



Spiritual Practice Packet

September 2022

Covenant



Photo by [Nicole De Khors](#) from Burst

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Unity Church-Unitarian, St. Paul, Minnesota

Unityunitarian.org

Bound in Covenant

Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law; this is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another. James Vila Blake, 1894

We are bound by covenant, each to each and each to all, by what theologian Rebecca Parker calls “freely chosen and life-sustaining interdependence.” The central question for us is not, “What do we believe?” but more, “What do we believe in? To what larger love, to what people, principles, values, and dreams shall we be committed? To whom, to what, are we accountable?”

In a tradition so deeply steeped in individualism, it becomes a spiritual practice for each of us to ask, not once and for all, but again and again: How do I decide which beautiful, clumsy, and imperfect institutions will carry and hold my “name, hand, and heart”? The life of the spirit is solitary, but our answers to these questions call us to speak, call us to live, in the plural.

Seeing ourselves as bound in covenant is an old practice among us. In 1630, John Winthrop, soon to become the first governor of Massachusetts, spoke to a soggy, stalwart band of fellow Puritans, sailing with high and pious hopes aboard the *Arabella* toward a new life in New England. Despite their stone-cold reputation, their caricatured intolerance, these were people who promised to bear each other’s burdens as their own, to subvert their separate, private interests, their “superfluities,” for the public good of all. Humbly, gently, patiently, they would serve a vision larger than any single eye could see; they would hold a larger hope.

The organizing statements of the early Universalist and Unitarian congregations in New England echoed this Puritan ideal. The theology changed — Unitarian beliefs about the nature of God, Universalist beliefs about the nature of human beings — but the essential premises of covenanted community, the foundation of their polity, did not. The covenant remains deep in Unitarian Universalist tradition, to walk together across disagreements, dissent, and difficult discernments, cherishing the way we walk as dearly as any outcome. This is no easy aspiration.

A covenant is not a contract. It is not made and signed and sealed once and for all, sent to the attorneys for safekeeping or guarded under glass in a museum. A covenant is not a static artifact, and it is not a sworn oath: Whereas, whereas, whereas.... Therefore, I will do this, or I’ll die, so help me God. A covenant is a living, breathing aspiration, made new every day. It can’t be enforced by consequences, but it may be reinforced by forgiveness and by grace, when we stumble, when we forget, when we mess up.

I love singing the round in our hymnal based on Rumi’s invitation, “Come, come, whoever you are.” Whenever I sing it, I think of one line that doesn’t appear in *Singing the Living Tradition*, however: “Though I’ve broken my vows a thousand times.” Yet, because I am held in and hold to a covenant — with the people in my church and with others whom I love, with convictions I cherish and principles I mean to practice — I turn to a different page in the same hymnal. I sing the line, “We forgive ourselves and each other; we begin again in love,” and I remember: a covenant is an aspiration to go deeper in relation to ourselves, to our best intention, to our God, and to each other.

Someone said to me not long ago, “Covenant is a promise I keep to myself, about the kind of person I want to be, the kind of life I mean to have, together with other people, and with all other living things.” When we welcome babies in our church, when we welcome new members into the community, when we celebrate the love of beaming couples, when we ordain new ministers, we speak not in the binding language of contract, but in the life-sustaining fluency of covenant, from “covenir,” to travel together. We will walk together with you, child; we will walk together with you, friend; we will walk together with each other toward the lives we mean to lead, toward the world we mean to have a hand in shaping, the world of compassion, equity, freedom, joy, and gratitude. Covenant is the work of intimate justice.

Excerpted from ***Bound in covenant*** by Rev. Victoria Safford. <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/bound-covenant>.

Spiritual Practices

Option A ***Whose Am I?***

Quaker teacher Douglas Steere writes:

The ancient question, “Who am I?” inevitably leads to a deeper one: “Whose am I?” – because there is not identity outside of relationship. You cannot be a person by yourself. To ask “Whose am I” is to extend the question far beyond the little self-absorbed self, and wonder: Who needs you? Who loves you? To whom are you accountable? To whom do you answer? Whose life is altered by your choices? With whose life, whose lives is your own all bound up, inextricably, in obvious or invisible ways?

So, whose are you? This exercise invites you to honor this core covenantal question by living with four different photographs this month. Here are your instructions:

1. Find pictures of four different people:
 - one of a person that represents your promises to those that have gone before you
 - one of a person that represents your promises to those who will come after you
 - one of a person that represents your promises to someone central to your life right now
 - one of yourself — past or present — that represents your promises to yourself
2. Put these four pictures in a place you will see every day this month: Print and then tape them to your bathroom mirror or stick them with magnets to your refrigerator door; add them to the photos on your phone; frame them and place them on your desk; use them as wallpaper on your PC, laptop, or phone.
3. Make a conscious effort to reflect on them every day and do at least one thing to honor your promise to one of these people.
4. Bring your four pictures to your small group and share how living with them altered your days.

(Note: consider making this a group effort and do it as a couple or as a family.)

Option B

Live in the Plural

In her article, *Bound in covenant*, UU minister Rev. Victoria Safford writes:

We are bound by “covenant,” each to each and each to all, by what theologian Rebecca Parker calls “freely chosen and life-sustaining interdependence.” The central question for us is not, “What do we believe?” but more, “What do we believe in? To what larger love, to what people, principles, values, and dreams shall we be committed? To whom, to what, are we accountable?” In a tradition so deeply steeped in individualism, it becomes a spiritual practice for each of us to ask [these questions], not once and for all, but again and again. The life of the spirit is solitary, but our answers to these questions call us to speak, call us to live, in the plural.

What might it be like for you to live “in the plural?” For this exercise, get out a big sheet of paper and write “ME” in the middle of it. Then start adding the people, principles, values, and dreams you’re committed to. Draw lines of connection, creating a mind map of the covenant network you live in.

When you’re done, set it aside for a few days. Then come back to it and consider:

What stands out for you?

What’s missing from your web?

What covenantal relationships do you have in your life?

How might you more intentionally live in the plural?

Bring your mind map and your insights to your small group.

Bound in covenant: <http://www.uuworld.org/articles/bound-in-covenant>

Option C

Return & Repair

In her article *What Does it Mean to be a Community of Covenant?* Rev. Gretchen Haley of Foothills Unitarian Church writes:

... covenantal theology doesn't just say that we become human through our promising, but also when we break those promises, and yet somehow find ways to reconnect and begin again – when we repair the relationship because we know we need each other, even when we think the other isn't doing enough, even when the other is annoying us, or isn't listening well, or isn't doing things the way we want them done – even then. When we realize right then, that we are still connected, and we can't give up – and so we return, and begin again. This beginning again, says our faith, is when the holy and the human meet.

And what our faith asks of us, what our faith imagines for us, is that somehow, right at that moment when our hearts break, we will find our way to see through that heartbreak. We will stay put – not close off, not run away, not hurt back – but keep on being in relationship, doing what we can to repair the world and each other, keep on opening our hearts with greater love. And, right then, our covenantal faith says – we will feel not only most human, but also most whole and most at home.

This exercise asks you to do the work of return and repair. Pick a relationship of heartbreak in your life. Maybe it involves a friend or family member, maybe even someone who is no longer living. Maybe a neighbor. Maybe even an institution, like your church or our government. Whoever or whichever it is, make time this month to return to that relationship and work on repair. Simply ask yourself “Where have I withdrawn, been betrayed, or broken something myself?” Your heart will know the answer. Listen to what it says. Then open your heart one more time and lean into relationship once again, doing what you can to repair what you can.

Questions to Ponder

Read through the questions below and notice which one(s) resonate with you. One or more of the questions might seem particularly compelling – or some might stir resistance in you. Either of these reactions might make the question fruitful to consider. Choose just one and take time to consider it, over several days if possible. Write it down on a piece of paper you carry in your pocket. Or take a picture of that paper with your phone. Or record it in your journal – and spend some time, each day if you can, reflecting on it in writing or otherwise, noticing where it leads you and what you learn from it and your response to it.

1. What promises have you made to those who have gone before?
2. What promises have you made to those who will come after?
3. Have you kept your promises to yourself?
4. Have you made a covenant with the holy? What promises have you made to Life itself? To God? To your inner voice?
5. What is the most life-giving promise you've made?
6. Many congregations recite these lines for their chalice lighting: *This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.* How might you adapt this to your own relationship with yourself or with the universe? Perhaps you might finish this sentence: "This is my great covenant: ..."
7. Has society ever broken its promise to you? How have you responded when you've witnessed society breaking its promises to others?
8. Some of us preempt heartbreak by leaving relationships before others have a chance to break their promises and our hearts. What is keeping you from the risk and pain of covenant?
9. Covenant rightly calls us to work on repairing relationship and sticking in there even when it is hard. But sometimes one's covenant with self requires us to put up boundaries and know when to leave a relationship. Is it time for you to put your covenant with yourself first?
10. If you're a member of your congregation, what promise did you make when you joined? You probably had a sense of what you'd get, but were you clear about what you promised to give?
11. Theologian James Luther Adams names the foundational covenantal nature of the universe as "the love that will not let us go." How do you experience this love? Has it kept its promise to you? How? Have you kept your promises to it?
12. **What is your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't name what life is asking from you now, spend the month listening to your heart to hear what your question is.

Resources

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

These resources are not required reading. They may not be analyzed in our sermons, newsletter, Chalice Circles, Wellspring, or other programs. Instead, they are here to companion you on your journey this month, get your thinking started, and open you to new ways of thinking about covenant. The hope is not that you will engage them all or even most of them; rather that the variety here will offer you at least several access points to the theme that invite you to consider it thoughtfully and perhaps with new insights or understanding.

Word Definitions & Roots

Covenant

Noun

a formal and serious agreement or promise. In Jewish and Christian theology, an agreement between God and God's people; in Unitarian Universalism, an agreement about how we will strive to be in relationship with one another.

Covenant is Latin for "come together" and means a "solemn agreement" or "promise from the heart" regarding a course of action between parties.

~UUA, Covenant of Right Relations [Covenant of Right Relations | UUA.org](https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/covenant-invites-relationship)

Wise Words

A covenant is not a definition of a relationship; it is the framework for our relating. A covenant leaves room for chance and change. It claims: *I will abide with you in this common endeavor, be present as best as I can in our becoming.*

~Lisa Ward

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/covenant-invites-relationship>

To seek the truth in love means that even when we stumble, we continue to love. Even when we flail, we stay in relationship. To seek the truth in love means that we talk about the hard things rather than denying that things can be hard. This is a very difficult task. It is not something that I have found easy to do, but it is something that I continue to try to be brave enough to do.

~Rev. Anne Mason

Mother Earth needs us to keep our covenant. We will do this in courts, we will do this on our radio station, and we will commit to our descendants to work hard to protect this land and water for them. Whether you have feet, wings, fins, or roots, we are all in it together.

~Winona LaDuke

We can join one another only by joining the unknown . . . [Your union] is going where the two of you — and marriage, time, life, history, and the world — will take it. You do not know the road; you have committed your life to a way.

~Wendell Berry, from *Standing by Words*

I am only the waves and particles of such as I was but I have a covenant with the Lord, the terms of it are simple: everything is required of me, forever.

~Russell Hoban, from *Pilgermann*

One of the most important lessons I learned in seminary, I learned from a three-year-old boy. ... My wife Sandy and I were visiting Jeffrey and his parents for dinner one evening. As we sat down at the table, Jeffrey looked around at us expectantly... Now, I expected that they would say some form of grace, but I was surprised.

Jeffrey was our leader. He had all of us hold hands while his father lit the chalice at the center of the table. Jeffrey then had us recite their family covenant... *Love is the doctrine of this family, and service is its law. This is our great covenant, to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.* Covenant as a personal spiritual practice... taught to me by a three-year-old Unitarian Universalist. Amazing.

~ Rev. David Pyle, from *Covenant as Spiritual Practice*
<http://celestiallands.org/wayside/?p=900>

We sometimes wrongly say it is the absence of creed that is most important to who we are [as Unitarian Universalists]. This is wrong. Any one of us could practice religious freedom at home on Sunday mornings. We could practice religious freedom all day long, every day, and never come into community. It is covenant that brings us out of isolation, covenant that brings us out of selfish concerns, out of individualism, to join ourselves to something greater, to become a part of a community that is working to practice love, to dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge and wisdom together, to find better ways to live our lives and live in the world.

~Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

Membership is understood as a matter of covenant among people. A covenant is a promise to stand together with other members of one's UU community in a relationship of mutual respect and support. Agreeing to the covenant means taking one's own personal religious journey seriously in community with others, and working together in commitment and community toward a common vision.

~Olympia UU Congregation

The ancient question "Who am I?" inevitably leads to a deeper one: "Whose am I?" – because there is no identity outside of relationship. You cannot be a person by yourself. To ask "Whose am I" is to extend the question far beyond the little self-absorbed self, and wonder: Who needs you? Who loves you? To whom are you accountable? To whom do you answer? Whose life is altered by your choices? With whose life, whose lives is your own all bound up, inextricably, in obvious or invisible ways?

~Douglas Steere, Quaker teacher

Sometimes it's as simple as this: Our society tells us to ask "What do I want?" Our religion invites us to ask "Whose am I?" Two very different questions that lead to two very different lives. Which question will we invite to lead us? Every single sacred text says our choice is literally a matter of life and death.

~Rev. Scott Tayler

Civilization's history tends to be written in terms of human discoveries and inventions, wars, artistic creations, laws, forms of government, customs, the cultivation of the land.... At the heart of this history, however, lies a sometimes hidden narrative of promises, pledges, oaths, compacts, committed beliefs, and projected visions. At the heart of any individual's story, too, lies the tale of her or his commitments.

~Margaret Farley, from *Personal Commitments: Beginning, Keeping, Changing*

Poetry

A Great Need

by Daniel Ladinsky (attributed to Hafiz)

Out
of a great need
we are all holding hands and climbing.
Not loving is a letting go. Listen,
the terrain around here is
far too dangerous for
that.

Love is the doctrine of this church

by L. Griswold Williams

Love is the doctrine of this church,
The quest of truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer.

To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve human need,
To the end that all souls shall grow into harmony
with the Divine –

Thus do we covenant with each other and with
God.

#471 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

Covenant

by Rev. Rebecca Parker

Let us covenant with one another to keep faith
with the source of life knowing that we are not our
own, earth made us.
Let us covenant with one another
to keep faith with the community of resistance
never to forget that life can be saved
from that which threatens it by even small bands of
people choosing to put into practice an alternative
way of life.
And, let us covenant with one another to seek for
an ever deeper awareness
of that which springs up inwardly in us.
Even when our hearts are broken by our own
failure
or the failure of others cutting into our lives,
Even when we have done all we can and life is still
broken,
there is a Universal Love
that has never broken faith with us and never will.
This is the ground of our hope,
and the reason we can be bold in seeking to fulfill
the promise.

In Gatherings

by Marta I Valentin

In gatherings we are stirred
like the leaves of the fall season rustling around
sacred trees, tossed hither and yon
until we come to rest together, quietly, softly . . .
We come to gather strength from each other. We
come to give strength to each other.
We come to ask for strength from the Spirit of All
That Is and Is Not.

When our hearts sing or when they frown
it is the way of compassion telling us to give.
It is the way of peace telling us to share our gifts,
for we are happiest and most powerful
when Love is made apparent in and through us.

Spirit of the circle that is Love,
as we twirl in this dance that is life
we give thanks for reminding us each day of our
task of ministering to each “other” with a searching
glance,
a safe touch,
a generous smile,
a thoughtful word...

Thank you for reminding us
that we are always building our beloved
comunidad.

Thank you for reminding us
that through our covenant with you we covenant
with each “other”
and are made whole.

In gratitude, we celebrate with open hearts and
minds. We discover who we are, separate from
each other and within one another.

In this circle that holds all life may we ever work
toward widening its boundaries
until there are none. Amen. Paz. Blessed Be.
<http://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/gatherings>

The Third Body

by Robert Bly

A man and a woman sit near each other, and they do not long
At this moment to be older, or younger, nor born
In any other nation, or time, or place.
They are content to be where they are, talking or
Not talking.
Their breaths together feed someone whom we do not know.
The man sees the way his fingers move;
He sees her hands close around a book she hands to him.
They obey a third body that they share in common.
They have promised to love that body.
Age may come; parting may come; death will come!
A man and a woman sit near each other;
As they breathe they feed someone we do not know,
Someone we know of, whom we have never seen.
<http://mondaypoem.blogspot.com/2010/11/third-body-by-robert-bly.html>

This is the True Ride

by Jennifer Welwood

My friends, let's grow up.
Let's stop pretending we don't know the deal here.
Or if we truly haven't noticed, let's wake up and notice.

Look: Everything that can be lost, will be lost. It's simple — how could we have missed it for so long?

Let's grieve our losses fully, like ripe human beings,
But please, let's not be so shocked by them. Let's not act so betrayed,
As though life had broken her secret promise to us.
Impermanence is life's only promise to us, And she keeps it with ruthless impeccability.
To a child she seems cruel, but she is only wild, And her compassion exquisitely precise: Brilliantly penetrating, luminous with truth, She strips away the unreal to show us the real.

This is the true ride — let's give ourselves to it!
Let's stop making deals for a safe passage: There isn't one anyway, and the cost is too high.

We are not children anymore.
The true human adult gives everything for what cannot be lost.

Let's dance the wild dance of no hope!
<http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=1024>

Articles/Online Resources

A Comprehensive Guide to Congregational Covenants

Excerpt:

Covenant is the silk that joins Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations, communities, and individuals together in a web of interconnection. The practice of promising to walk together is the precious core of our creedless faith.

<https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/congregational-covenants>

Step 5: Admitting our Wrongdoing

by Richard Rohr

We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. — Step 5 of the Twelve Steps

Almost all religion and cultures that I know of have believed in one way or another that sin and evil are to be punished, and retribution is to be demanded of the sinner in this world — and usually the next world too. Such retributive justice is a dualistic system of reward and punishment, good guys and bad guys, and makes perfect sense to the ego. I call it the normal economy of merit or “meritocracy.” This system is the best that prisons, courtrooms, wars, and even most of the church (which should know better) can do.

[Step 5: Admitting Our Wrongdoings — Center for Action and Contemplation \(cac.org\)](http://www.cac.org)

A Covenant Invites Relationship

by Lisa Ward

Excerpt:

A *creed* creates a static truth, something that does not incorporate new insights and realities.

A *covenant* is a dance of co-creation, keeping in step with one another in the flow of our lives.

A *creed* seeks uniformity and a unison voice.

A *covenant* seeks harmony and a shared voice.

Sometimes we may arrive at a unison, but it is not required.

A *creed* gives authority to the statement.

A *covenant* gives authority to shared intention.

A *creed* creates an “us” and “them.”

A *covenant* invites relationship.

A *creed* is a prescription that must be relied on.

A *covenant* relies on the treasures of shared truth.

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/covenant-invites-relationship>

Yes, You Are Your Brother’s Keeper: The Final Call of MLK

by Mika Edmonson.

Excerpt:

Most churches are willing to address certain social issues. If you don’t think so, just ask yourself whether your church addresses the culture’s attitudes around sexuality, money, education, and abortion. Most churches apply the claims of the gospel to social issues, and rightly so. The problem is that we have a highly selective social ethic that recognizes and addresses the sufferings of certain people while conspicuously ignoring the sufferings of others.

From *The Gospel Coalition*, March 22, 2018.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/you-are-brothers-keeper-final-call-mlk/>

How Covenants Make Us

by David Brooks

When we go out and do a deal, we make a contract. When we are situated within something it is because we have made a covenant. A contract protects interests, but a covenant protects relationships. A covenant exists between people who understand they are part of one another. It involves a vow to serve the relationship that is sealed by love: Where you go, I will go. Where you stay, I will stay. Your people shall be my people.

<http://tinyurl.com/jhs3e2w>

Stopping Oppression: An Islamic Obligation

The Prophet Muhammad

A person should help his brother, whether he is an oppressor or is being oppressed. If he is the oppressor, he should prevent him from continuing his oppression, for that is helping him. If he is being oppressed, he should be helped to stop the oppression against him.

On Covenant

by Rev. Sue Phillips

As [Unitarian Universalist] congregations we “covenant to affirm and promote” the Principles. Affirming and promoting shared values is important, but it puts tepid commitment at our collective center, asks virtually nothing of us, and offers virtually nothing. This is not covenanting. It is parallel play.

<http://tinyurl.com/zpwrtpn>

The Five Major Ingredients of Covenant

by James Luther Adams, UU Theologian and Social Ethicist (1901-1994)

Human beings, individually and collectively, become human by making commitment, by making promise. The human being as such ... is the promise-making, promise-keeping, promise-breaking, promise-renewing creature.

<http://tinyurl.com/jzdx9db>

Guiding Principles of Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter Los Angeles

Excerpt:

UNAPOLOGETICALLY BLACK

We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black Lives Matter, we need not qualify our position. To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a prerequisite for wanting the same for others.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND STRUGGLE

We intentionally build and nurture a beloved community that is bonded together through a beautiful struggle that is restorative, not depleting.

LOVING ENGAGEMENT

We embody and practice justice, liberation, and peace in our engagements with one another.

Read the complete set of principles:

<https://www.blmla.org/guiding-principles>

- Unapologetically Black
- All Black Lives Matter
- Globalism
- Diversity
- Restorative Justice and Struggle
- Trans Affirming
- Womanist
- Empathy
- Black Villages
- Queer Affirming
- Intergenerational
- Loving Engagement

Racial Covenants

The University of Minnesota Mapping Prejudice Project

Covenants are not always used for good. Minnesota has had some of the largest racial disparities in the United States, perhaps in part because of racial covenants, in use between about 1910 and 1950, that were included in property deeds to prevent non-White people from buying or

renting property. So far, Mapping Prejudice volunteers have found more than 26,000 racial covenants in Minnesota's Hennepin and Ramsey counties.

<https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/>

Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival Covenant of Nonviolence

Excerpt:

There are at least 140 million people in the country who are impacted by the interlocking injustices of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the false narrative of Christian nationalism. The Poor People's Campaign believes that nonviolent struggle has the power to end these injustices, shift the narrative from individual shame or blame to systemic root causes and transform our society.

This Covenant of Nonviolence draws on lessons from historic nonviolent social movements and our experiences in building this Campaign. At all our activities, events and actions, we seek to uphold the following principles:

1. I will act with respect towards all.
2. I will speak truth to power.
3. I will seek to defeat injustice, not people.
4. I will accept the consequences of my actions for justice.
5. I will not resist arrest, use hostile language or insults, carry or use weapons or make any threats of violence.
6. I will walk in love.
7. I may wear a face mask for the health and safety of myself and others.
8. I believe the universe is on the side of justice.
9. I am committed to a movement, not a moment.

<https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/covenant-of-nonviolence/>

Books

Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America

In *Sacred Ground*, author and renowned interfaith leader Eboo Patel says this prejudice is not just a problem for Muslims but a challenge to the very idea of America. Patel shows us that Americans from George Washington to Martin Luther King Jr. have been “interfaith leaders,” illustrating how the forces of pluralism in America have time and again defeated the forces of prejudice. And now a new generation needs to rise up and confront the anti-Muslim prejudice of our era. To this end, Patel offers a primer in the art and science of interfaith work.

<http://www.beacon.org/Sacred-Ground-P930.aspx>

More Together than Alone

by Mark Nepo

At once a moving meditation and an empowering guide, *More Together Than Alone* is a compelling testament to the power of community and why it’s so essential in our lives, now more than ever. Mark Nepo draws from historical events, spiritual thought leaders, and the natural world to show how, in every generation, our tendency is to join together to accomplish our greatest achievements, from creating education to providing clean drinking water, and preserving the arts.

<https://www.amazon.com/More-Together-Than-Alone-Discovering/dp/1501167839>

The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial

by Robert Bellah

This Second Edition represents Bellah’s summation of his views on civil religion in America.

[The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial by Robert N. Bellah | Goodreads](#)

Not for Ourselves Alone: Theological Essays on Relationship

Edited by Laurel Hallman and Burton D. Carley

These twelve essays from Unitarian Universalist leaders emerge as part of a movement in the faith from focusing on individual identity to relational connectedness. Through personal stories and thoughtful reflections, the contributors describe how we might grow our souls through our connections with one another and with the Holy.

<http://www.uuabookstore.org/Not-for-Ourselves-Alone-P17454.aspx>

Movies

Blackkklansman

Directed by Spike Lee, 2018

Ron Stallworth, an African American police officer from Colorado Springs, CO, successfully manages to infiltrate the local Ku Klux Klan branch with the help of a Jewish surrogate who eventually becomes its leader. Based on actual events.

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7349662/?ref=nm_sr_srsrg_3

God on Trial

Directed by Andy De Emmony, 2008

Awaiting their inevitable deaths at one of the worst concentration camps, a group of Jews make a rabbinical court to decide whether God has gone against the Holy Covenant and if He is the one guilty for their suffering.

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1173494/?ref=kw_li_tt

Up

Directed by Pete Docter and Bob Peterson, 2009

78-year-old Carl Fredricksen travels to Paradise Falls in his house equipped with balloons, inadvertently taking a young stowaway.

<http://tinyurl.com/hqvnzyz>

Music

Nothing More

by The Alternate Routes

Excerpt:

To be humble, to be kind
It is a giving of the peace in your mind
To a stranger, to a friend
To give in such a way that has no end

We are love, we are one
We are how we treat each other when the day is
done
We are peace, we are war
We are how we treat each other and nothing more

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tXzIVjU1xs>

Would You Harbor Me?

by Ysaye Barnwell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChkDvZXFTys>

This packet includes material from the Soul Matters Sharing Circle model of small groups by Andrea Johnson, originally published in the 2018 Unity Church Covenant Chalice Circle packet.

ART

The Creation



by Michelangelo, from the Sistine Chapel
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