



## White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church

Grow Your Soul & Serve the World

[www.wbuuc.org](http://www.wbuuc.org) | 652.426.2369 | 328 Maple Street | Mahtomedi, MN 55115

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*Theme for September*

### **Home – the practice of setting roots**

Each month, our church gathers around a monthly theme and practice to guide our congregational life: worship, small groups, religious education, justice, and classes. Use these readings for reflection around the dinner table, in your own prayer practice, alone or with others.

More online at [www.wbuuc.org/themes](http://www.wbuuc.org/themes).

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### **QUESTIONS**

What places, people, or things make you feel at home?

How have you experienced an absence of home or roots in your life?

What makes a *spiritual home* for you?

### **QUOTES**

The population on this continent will become grounded, will find their place, by a slight change of mind that says “I’m here.”

- Gary Snyder

All our prayers in the morning, in the evening, start with the word “Here.”

- Edmund Ladd

It is not on any map; true places never are.

- Herman Melville

Most educated people say where is it written? Our people say where is it lived?

- Steve Rodriguez

With the past, I have nothing to do; nor with the future. I live now.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

## POETRY & LYRICS

### *Homesteading*

Long ago, I settled on this piece of mind,  
clearing a spot for memory, making a  
road so that the future could come and go,  
building a house of possibility.

I came across the prairie with only  
my wagonload of words, fragile stories  
packed in sawdust. I had to learn how  
to press a thought like seed into the ground;

I had to learn to speak with a hammer,  
how to hit the nail straight on. When  
I took up the reins behind the plow,  
I felt the land, threading through me,  
stitching me into place.  
- Joyce Sutphen

### *At Home from Church*

The lilacs lift in generous bloom  
Their plumes of dear old-fashioned flowers;  
Their fragrance fills the still old house  
Where left alone I count the hours.

High in the apple-trees the bees  
Are humming, busy in the sun,—  
An idle robin cries for rain  
But once or twice and then is done.

The Sunday-morning quiet holds  
In heavy slumber all the street,  
While from the church, just out of sight  
Behind the elms, comes slow and sweet

The organ's drone, the voices faint  
That sing the quaint long-meter hymn—  
I somehow feel as if shut out  
From some mysterious temple, dim

And beautiful with blue and red  
And golden lights from windows high,  
Where angels in the shadows stand  
And earth seems very near the sky.

The day-dream fades—and so I try  
Again to catch the tune that brings  
No thought of temple nor of priest,  
But only of a voice that sings.

- Sarah Orne Jewett

## **READINGS & EXCERPTS**

Come back. Come home. Be present again. Be Here Now.  
Being Here Now is experiential and it takes practice. It's about being rather than doing.  
When you are in the moment, truly in the moment, this is it, it's all there is. Time slows  
down. You can enter a flow of love with a quiet mind, simply being present. You flow from  
one activity to the next, moment to moment, being with one person, then with another, just  
Being Here Now.

- Ram Dass

I wish someone had told me when I was young that it was not happiness I could count on,  
but change. Democracy demands we speak and act outrageously. We can change the world  
if our view is long and focused with friends drawn lovingly around the place we call home. I  
believe my own voice continues to be found wherever I am being present and responding  
from my heart, moment by moment. My voice is born repeatedly in the fields of  
uncertainty.

- *From When Women Were Birds by Terry Tempest Williams*

*Walking with Peace and Presence*

Peace is something we can contemplate every day. Walking meditation is one of the ways to contemplate peace, and today we are going to walk together, generating the energy of peace, solidity, and freedom. I suggest that when you breathe in, you make three steps. Bring your attention to the soles of your feet, and become aware of the contact between your foot and the ground. Bring your attention down from the level of the brain to the soles of your feet. Breathing in, we make three steps, and we may tell ourselves with each step, "I have arrived. I have arrived. I have arrived." And breathing out, we make another three steps, always mindful of the contact between our feet and the ground, and we say, "I'm home. I'm home. I'm home."

Arrived where? Where is our home? According to the teaching and the practice of the Buddha, life is available only in the present moment, in the here and the now. And when you go back to the present moment, you have a chance to touch life, to encounter life, to become fully alive and fully present. That is why every step brings us back to the present moment, so that we can touch the wonders of life that are available. Therefore, when I say, "I have arrived," I mean I have arrived in the here and the now -- the only place, the only time where and when life is available, and that is my true home.

- *Thich Nhat Hanh*

Before babies are born they live in the sky where they fly among the clouds. The sky is a happy place and calling babies down to earth is not an easy thing to do. From the sky, babies can see the course of human lives.

This is what the Hmong children of my generation are told by our mothers and fathers, by our grandmothers and grandfathers. They teach us that we have chosen our lives. That the people who we would become we had inside of us from the beginning, and the people whose worlds we share, whose memories we hold strong inside of us, we have always known.

From the sky, I would come again.

- Kao Kalia Yang, *The Latehomecomer*