

Water Ceremony: Liturgical Lesson (BP)

Materials Needed:

Pitcher half-full with water on top of clean-up shelf
Small containers for water in basket
Tray with:
Pitcher with about two cups of water
Large bowl, preferably see-through
A folded towel for cleaning up spills
Storyteller should bring own small container of water from his/her summer

Presentation:

When children are ready in circle, begin the lesson.

Now, watch carefully where I go to get the lesson.

Walk all the way around the circle back to the U.U. focus shelf and remove the tray with the Water Ceremony materials.

Ah, here it is.

Place tray to your side. Take empty bowl from tray and place in front of you. Pour some water into the bowl over your hand and feel it.

This is the water of creation, the water of community.

Water is very important for all living things. We use water to drink, water to wash.

We swim in water. Our bodies are made mostly of water. Water keeps us alive.

We were carried inside our mother's wombs in water. Without water, we could not live, plants could not live, animals could not live.

In our Unitarian Universalist church, we use water as a sign of our naming when we welcome babies into the church. And we use water when we come together again after being away from each other for the summer. This is the water ceremony we will practice today.

Take some water for yourself and pour into the bowl.

Next Sunday is the last time we'll meet for Spirit Play this spring. Over the summer, we will all do summertime things with our families and people don't come to church every Sunday. But we won't forget about each other, will we? One way we remember each other is by saving water from a special place that our families will visit over the summer. Maybe it will be a lake where the family cabin is located. Maybe it will be a river that you canoe on together. Maybe it will come from far away, maybe from close by. Maybe the special place will be your own backyard.

No matter where you go this summer, think of everybody from church traveling to different places because each of us will be thinking of you. We will bring home water from where we go to share with you. We'll bring it home in bottles or jars and then, in the Fall, when we all come back together, everyone will bring their water to church, water from all over the world. We will mix it together in a beautiful bowl just like people all come together at our beautiful church.

We're going to pretend to do the Merging of the Waters here in our class. First, imagine where you would like to go this summer. Close your eyes and imagine. Will there be water there? Will it be a river or pond or ocean or faucet?

Each of you will get a small container of water. Hold it close to your heart and imagine a place you hope to visit this summer. Imagine the water is from that special place. Then, we'll each take a turn adding our water to the Gathering Bowl. The water comes together just like we come together to be at church. The mixed-together water is used to bless new babies and to bless people who are sick and dying – it reminds us at those times that the church is a gathering of many people and that our love is with any members who have great joy or great sadness in their lives. Let's pretend to hold a Merging of the Waters.

Here's what we'll say:

“I am _____ (name) and I hope the water from my summer will come from _____ (place) where I will _____ (activity) with _____ (friends and family).

This is the water of our community.”

Choose a child by name to pour their water into the bowl.

_____, what water will you bring for our community?

After each child finishes, say “This is the water of our community.” Go around entire circle.

This is the water of our church school community at Unity. After our class today, I will take this water and share it with the plants outside so that they may grow. Imagine how wonderful it will be when our church does the Merging of Waters for real! We will miss one another over the summer, but come together again to share our water and our stories in September.

Place tray with pitcher back on shelf. Put bowl with water next to chalice on top focus shelf.

Wondering Questions: (BLB)

I wonder how all this water came to be?

I wonder where all this water comes from?

I wonder if it comes from one place or many different places?

I wonder how your water is different than the others?

I wonder how your water is the same as the others?

I wonder what happens inside the pitcher when we mix all the waters?

I wonder how much new water we could add and still have the same water?

I wonder what would happen if someone new joined our class this year?

I wonder if we could separate all the waters and give them back to each person?