if I miss signups?

Contact David Sellers (dlsellers@gmail.com or 513-309-1316). You can also email or call the church office (www.huuc.net or 513-231-8634) to leave your contact information with our office manager, Denise Martinez.

What others are saying:

~ *“Through Chalice Circles we can get to know people we might not otherwise have.”*

~ *“As a newcomer, the Chalice Circles helped me to fit in and make friends quickly.”*

~ *“It has given me the opportunity to explore with a group of people, the deep questions of life in an environment that is trusting and nonjudgmental.”*

~ *“Chalice Circles give me the special connection I feel when I worship here on Sundays.”*

~ *“It is a way to build the foundation of, and expand our beloved community so that we can create and spread peace and harmony throughout the world.”*

~ *“This is a wonderful way to deepen people’s spirituality and faith.”*



CHALICE CIRCLE PROGRAM

- ~ Build personal relationships
- ~ Explore spiritual paths
- ~ Ponder life’s mysteries
- ~ Seek greater intimacy
- ~ Foster connection and caring
- ~ Be of use through service
- ~ Connect to the church community



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What are Chalice Circles?

They are a network of small groups, whose main objective is to strengthen the congregation by drawing us into mutual ministry.

Why are we developing Chalice Circles in our congregation?

We expect through Chalice Circles to continuously develop lay leadership, deepen our understanding of Universalist Unitarian principles and values, be further challenged to action and spiritual growth, as well as to be prompted to express in a more consistent way, our principles and values in the community.

Tell me more about Chalice Circles!

The primary emphasis of Chalice Circles is to care for people - to serve them, encourage them to spiritual growth, and to meet their needs for affirmation and acceptance. By creating an open, supportive, and nurturing environment, Chalice Circles promote and facilitate spiritual growth and mutual interactive care for one another, therefore providing a quality of caring that most people only wish for.

Additionally, Chalice Circles offer opportunities to search and grow at the individual's own pace and in the individual's own way through learning together and loving one another. As individuals identify and use their own spiritual gifts, they will be moved to contribute of themselves and their resources.

What happens at a Chalice Circle meeting?

Opening Words: Gather people in, help settle folks down, serve to remind participants of the special opportunity of the gathering, and often reflect the topic of the evening. A chalice will be lit as well.

Check in: Participants share news of what has been happening in their lives. Each group develops its own customs as to the length of sharing or how to respond, if at all, during this time. This portion of the meeting may expand from time to time when circumstances call for it.

Topic/Discussion: A paragraph or two lays out a topic and presents questions that will elicit thoughtful discussion and significant reflection.

Feedback: Having listened actively to each other, participants may choose to comment on what others have said, speaking from their own experiences without judgment and staying on the chosen topic. Chalice Circles are not intended as group therapy. No one is expected or qualified to give counseling.

Closing Words: The formal session is brought to an end with another reading by the facilitator. Groups are encouraged to start and end on time.

Who will know what I say?

There is an expectation of confidentiality within groups. Participants are encouraged to renew their covenant regarding this expectation from time to time.

Are Chalice Circles therapy?

No. Participants in our groups often report feeling better connected and happier in their lives but Chalice Circles do not provide therapy; we offer connection, reflection, community and spiritual growth.

How does the idea of service fit in?

We ask that every group, over time, take on some kind of service in the church or in the community. This helps to offset the natural tendency of small, intimate groups to become self absorbed and disconnected.

Where do groups meet?

Each group decides whether to meet primarily in member's homes or at the church. As our Chalice Circle Program grows, our goal is to have many groups located throughout the Greater Cincinnati area to keep travel to a minimum for participants.

How long do meetings last?

Sessions are one and a half to two hours long and by common consent, most groups are respectful of time.

Can I expect food to be served?

No food is served because the Chalice Circle time is better spent without that distraction.

What is the role of the minister?

Rev. Bill Gupton coordinates the Chalice Circle ministry with the Steering Committee Coordinator, David Sellers. Together, they recruit and train facilitators, meet with them to counsel and guide, assign new members to existing groups, write and develop the sessions that guide group meetings.

What is expected of a Chalice Circle participant?

Participants are expected to bring a positive attitude, a willingness to listen, share and learn from each other's life experiences. The most important expectation is that group members make the meetings a high priority in their lives. While no one can make every meeting, members make every effort to attend.

How long will I be in a group?

At signup you will have a choice between six sessions meeting twice a month for three months or a longer commitment of 18 sessions meeting twice a month over a period of nine months.