



Soul Matters

Widening the Circle

RE Resources
Second - Fifth Grade

February 2022

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Welcome to Widening the Circle

Welcome to the Soul Matters Multi-Platform Packet for Second through Fifth Grades for the month of February. This year our monthly themes invite us to think about not only what values our UU faith calls us to but also the actions and skills that *our times* require of us. Pandemic time, along with our racial, political and environmental challenges, exposes the need for humanity to change and adjust in key ways. So each month we will explore a different skill that we need to lean into so that we don't just return to normal after the pandemic is over, but actually bring about a "new normal."

This month we explore the ways in which our times call us to "Widen the Circle." There are four ways we will explore the ways we can widen the circle. Here they are:

Lesson A: Widening the Way We Accept Ourselves - Understanding our Outsides and Insides

Lesson B: Widening the Love We Share- Celebrating all kinds of love

Lesson C: Widening the History We Tell - Black History Month

Lesson D: Widening the Principles We Live By - The 8th Principle proposal

This month, I'm excited about the stop action animation video created by Meg McGuire, a candidate for ministerial fellowship in Berkeley, CA. Meg is thrilled to give permission for other congregations to use her video about the 8th principle for Session D. I love that she has captured a complex topic into a Message for All Ages that children can engage with. I also love that we have creative people who use technology to make our faith accessible. Thank-you, Meg!

Additionally, I enjoyed imagining a possible connection between Rev. Egbert Ethelred Brown, the first African American Unitarian minister and the picture book called *The Book Itch: Truth, Freedom and Harlem's Greatest Bookstore*. Both resided in Harlem, NY during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920's and 30's. I invite readers to imagine Rev. Brown as one of the passersby in the book illustrations; since many famous individuals visited the bookstore, why not a freedom loving and politically active preacher?

Last but not least, I enjoyed researching the life of Dr. Gladys Mae West for Black History Month. Dr. West is a mathematician whose talent gave us GPS (Global Positioning System) without which we would still be using those old paper maps and would also be getting lost a lot more often! For the Wonder Box reflection object, I suggest a smartphone with Google Maps on it. Now that's another use of technology which Sophia Fahs couldn't have imagined! And yet I think she would be proud of us staying current and relevant.

Especially this month, I'm feeling so grateful for our [Widening the Circle RE Research Team](#) and the "regulars" who show up at our monthly Brainstorming Lab (see last page). This month and all year they have enriched our materials and widened my perspective. And maybe that's ultimately what this month is all about: A reminder that it takes all of us to widen the circles of justice, hope and love. So here's to doing the work together!

Katie, on behalf of the [entire Soul Matters Team](#)

DRE for Soul Matters, soulmattersre@gmail.com

PS. If you would like to read or review our overall approach to the 21-22 RE Packets, check out our ["Welcome to Soul Matters RE" Google Doc](#).

Legend:

1. *Purple Font* = online adaptations and alternatives
2. Double asterisks ("**") = books recommended by the Widening the Circle Research Team

Calendar Connections

February 2022

Click on the name of each event for more information or inspiration.

Interfaith:

- [Nirvana Day](#)/Parinirvana Day -Buddha's entry into Nirvana (Buddhist) - celebrated on Feb. 8 by some but by most on the 15 February.

Unitarian Universalist:

- Fannie Barrier Williams' [birthday](#) - Feb. 12 (1855)
- Susan B. Anthony's [birthday](#) - Feb. 15 (1820) (more [here](#); On her complex relationship to racism: [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).)
- [Thirty Days of Love](#) - Side with Love Campaign - Jan.15 - Feb.14
- [The Edict of Torda](#) is issued - Feb. 18 (1568)

National & Cultural:

- [Black History](#) Month (more [here](#))
- Season for [Nonviolence](#) - Jan. 30 - April 4 (more [here](#))
- [Groundhog Day](#) - Feb. 2
- Rosa Parks' birthday - February 4 (1930)
- [Freedom to Marry](#) Day - Feb. 12
- Mardi Gras - Feb. 13
- [St. Valentine's Day](#) - Feb. 14
- Toni Morrison & Audre Lorde's(past) birthday - Feb.18 (more [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#))
- [President's Day](#) - Feb. 19
- Louis Riel Day (Canada) - Feb. 19 (more here: <http://louisrielday.com/>)
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ([NAACP is founded](#) - Feb. 12 (1909)
- Malcolm X assassinated - Feb 21 (1965), related Netflix series [HERE](#)
- [Trayvon Martin](#) is shot by George Zimmerman - Feb. 26 (2012)

For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [Superbowl](#) Sunday - Feb. 13
- [Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk](#) Day - Feb. 11
- International [Darwin Day](#) (Darwin's Birthday) - Feb 12
- Random Acts of [Kindness Day](#) - Feb. 17 (more [here](#))

Lesson A:

Widening the Way We Accept Ourselves

Understanding our Outsides and Insides

(Core Story: The Hungry Coat)

Theme Angle

Our theme this month is “Widening the Circle.” In this lesson, we reflect on widening the way we accept ourselves, understanding our insides and outsides. Our society encourages us to spend time on our outsides - what we wear, our hair length, our skin, our height, our weight, how glib or funny we can be.

People mostly don’t portray the important things inside of them. Like what they are wondering about, what they believe, how they act, who they care deeply for, and how they make meaning in this world. These are things that make us who we are. These are the things which get us through the hard and sad times. These are the things which help us work for justice. Our faith reminds us, “It is the insides that matter most!”

Light It!

We know that everyone approaches chalice lighting differently. Some use the same chalice lighting words for the entire month, while others pick a new one each week and tailor it to that week’s particular theme connection. So instead of offering specific chalice lightings for you to use, we offer four “places” for you to find the chalice lighting that fits your approach:

- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting>
- [Tapestry of Faith and other common Chalice Lightings for Children](#)
- *Our monthly Soul Matters worship packets*
- *Your own congregation’s special chalice lighting words*

Extinguish It!

Signal the end of “sacred time” or “Chalice time” with a short ritual for extinguishing the chalice. It might be just after any of the below sections or at the end of the session. Use a [candle snuffer](#) if you use real candles for dramatic effect, or just blow it out. Here are some resources for you to find the chalice extinguishing words that fits your approach:

- *UUA:* <https://www.uua.org/genre/chalice-extinguishing>
- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6049.shtml>
- *Katie’s Words*

*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts.
Back into the world of do and say,
Carry it forward into the dawning day.
Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)

Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

Outsides and Insides

Reflection Object: an anatomy [photo](#), [skeleton model](#), even the figure from the game [“Operation.”](#)

Suggested Script

“Here is our insides. It is called our anatomy. Anatomy is the study of all the parts of the human body, digestion, respiration, and skeletal. We have insides and outsides. Inside of us are bones, blood, intestines, brain, lungs, etc. We know about our anatomy because the ancient Greeks started looking into the human body about [300 B.C.](#) Later, [Leonardo Da Vinci](#) made anatomical sketches of the insides of the human body to understand how to sculpt the body accurately. Now, we know a lot about our anatomy. But when we talk about our “insides” in our faith, we think of not just anatomy but of our unique gifts, thoughts, love and spiritual searching that make us who we are.

Our theme this month is “Widening the Circle.” In this lesson, we reflect on widening the way we accept ourselves, understanding our insides and outsides. Our society encourages us to spend time on our outsides - what we wear, our hair length, our skin, our height, our weight, how glib or funny we can be. When we use Social Media, like Instagram, Snap Chat and TikTok, all that we see are the “outsides” of people. What they look like, the silly videos, the photos.

People mostly don’t portray the important things inside of them on Social Media. Like what they are wondering about, what they believe, how they act, who they care deeply for, and how they make meaning in this world. These are things that make us who we are. These are the things which get us through the hard and sad times. These are the things which help us work for justice. Our insides help us find joy and connection. Our faith reminds us, “It is the insides that matter most!”

So today we’re going to explore our understanding of our insides and outsides so we can widen the way we accept ourselves. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

Tell It and Talk About It!

(Story)

Suggested Introductory Words

“A great way to explore how we project an outside appearance, and an inside appearance is by sharing this wisdom tale. In this story, Nasruddin, a philosopher, Sufi and wise man, teaches the village about appearances. It’s a great reminder about how people judge others by outward appearances.” Here we go!

The Hungry Coat: A [Mullah Nasruddin](#) Wisdom tale

Online story: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session6/123344.shtml>

Preview of Video and Song by Lea Morris: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqPMMcOiL-g>

Reflection Prompts

- What part of the video will you remember most?
- What would you have done if you were treated the way he was treated when he first arrived?
- Why did Mullah Nasruddin return to the dinner party?
- How have you been treated differently depending on your appearance?

More about our video story and song project with Lea Morris...

The Soul Matters Team is thrilled about this year’s creative collaboration with Lea Morris. Each month Lea tells one of our selected & theme-based wisdom tales and then shares a reflection & song inspired by that story. It’s a beautiful blending of her wonderful story-telling skills, luminous songwriting and joy-filled singing.

As with all ten of the videos Lea is creating, the purchase price per video is \$20.

With your purchase comes the **following usage rights:**

- *Playing the video in online and in-person worship services (including recorded services)*
- *Playing the video in online and in-person children’s religious education programs/presentations (including ones that are recorded and posted online)*
- *Sending out a link to the video to parents so they can watch it with their children at home as part of their family spiritual life activities*

Purchase all ten at a lower price: Follow this link to purchase all ten of Lea’s story/song videos on all ten of our Soul Matters themes at: <https://www.hopesingseternal.me/stories/alltenstorysongs>

Explore It!

(Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. We also offer an online adaptation or alternative and *highlight it in purple*.

Explore It with...

Making Homemade Bagels**

Explore the theme tangibly while making circle bagels. Reflect on “insides” and “outsides” of the hole and the dough. As published in April Rosario’s *UU Kids Spiritual Themed Recipe Book*, used with permission.

Ingredients: 1 cup flour, 1 Tbsp baking powder, ½ cup Greek yogurt, Pinch of salt, Handful of shredded cheese

Directions: Mix all ingredients and knead into playdough texture dough. Form into bagels and bake at 350 for 20-25 min.

Substitutions

- 1 cup almond flour can be substituted for the 1 cup all-purpose flour
- dairy free Greek yogurt can be substituted for regular Greek yogurt
- cheese can be replaced with raisins or chocolate chips
- melted butter or water can be used in place of egg wash

Tip 1! The bagels expand when they bake so you’ll want to make sure they have plenty of room, so they don’t stick together.

Tip 2! To make sweet bagels use vanilla Greek yogurt and add in 1 teaspoon cinnamon and/or a handful of raisins instead of the shredded cheese.

More about April’s UU Kids Spiritual Themed Recipe Book

If you’re looking for a fun way to keep kids/youth and families engaged in faith formation and religious education this UU Kids Spiritual Themed Recipe Book may be just what you’re looking for!

It was created by April Rosario, DRE at First Parish Taunton, Mass, and a member of our Soul Matters Widening the Circle RE Research Team. We are so excited to share the news about her wonderful creation!

With a total of 14 past Soul Matters themes and 23 recipes there is something for everyone. Each recipe has Think About It and Talk About It sections to provide a deeper dive into each of the spiritual themes. This book is great for multi-platform RE as it can be sent out to families for them to use on their own as part of their own faith journey, or it can be used for virtual and/or in person curriculum.

Please contact April Rosario via email at dre@firstparishtaunton.org with any questions. PFD copies are available for purchase for \$45 each. Please send payment via PayPal to [@UUdre](https://www.paypal.com/@UUdre) or dre@firstparishtaunton.org

Notes on the Activity

**ARAOMC Context from the Widening the Circle Research Team

The WTC team chose this activity because of its experiential reinforcement of the theme. As children make and stretch their bagel dough it is a tangible representation of Widening the Circle. Fun and delicious, too!

Making “Inside and Outside” Masks

Use a [blank mask](#). Invite the children to draw things that people see on their outsides - like their hair, their jewelry, etc. Now, invite the children to turn the mask over and draw the things that are on their insides:

- Like what they are wondering about,
- what they believe,
- how they act,
- who they care deeply for,
- and how they make meaning in this world.

These are things that make us who we are. These are the things which get us through the hard and sad times. These are the things which help us work for justice. Our faith reminds us, “It is the insides that matter most!” Share the inside drawings with each other.

A Pep Talk

Show this video of Kid President reminding us to widen the acceptance of ourselves and use the power of our insides.

Kid President/Soul Pancake “I Think We All Need a Pep Talk”

https://www.ted.com/talks/kid_president_i_think_we_all_need_a_pep_talk

A Meditation

[Indra’s Magnificent Jeweled Net](#) from Tapestry of Faith, Building Bridges

Read as a meditation to introduce the vast interdependent web of which every person is a part!

An Interview

Congregational Special Guest

Who in your congregation has known or experienced being judged by their outsides or using the power of their insides? invite them to share how they have accepted themselves and celebrated their insides.

Lesson B:

Widening the Love We Share

Celebrating all kinds of love

(Core Story: For Estefani)

Theme Angle

The theme of the month is Widening the Circle. For this lesson, we reflect on Widening the Circle of Love, especially since we are close to Valentine’s Day. We widen the circle when we spread love to everyone, including refugees and asylum seekers. We focus on refugees and asylum seekers because they are often “not loved.” So when it comes to widening the circle, our faith clearly tells us, “Love is for everybody.”

Light It!

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Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

For Estafani, Third Grade, Who Made Me a Card

Reflection Object: a heart or Valentine's card

Many thanks to [Jenni Papp](#) who suggested this poem for us!

Suggested Script

"Here is a heart. Our theme is Widening the Circle. For this lesson, we reflect on Widening the Circle of Love, especially since we are close to Valentine's Day.

I'm going to share an animated video of Aracelis Girmay's poem "For Estefani, Third Grade, Who Made Me A Card." It involves a mysterious word "LOISFOERIBARI."

Show the animated poem video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DciYMCC0M1w>

[For more, check out.... Interview with the poet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkKZSJGCbyI&t=0s>]

Love is for Everybody. We widen the circle when we spread love to everyone. One group of people who especially need this message are refugees and asylum seekers. They and we need to hear the message, "Love is for Everybody" that is in the poem, to help overcome the losses that refugees feel. "A refugee is a person who is seeking a safe haven after being forced to flee violence, persecution or war. Refugees are defined and protected in international law. And seeking asylum is not a crime. While every refugee is initially an asylum seeker, not every asylum seeker will ultimately be recognized as a refugee. Many refugees around the world live in vulnerable conditions, including refugee camps, informal settlements and on the streets." - [Source](#)
So when it comes to widening the circle, our faith clearly tells us, "Widen the love we share."

Are you ready?! Let's begin!"

Special Guest Strategy

Who in your congregation is a poet? Invite them to share how their poetry comes to them. Or invite someone who is working with refugees to share how they have widened the circle of love.

Tell It and Talk About It!

(Our Story: The Silence Seeker)

Suggested Introductory Words

“Today’s story is an example of the way we can widen our circle of and include caring for refugees and asylum seekers. A young boy mistakes his mother’s words. She says the new neighbor is an “asylum seeker” meaning a refugee seeking to make a home in a new country. The young boy hears “silence seeker.” Someone looking for quiet. By caring about a new refugee, a little boy tries to offer him his companionship and knowledge of the places in his city. Let’s listen to the story together! While you are listening, think about any questions that arise about what is happening.”

The Silence Seeker by Ben Morley and Carl Pearce

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nYR_7nTOWE

Book: [HERE](#)

Reflection Prompts

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How did you feel when the boy finally smiles?
- Have you ever been with someone who doesn’t understand the language?
- Would you communicate and reach out?
- How can we widen our circle of love and include people who are refugees?
- How should a country widen its circle by helping those from other countries?

Notes on the Book

**ARAOMC Context

We chose this book because of how it brings the awareness of asylum seekers and can start a discussion about asylum seekers. Since the story doesn’t directly address the issue of asylum seekers and refugees, we suggest using the resources for teaching children from the [UN Refugee Agency](#), including short animations and discussion guides. Many thanks to [Sam Dickerson](#), DRE for the Chalice UU Fellowship of the Conejo Valley, CA for suggesting this book.

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Explore It!

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

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Explore It with...

A Discussion about Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Use the resources from the UN Refugee agency to answer the children's questions about asylum seekers. You might use this to find the questions the children are especially interested in and share the UN's answers. There are suggestions for ages 6-9- and 9–12-year-olds. Check out the short video about Rahf, a young girl from Syria now living in Luxembourg. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/teaching-about-refugees.html#materials>

Leader Background from UUSC: [Building Bridges Refugee Support and Advocacy Toolkit](#)

Youth with Refugees Art Contest

Each year there is a contest for youth to design something for the benefit of refugees. While the 2022 isn't announced at the time of our packet publication, check out the [Youth with Refugees Art Contest page](#) for the 2022 updates.

The first edition, in 2020, was "Everyone counts in the fight against COVID-19, including refugees." They received 2,000 drawings from 100 countries. They awarded seven global winners – whose drawings were animated by Japanese Studio Speed Inc, five regional prizes, five prizes for cartoons and 20 special mentions. They created a [3-D Museum](#) you can virtually visit.

The 2021 edition was "Together through sport". It shed light on the power of sport to bring people together and create a sense of hope. The contest asked youth and young adults to design a soccer ball and enter the #dreamball design contest. The best designs were turned into soccer balls made by an ethical manufacturing company and sold to support sporting activities for refugees!

See many designs and meet the 5 winners from across the planet! <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/stories/2021/9/61267fbc4.html>

Just for fun, you can use their [ball design template](#) (or find the link on the [webpage](#)) and design your own.

Heart Cards

Cut out hearts. Help the children fill in the words, "Love is for Everybody" and then decorate it. Use as Valentine's cards for a local refugee organization, or other people who may need an affirmation of caring.

An Interview

Congregational Visitor (online or in person)

In the spirit of cultivating multigenerational relationships, continue the conversation with your special guest.

Lesson C: Widening the History We Tell Black History Month

(Story: The Book Itch: Freedom, Truth and Harlem's Greatest Bookstore)

Theme Angle

The theme this month is Widening the Circle. This lesson is about Widening the History We Tell. Many of the stories about African Americans were overlooked or deliberately ignored. In this lesson, we will discover several figures in history whose stories deserve to be told. It is time that we, as a faith, widened the circle of the history we tell. Happy Black History Month!

Light It!

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Introduce It (Wonder Box)

The Magnificent Dr. Gladys Mae West

Reflection Object: a smartphone with Google Maps on it.

Suggested Script:

“Here is the app called Google Maps. If you need directions home or to a bookstore or to church, you can use Google Maps to tell you the way, by car, by bike, by public transit, by walking. Google Maps uses GPS which stands for Global Positioning System. It was developed by a team led by Dr. Gladys Mae West, an African American mathematician. “West soon started to get recognition as one of the “hidden figures” for her contribution to the development of GPS. In 2018, West was inducted into the US air force hall of fame. Her work has at last been written into history.” - [source](#)

[Show this 2:45 min video of Dr. West <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MclemoQWv64&t=97s> or this 6:30 min. Version https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dg4_mqHXtfw]

The theme this month is Widening the Circle. This lesson is about Widening the History We Tell. Many of the stories about African Americans were overlooked or deliberately ignored. In this lesson, we will discover several figures in history whose story deserves to be told. For instance, the stories in “Hidden Figures.” Hidden Figures is a movie about “three [other] brilliant African American women at NASA -- Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson -- serve as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race and galvanized the world.” https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/hidden_figures

It is time that we widened the circle of the history we tell. Too often in this country, the stories of African Americans have been excluded. We lift that up during Black History Month in the hopes that it becomes a year-round and all the time experience. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

Tell It and Talk About It

Our Story: The Book Itch: Truth, Freedom and Harlem’s Greatest Bookstore

Leader’s note: This story includes mention of Malcom X’s assassination. Please be sure to preview it for the suitability for your group.

Suggested Introductory Words

“Here’s a story about a real bookstore that is a part of African American history called the [Harlem Renaissance](#). Harlem was a part of New York City. It was a time “considered a golden age in African American culture, manifesting in literature, music, stage performance and art.” Our [first African American Unitarian minister](#) founded the First Unitarian Church of Harlem in 1920, Rev. Egbert Ethelred Brown. This book is about the National Memorial African Bookstore, but we can imagine that minister as one of the people who might have visited that bookstore. We may never know. Many of the artists, poets, and great African American figures of the era visited the bookstore. Why not a preacher? Imagine Rev. Brown as one of the background figures in the illustrations. Here we go.”

The Book Itch: Truth, Freedom and Harlem’s Greatest Bookstore

Video Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9Treqx2rHE>

Book: [HERE](#)

Reflection Prompts

- What part of the story do you remember the most?
- What did you like about the story?
- Have you ever felt a book itch?
- Was there a time when you wanted to change or achieve something and had to start from scratch?
- Have you ever thought about a dream you wanted to achieve?
- What do you think this story teaches us?
- Have you ever kept on trying and trying until something really happened?

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Explore It

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

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Explore It with...

UU Black History Story and Treasure Hunt: Find Out About Rev. Egbert Ethelred Brown, first African American Unitarian minister

Read the story from Tapestry of Faith's Faithful Journeys curriculum, "[Finding Your Way Ethelred Brown](#)." Use his [photo](#), a [printout of the Jamaican flag](#), and a [picture of Harlem in the 1920s](#). Show these items as you tell the story.

Play the "[Truth and Meaning](#)" Treasure Hunt Game from the Faithful Journeys Session. [Print out the words](#) in the Leader Resource that represent the UU Principles.

If online, invite the children to hunt for a representation of each word in their home, then describe why it connects to the word. "Offer some examples to help children conceive how an object can represent an abstract idea such as respect, fairness, or connection. For instance, tape, glue, or a paper clip might symbolize connection; a book might symbolize curiosity; a Braille hymnbook might symbolize fairness.

... If children have difficulty finding an item, offer them the option of drawing something that shows their word. Children who return quickly with an item can also be given the option of drawing a representation of their word while they wait for the others to return." - from the [curriculum](#)

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>*

Dance Song Video

Black History Songs for Kids

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ky21iG9FiAU&t=17s>

Black Women In History (feat. Rissi Palmer & Snooknuk)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE1K_850u5k&t=0s

Hand Art with Skin Tone Colors

[Multicultural Markers](#) or [Crayons](#) - Invite the children to color people with these skin tone markers. What do they notice about the variety of beautiful colors?

“...Trace an outline of their hand and color it to match their own skin color. Ask children to look at their skin. How would you describe the color of your skin? If children give responses such as white or black, encourage them to look closer and identify some of the different colors that combine to make their skin tone. For example, do they see brown, red, orange, yellow, and/or beige in their skin? Examine the multicultural crayons and/or paints together. Read and discuss the names on each label. Ask:

Which crayon is closest to the color of a peach?
Which brown looks like the color of a teddy bear?

Invite children to pick the crayon or paint that most closely matches the color of their skin. If they feel that the color is not close enough, encourage them to mix in other colors.

When children have skin tone colors they are satisfied with, have them trace the outlines of their hands on sheets of paper, then color or paint the outlines. Encourage children to invent a name for the color of their skin. Foods are often good inspiration, for example, chocolate cake and honey gold. Help children write their color names on their artwork: My skin is _____.”

- From Exploring Skin Colors

<http://www.peepandthebigwideworld.com/en/educators/curriculum/center-based-educators/color/activity/stand-alone/470/exploring-skin-colors/>

Geocaching Outdoors

Leader Background: <https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/geocaching-kids.html>

Celebrate Dr. Gladys Mae West’s key role in creating the GPS system which we all use today. Geocaching is a fun “treasure hunt” using GPS. Check geocaching.com to see if there is a geocache on or near your church facility that you could try to locate with a smartphone. Next level: Find someone familiar with geocaching and invite them to create a cache for you on the church grounds! Then find it and leave something.

Create a Book Cart Used Book Swap

Celebrate Lewis Michaux, Sr. the founder of the National Memorial African Bookstore in Harlem. Before locating his bookstore in a storefront, Mr. Michaux pushed a book cart down the sidewalk, selling books. Invite the children to donate books and hold a book swap. Suggested donation from Katie’s former book swap cart: Ten cents per book, or “what it is worth to you.” Scratch that book itch!

Learn about Black UU’s

Black Lives of UU’s teach-in resources include stories of four Unitarians and Universalists born in the 19th century who lived into the 20th: Lewis McGee, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Fannie Barrier Williams, and Annie B. Jordan Willis. With each story are questions and **activities** to further connect with these figures and what their achievements mean for us today. <https://www.uuteachin.org/copy-of-teachin2-education-child-yo>

Black Women in History Coloring Sheet

Featuring a graphic of [Fannie Lou Hamer](#)
<https://www.fyutch.com/class>

Game

Play Red Light, Green Light

You might ask what the game Red Light, Green Light has to do with Black History Month, but it all makes complete sense when you meet [Garrett Morgan](#)! Garrett Morgan was an African American inventor who patented the 3-position traffic signal.

Poem

Invite the children to memorize a poem about widening the circle of love:

Outwitted - Edwin Markham, Universalist

<https://www.questformeaning.org/family-quest/in-the-circle-of-love/>

He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in!

Lesson D:

Widening the Principles We Live By

The 8th Principle Proposal

(Core Story: The 8th Principle)

Theme Angle

Our theme this month is Widening the Circle. This session is about how we hope to widen the UU principles we live by and add another principle to make 8. Some people (and maybe your own congregation) have added or want to add an 8th principle. In [children's language](#) it says: "Build the beloved community, free from racism and oppression." (This was created by DREs in collaboration with Paula Cole Jones and is used widely across the country in RE programs.) In [adult language](#), it says, "journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." Our faith is a living tradition. That means that it is an ever-growing faith, pushing us to grow in the process.

Light It!

We know that everyone approaches chalice lighting differently. Some use the same chalice lighting words for the entire month, while others pick a new one each week and tailor it to that week's particular theme connection. So instead of offering specific chalice lightings for you to use, we offer four "places" for you to find the chalice lighting that fits your approach:

- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting>
- [Tapestry of Faith and other common Chalice Lightings for Children](#)
- *Our monthly Soul Matters worship packets*
- *Your own congregation's special chalice lighting words*

Extinguish It!

Signal the end of "sacred time" or "Chalice time" with a short ritual for extinguishing the chalice. It might be just after any of the below sections or at the end of the session. Use a [candle snuffer](#) if you use real candles for dramatic effect, or just blow it out. Here are some resources for you to find the chalice extinguishing words that fits your approach:

- *UUA:* <https://www.uua.org/genre/chalice-extinguishing>
- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6049.shtml>
- *Katie's Words*

*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts
Back into the world of do and say
Carry it forward into the dawning day.
Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)

Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

Octo means Eight

Leader Background on the 8th Principle: <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>

Reflection Object: an octave musical scale baby toy xylophone, 8 notes on a piano to make a scale, [guitar octaves explained on YouTube](#). OR an octopus stuffie or photo (get it - 8 legs!)

Suggested Script

Here's an 8 note octave. [play it] (or an 8-legged octopus.) OCTO means 8 in Latin. So an 8 note scale is called an "octave" and an 8-legged sea creature is called an octopus. Can you think of another word that starts with octo and is connected to the number 8? (Octagram) So why are we learning about the number 8 when right now there are SEVEN Principles in our Unitarian Universalist Faith. In children's language the Seven Principles are [or if you prefer adult language see [HERE](#)]:

- Each person is worthwhile.
- Be kind in all you do.
- We help each other learn.
- We search for what is true.
- Each person has a say.
- Work for a peaceful world.
- The web of life's the way.

Here's why. Our theme this month is Widening the Circle. This session is about how we might widen the UU principles we live by and add another principle to make 8. We are talking about OCTO, 8 because some people want to add an 8th Principle. Some people (and maybe your own congregation) have added or want to add an 8th principle. In children's language it says:

"Build the beloved community, free from racism and oppression." (This was created by DREs in collaboration with Paula Cole Jones and is used widely across the country in RE programs." <https://esuc.org/8th-principle-faqs/>

In [adult language](#), it says, "journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

Maybe we will end up calling it our OCTO principle!

Our faith is a living tradition. That means that it is a changing faith. Our principles have changed over the years as our understandings have changed.

So, let's explore Widening the Principles we live by and the 8th principle. ... Are you ready?! Let's begin!"

Tell It and Talk About It!

Our Story: What is the 8th Principle?

Suggested Introductory Words

“Here’s a video story about the proposed 8th Principle. It was made by Meg McGuire, who is working towards being a UU minister. She made it for the children in the church where she was a ministerial intern. She’s sharing it with all UU children. Here we go.”

What is the 8th Principle (Video)?

Video: What is the 8th principle? A Message for All Ages by Meg McGuire

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

Reflection Prompts

- What part of the principles video do you remember the most?
- What did you like about the description of the principles and the 8th principle?
- What didn’t you like about the description of the principles and the 8th principle?
- What do you think this video teaches us?
- What does the 8th principle mean to you?

Online Permission Note: *Meg McGuire, candidate for UU Ministerial Fellowship, Berkeley, CA is thrilled to have other congregations use her video.*

Explore It!

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. When a more involved online adaptation or alternative is needed, [we highlight this in purple](#).

Explore It with...

Games

8th Principle Activities from the “UU Kids Connect inter-congregational collective” described in the UUA Leaders Lab with Jil Novenski, Director of Religious Education for Children and Youth, The Community Church of New York and Carson Jones, Lifespan Religious Education Coordinator, Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock, (min 31:00 - 43:12), linked with permission from the UU Kids Connect inter-congregational collective.

<https://www.uua.org/leadership/library/re-and-8th-principle>

Including Deconstructing the Words using the book “Anti-Racist Baby” and Jenga!

Crazy Eights Card Game

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1c4YPQTS35I>

Eights are wild cards. They symbolize change!

8 Box Hopscotch

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

Write the principles in each box!

A Dance Video

Feel a brand-new day as we move into Beloved Community!

Darkness Rising presents “Brand New Day”

From The Wiz (as used by the [UU Kids Connect 8th Principle Lesson](#))

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKDuhXpUOC4>

A Poster about the 8th Principle

Make a Poster of the Seven Principles and add the 8th Principle. Suggestions include making each principle a building block with the 8th principle being added by a crane. Or a pizza divided into 8 slices, with one on the pizza serving knife, etc.

- Each person is worthwhile.
- Be kind in all you do.
- We help each other learn.
- We search for what is true.
- Each person has a say.
- Work for a peaceful world.
- The web of life’s the way.
- Build the beloved community, free from racism and oppression.

Children’s Chapel & Time for All Ages Suggestions

Below is a list of picture books, tellable wisdom tales and activity based “message moments” to support your efforts beyond RE classes and groups, such as children’s chapel or Multigenerational times for all ages.

Knowing that some congregations will want to draw from the stories in the sessions above to ensure continuity between worship and RE classes, we first list this packet’s stories to make them all available in one glance.

We also know that some congregations like to have stories in children’s chapel and multigenerational worship that complement but are different from those shared in RE classes. So we’ve also listed some suggestions not found in the sessions above. We hope both lists support whichever approach you use!

From This RE Packet

The Hungry Coat: A [Mullah Nasruddin](#) Wisdom tale

Online story: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session6/123344.shtml>

Preview of Video and Song by Lea Morris: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqPMMcOil-g>

More about our video story and song project with Lea Morris...

The Soul Matters Team is thrilled about this year’s creative collaboration with Lea Morris. Each month Lea tells one of our selected & theme-based wisdom tales and then shares a reflection & song inspired by that story. It’s a beautiful blending of her wonderful story-telling skills, luminous songwriting and joy-filled singing.

As with all ten of the videos Lea is creating, the purchase price per video is \$20.

With your purchase comes the **following usage rights:**

- *Playing the video in online and in-person worship services (including recorded services)*
- *Playing the video in online and in-person children’s religious education programs/presentations (including ones that are recorded and posted online)*
- *Sending out a link to the video to parents so they can watch it with their children at home as part of their family spiritual life activities*

Purchase all ten at a lower price: Follow this link to purchase all ten of Lea’s story/song videos on all ten of our Soul Matters themes at: <https://www.hopesingseternal.me/stories/alltenstorysongs>

The Silence Seeker by Ben Morley and Carl Pearce

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nYR_7nTOWE

Book: [HERE](#)

Online Permission Note: *Tamarind Publishers, an imprint of Penguin Random House, has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “Penguin Random House Publishers.”*

The Book Itch: Truth, Freedom and Harlem’s Greatest Bookstore

Video Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9Treqx2rHE>

Book: [HERE](#)

Online Permission Note: *Lerner Books, which owns Carolrhoda Books, has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “Lerner Book Publishers.”*

UU Black History Story: Rev. Egbert Ethelred Brown, first African American Unitarian minister

From Tapestry of Faith’s Faithful Journeys curriculum, “[Finding Your Way Ethelred Brown](#).” Use his [photo](#), a [printout of the Jamaican flag](#), and a [picture of Harlem in the 1920s](#). Show these items as you tell the story.

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>*

What is the 8th Principle? (Stop Action Animated Video)

Video: What is the 8th principle? A Message for All Ages by Meg McGuire
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmqcSxhzBMA>

Online Permission Note: *Creator Meg McGuire, candidate for UU Ministerial Fellowship, Berkeley, CA is thrilled to have other congregations use her video.*

Additional Wisdom Tales & Message Moment

[The Good Samaritan](#) as told in Tapestry of Faith, Moral Tales

Widen the circle of love and caring.

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>*

[Indra's Magnificent Jeweled Net](#) as told in Tapestry of Faith, Building Bridges

When we visualize how interdependent we are, it's easy to widen the circle of love and caring.

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>*

[The King's Highway](#) wisdom tale

"He who travels the road best is he who makes the road smoother for those who will follow."

Online Permission Note: *author unknown/wisdom tale in the public domain*

[Map of the World](#) as told by Rev. Gretchen Haley

"I just put the person together, and the whole world fell into place."

Online Permission Note: *Permission secured by Soul Matters*

[The Edict of Torda](#) as told in Tapestry of Faith, A Place of Wholeness

"The Edict of Torda was one of the earliest expressions by a European government affirming people's right for religious freedom."

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>*

[The Platinum Rule](#) as found in the INC. article by Peter Economy

When widening the circle, how you want to be treated is not as important as how the other person wants to be treated.

Online Permission Note: *not indicated.*

Message Moment

Widening the Circle is like Stretching a Rubber Band

Collect a variety of rubber bands and the larger exercise bands and invite volunteers to demonstrate their elasticity while you reflect on the metaphor. Then pass out a rubber band to everyone as a Widening the Circle gift.

The concept of widening is complex, yet simple. It is as simple as the metaphor of a rubber band.
[Invite a few volunteers to come up and demonstrate the various rubber bands]

Rubber bands, like people, come in different sizes and are subjected to different challenges. They also have different thickness and abilities to stretch—shorter or longer. Can you show us how your rubber band stretches and snaps back with resilience?

The modern rubber band goes through a process called vulcanization. Vulcanization is a chemical process in which the rubber is heated with sulfur. The process involves the formation of **cross-links** between long rubber molecules. This gives the rubber durability with increased flexibility to snap back, just like our volunteers are showing us.

We human beings have our own cross links, just like the vulcanized rubber bands. We have our family, our friends, our community. We are meant to widen our circles. We will not let others be discarded like a useless rubber band. We all can bounce back stronger after our personal walks through fire, with the help of our cross-links.

To help you remember to use your cross links to widen your circle, please take a rubber band as a gift. For those who get the urge to shoot it, please stifle that urge or give your rubber band to someone else. Thank-you.

Opportunities for Leader Support

Come share together

Online Zoom Labs, Join Us!

Zoom Information:

All Labs take place on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

Audio only: Dial: +1 408 638 0968 or +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 585 709 9120

Password: 333

RE Leader Labs - Katie's Overview and Group Sharing!

In our leader labs, Katie gives an overview of the packet for the next month's theme, and then RE Leaders share challenges, opportunities and take-aways. These meetings are recorded and posted on the [Soul Matters YouTube Channel](#).

- **Wed. Feb. 9, 2021, 1 p.m. ET for March's theme of Renewing Faith**

Brainstorming Labs

In our brainstorming labs, RE Leaders support Katie by sharing ideas for upcoming packets. Attendees like the way it gives them ideas in advance. The packets are always stronger when our sharing circle members pitch in their creativity!

Meeting time: *First Wednesday of the Month at 1 pm ET. Brainstorm on the upcoming theme 2 months away.*

- **Wed. Feb. 2, 2022, 1 p.m. ET May theme of Nurturing Beauty**

Other Resources and Sources of Support

RE Leader Facebook Page

Don't forget about our RE Leader Support Facebook page. Here is where our colleagues post bulletin board pictures, share books, and ideas. It's a great ongoing source of support. Your colleagues are available to support you at the click of a button and with the ease of a post:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/545202255591601/>

Inspiration Facebook Page

Offer your teachers and parents spiritual nourishment and inspiration by encouraging them to join the Soul Matters Inspiration Facebook Page. Use the memes for your congregational FB page, as well:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Soul Matters Music Playlists

We create two different playlists on the monthly theme each month: one in Spotify and another in YouTube. Music connects us to the themes in a way like nothing else.

Click [here](#) for links to the [Spotify playlists](#) for each month.

Click [here](#) to check out the [YouTube playlists](#).

“On the Road Together” - Soul Matters Senior High Youth Packet

A monthly packet for High School Youth Groups! Here's the link to the [Soul Matters Youth Packet](#) page on our website.

Sessions with resources for Check In, Spiritual Practice, Discussion Starters, Expressing Yourself with the Arts, Fun and Games, and Off-Road Excursions.

Soulful Home Family Guides

Invite your parents to explore the themes at home with their family by subscribing to our monthly parent guides, **Soulful Home**. Here's the link to the Soulful Home page on our website:

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html>.

There are three types of subscriptions: congregational, family and gift subscriptions. Check them all out!

Soul Matters RE Packet Author & Support Team

Packet Author: Katie Covey, Soul Matters Director of Religious Education

Thanks to all the Soul Matters Religious Educators who send in suggestions for our monthly packets and participate in our monthly packet brainstorming calls. Special thanks to the Brainstorming Lab Regulars - Samantha Dickerson, DRE at Chalice UU Fellowship of the Conejo Valley, CA, Jenni Papp, DRE at the Southwest UU Church, North Royalton, OH and Katy Carpman, DRE at the Emerson UU Church, Houston, TX for their great suggestions each month.

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Thanks also to the other [Soul Matters Team](#) members who contribute to the content and shape of these packets:

Rev. Michelle Collins, Soul Matters Small Group & Special Projects Researcher
Rev. Scott Tayler, Soul Matters Team Lead



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Learn how to join at <http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com>