



FAMILY REFLECTION

January 2017 Prophecy

Rituals help us slow down, create a practice of mindfulness, and reinforce what is most important. We invite JUC families to sit down together for a family ritual of sharing and reflection. Most of your children's spiritual and religious development takes place within your family and we hope to assist you to be more intentional.

We offer a simple ritual that includes lighting a chalice (the symbol of Unitarian Universalism), opening words to say together, some questions you can use for reflection and sharing together, and a unison closing. The theme and questions are based on the same monthly themes that are reflected in sermons, our small group ministry programs and our monthly Children's Chapel.

Choose one or more nights each week to gather before eating dinner or at bedtime. We recommend the time you pick be consistent. The power of ritual is that it be predictable and regular. Feel free to adapt the reflection questions to meet your family's needs.

You will need a chalice, a small candle (it could be either electric for younger children or wax) and matches.

Unison Opening Words



We are a Unitarian Universalist family.
We are a family of open minds,
We are a family of helping hands,
We are a family of caring hearts.
Together, we care for the earth and all it's creatures
and works for justice for all people.

UU Theologian and Minister Rebecca Parker, said that “prophetic witness is our capacity to see what is happening, to say what is happening and to act in accordance with what we know.”

Chalice Lighting



Today we light this chalice to honor the guiding light within each of us.

Reflection



Prophecy is a tough topic. In our culture we consider prophets fortune tellers. But in liberal religions like ours, prophets are not just those who predict the future but those who intentionally create the future. Who do you see as prophets at a national level, state level or community level? Those who are making the world more just and fair? Black Lives Matter leaders? Family Promise hosts at JUC?

Unison Closing Prayer (from Rev. Wendy)



If there are words to be spoken,
let your voice speak them.
If there are hands to be touched,
let your hands hold them.
If there is silence to be held, let your witness give it.
If there is hurt to be named, let your ears hear it.
If there are lonely ones, let your eyes meet them.

Reflection 2



Prophets, those who seek the truth and create the future. What do you know to be true? Are people basically good? Is there a force in the universe that bends toward justice?

Reflection 3



Some of the recent children's and young adult novels have a protagonist that is a prophet. Characters such as Harry Potter, Katniss from the Hunger Games, and Tris from the Divergent series are prophets that attempt to change their world after seeking the truth. Can you think of other characters that possess similar traits? Do these characters seem realistic? How?

Reflection 4



We all have the power to act as prophets and change the future. If you could promote just one change in the world at this time what would it be? What issue is important to you? Do you think other people also think it's important?

Activity 1



New Year is a time we make resolutions to try to improve ourselves. Instead of making an individual resolution, as a family develop a resolution for the entire family for the year. Challenge your family to think big! In the vein of JFK, think not what can I do to make myself better, but what can we do to make the world better.

Activity 2



Reflect on the values in your family, and ask are we living the values that we believe in? Are there activities that the family can participate in, that reinforce the values of the family? Consider participating in the MLK Parade on Monday Jan 16 at 9am in Denver City Park with other JUC families.

[http://www.denver.org/event/martin-luther-king-marade-\(march-and-parade\)/842/](http://www.denver.org/event/martin-luther-king-marade-(march-and-parade)/842/)

Activity 3

Rev. Rebecca Parker wrote, “It is better to see [the prophet] as the crest of a wave, the sparkling foam breaking brightly from the force of a whole ocean moving and swelling up from underneath.” With this image and idea in mind, we are creating a bulletin board and inviting children to add their Everyday Acts and Ordinary Rebellions to the board each Sunday, which will be in the shape of a wave or swell in the ocean. Examples of Everyday Acts and Ordinary Rebellions: being kind to someone you have usually ignored; standing up for someone being made fun of; sharing your idea or experience even though you are afraid; speaking up when your idea or opinion is different from most; and refusing to go along with your friends when they are doing something hurtful or unkind or wrong.

JUC Family Facebook Sharing

What are other ways to incorporate the theme of prophecy into your family life? What worked and what didn't work? How did you family discuss the theme of healing? Please share on the JUC Families Facebook page.

Song Lyrics on Prophecy

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

God is God- written by Steve Earle, sung by Joan Baez
I believe in prophecy.
Some folks see things not everybody can see.
And, once in a while, they pass the secret along to you and me.
And I believe in miracles.
Something sacred burning in e very bush and tree.
We can all learn to sing the songs the angels sing.