

UU Wellspring: Sources

Revised April 2022



Background

Many Unitarian Universalists, young and old, are familiar with the seven principles, a statement of our most deeply held values that starts with “the inherent worth and dignity of every person” and ends with “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

In addition to affirming and promoting the seven principles, the living tradition of Unitarian Universalism also draws on six sources for religious knowledge and spiritual growth: direct experience, prophetic women and men, world religions, Jewish and Christian teachings, humanist teachings, and Earth-centered traditions. If the principles are what we aspire to, the sources are what inspires us.

Sources is a prerequisite for all other years of UU Wellspring. Participants in *Sources* are challenged by, comforted by, and inspired by each one of the six sources. They learn about Unitarian Universalism, and also how to integrate their Unitarian Universalist faith more fully into their daily lives.

Structure

Sources is divided into six units, one for each of the UU sources. Within each of the units, participants cycle through a head-hands-heart experience of the source:

- **Head:** When introduced to a given source, participants learn about our Unitarian Universalist faith tradition. Grounded in UU history and theology, topics such as courage, love, and justice are explored.
- **Hands:** For the second section, participants reflect on how taking the source seriously might change the way we live our lives. Meaningful topics are brought into the circle such as the theology of everyday life, the prophetic imperative, and reimagining God.
- **Heart:** During the third part of the head-hands-heart cycle, participants go deep into core spiritual themes: vulnerability, forgiveness, joy, and more. Spiritual struggles, spiritual practices, and spiritual questions are all brought forth, with the wisdom of each source as a guide.

Holding this all together are the essential components that are the heart of all UU Wellspring programs: small group connection, commitment to daily spiritual practice, monthly spiritual guidance, reflecting on the assignments, and putting our faith into action. All rest on a foundation of deep listening.

UU Wellspring: Sources Topics



Introduction

Retreat

Session 1 — *Welcoming the Soul*

Direct Experience

Session 2 — Everyday Theology

Session 3 — Spiritual Histories

Prophetic People

Session 4 — Prophetic Voices of Our Unitarian and Universalist Ancestors

Session 5 — Prophetic Voices of Today

Session 6 — Your Own Prophetic Voice: Vulnerability and Courage

Session 7* — *Solstice Ritual*

Jewish and Christian Teachings

Session 8 — Jewish and Christian Teachings

Session 9 — Reimagining God: Process

Theology

Session 10 — Prayer

World Religions

Session 11 — World Religions

Session 12 — Forgiveness and Letting Go

Earth-Centered Spirituality

Session 13 — Nature as Spiritual Guide

Session 14 — UUism and the Crisis of Life

Session 15 — Theology of Joy

Humanist Teachings

Session 16 — Good without God

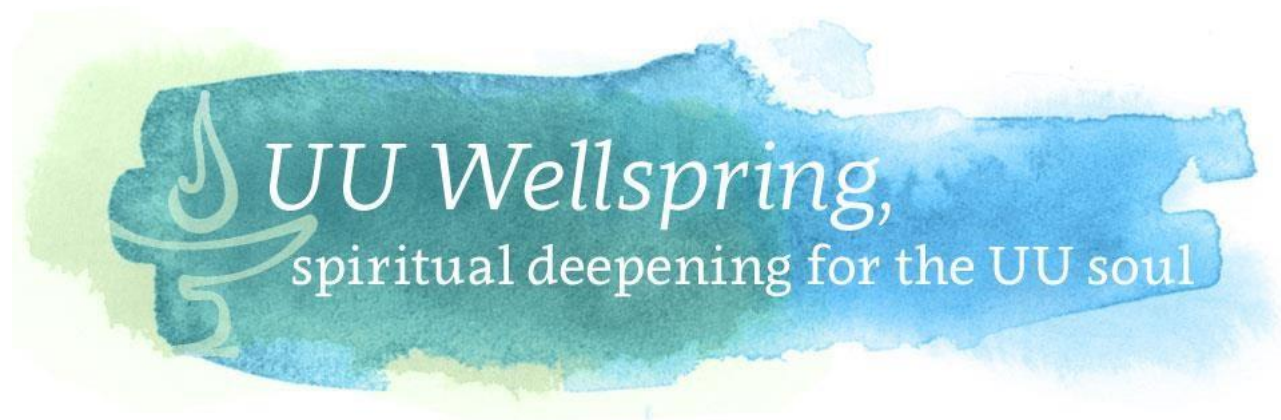
Session 17 — UU Perspectives on Death and the Afterlife

Closing

Session 18 — Let Your Life Speak

Session 19 — *Celebration and Reflection*

*Attendees are encouraged to attend a solstice ritual if you prefer not to create one as a group.



Required and Optional Books for Sources

1. Read as much as possible before the retreat:

- *Everyday Spiritual Practice: Simple Pathways for Enriching Your Life*, Scott Alexander, editor. Available from the UUA Inspirit Bookstore and online retailers.

2. Read Before Session 14:

- *Heartwood: The Art of Living with the End in Mind* by Barbara Becker. Available from the UUA Inspirit Bookstore and online retailers.

3. Read before Session 18:

- *Let Your Life Speak* by Parker Palmer.

4. Optional: One or both, as possible, to use throughout the program:

- *Voices from the Margins* edited by Jacqui James and Mark D. Morrison-Reed
- *To Wake, To Rise: Meditations on Justice and Resilience* edited by Rev. William Sinkford.

All of the books are currently available from the UUA Inspirit Bookstore, online retailers and as ebooks.

