

## Letting Go—UUFVB Covenant Groups— February 2020

### Chalice Lighting

May we know once again that we are not isolated beings,  
but connected, in mystery and miracle,  
to the universe, to this community and to each other.

**Check-in:** What is most on your mind today?

**Opening Reading:** *"Reluctance," (Robert Frost, American poet)*

Out through the fields and woods  
And over the walls I have wended  
I have climbed the hills of view  
And looked at the world; and descended;  
I have come by the highway home,  
And lo, it is ended.

And the dead leaves huddled and still  
No longer blown hither and thither;  
The last lone aster is gone;  
The flowers of the witch-hazel wither;  
The heart is still aching to seek,  
But the feet question, "whither?"

The leaves are all dead on the ground,  
Save those that the oak is keeping  
To ravel them one by one  
And let them go scraping and creeping  
Out over the crusted snow,  
When others are sleeping.

Ah, when to the heart if man  
Was it ever less than a treason  
To go with the drift of things  
To yield with a grace to reason  
And bow and accept the end  
Of a love or a season?

### **Topic Exploration**

Sooner or later, we are all confronted with the decision to let go of something; be it an object, a friendship, a love, or even a thought, idea or memory. We know we have the choice before us, whether to hang on, or let go, but it's never quite as easy as it sounds on its face. We struggle sometimes with the reality of moving on from any one of these, but how we approach this task can be puzzling and confusing. There are lots of resources available that discuss how to 'heal yourself', or 'move on' from ended relationships or past emotional wounds, and some may or may not apply to each of us individually. One thing these resources do highlight...and that is the challenge of 'letting go'.

Nora Ephron gives us a different way of looking at loss, as straightforward as editing written copy. She describes it as a normal, if sometimes painful, chapter in our lives. It is part of the process of growth and growing.

***"Everything Is Copy," (excerpt from I Feel Bad About My Neck, Nora Ephron, American author)***

"I'm seven months pregnant with my second child, and I've just discovered that my second husband is in love with someone else. She, too, is married. Her husband telephones me. He's the British ambassador to the United States. I'm not kidding. He happens to be the kind of person who tends to see almost everything in global terms. He suggests lunch. We meet outside a Chinese restaurant on Connecticut Avenue and fall into each others' arms, weeping. "Oh, Peter," I say to him, "Isn't it awful?" "It's awful," he says. "What is happening to this country?" I'm crying hysterically, but I'm thinking, someday this will be a funny story.

I fly to New York to see my shrink. I walk into her office and burst into tears. I tell her what my husband has done to me. I tell her my heart is broken. I tell her I'm a total mess and I will never be the same. I can't stop crying. She looks at me and says, 'You have to understand something. You were going to leave him eventually.'

### **Questions / Sharing**

1. What, if anything, have you let go? Was it an idea, or object, or thought, friendship, love, or even a habit? How did you realize you needed to let go of whatever it was?
2. Is letting go always difficult? If not, what makes it easy to let go? Is it timing, necessity, or making room for change? Could the difficulty of change be blunted by viewing such change as editing written copy, or purposefully editing your life story?
3. Can we successfully move on without first letting go?
4. How, if at all, did letting go change you and/or the way you see the world?
5. Could 'letting go' become a regular part of your spiritual practice? How?

### **Closing Reading:** "O By the By," (e.e. cummings. American poet)

o by the by  
has anybody seen  
little you-I  
who stood on a green  
hill and threw  
his wish at blue

blue took it my  
far beyond far  
and high beyond high  
bluer took it your  
but bluest took it our  
away beyond where

with a swoop and a dart  
out flew his wish  
(it dived like a fish  
but it climbed like a dream)  
throbbing like a heart  
singing like a flame

what wonderful thing  
is the end of a string  
(murmurs little you-i  
as the hill becomes nil)  
and will somebody tell  
me why people let go

**Check-out and reflections on today's session:** Please express any thoughts on the content or process of today's session.

### **Extinguish the Chalice**

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth,  
the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.  
these we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

### **Housekeeping**