

“Water Communion”
September 8th, 2019
Rev. Laurel Gray

Water Communion

This ritual, which we’ll do in a few minutes, water communion, is something UU congregations all over the country are doing today as we all come back together in community, celebrating the start of a new church year. We come together carrying all the places and people who’ve touched us these last few months, blending our water together, recognizing our connection to the earth and each other.

The first water communion was created by two lay women in Lansing, Michigan named Carolyn McDade and Lucile Schuck Longview. This was in 1980 and they were asked to create a ritual for the Women and Religion Continental Convocation of Unitarian Universalists. They wanted to create something that celebrated women’s spirituality and power in a time when female ministers and female leaders were still rare. Water communion was born of the feminist movement within our denomination.

McDade and Longview wrote this about the ritual, quote:

“Water is more than simply a metaphor. It is elemental and primary, calling forth feelings of awe and reverence. Acknowledging that the ocean is considered by many to be the place from which all life on our planet came—it is the womb of life—and that amniotic waters surround each of us prenatally, we

now realize that [this worship service] was for us a new story of creation... We choose water as our symbol of our empowerment.”

End quote.

And so we come together today recognizing our source, our connection with the sacred waters of life, honoring our origins, recognizing the power of the marginalized, blending together our experiences into one sacred well.

This water will continue to bless this community throughout the year - it is our holy water to be used for baby blessings and child dedications.

And so now I invite you all to come forward to pour your water into this well. There is a pitcher filled with water if you've forgotten to bring some. All are welcome. As you pour in your water, please share briefly where your water has come from and perhaps why it is sacred to you. When we're finished, I'll end with a blessing.

Now that we have combined all our water together, I'll end with this blessing by the Rev. Ranwa Hammamy:

This water is sacred. It is made sacred by the many hands that have poured it with intention and love, the many stories that each drop contains, the many lives surrounding it in this unique moment, connected by commitment and faith.

This water is sacred. May it continue to flow through this community, with shining reflections of the unique gifts that flow through each of its members.

May it continue to nurture this community, With sustaining hope that we journey together through ripples of growth and change.

May it continue to bless this community with loving reminders of our collective responsibility to one another and the world.

May its ripples be a reminder that the changes and growth within this community bring movement and transformation to the world beyond our doors.

May its purity offer grace to our community, and the willingness to forgive ourselves and one another when we make mistakes.

In moments when we are confused or uncertain, may it bring us clarity of purpose and commitment.

In moments when the reservoirs of hearts and spirits are drained by sorrow or pain, may it nourish them with the knowledge that we are surrounded by a deep and abundant love.

This water is sacred.

Blessed be.