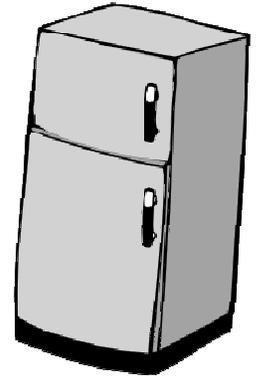




RE-Frigerator Page



We Celebrate...

This month in the northern hemisphere, we might notice that the night comes earlier and earlier until, finally, on December 21st, we reach the day with the longest night and the shortest day of the whole year—it's the winter solstice!

The routine of our days may not change much just because it gets dark earlier. We get up in the morning and do the things we need to do during our days: go to school, eat our meals and play with our families. Maybe we care for our pets and practice our music or sports. But

we notice the longer dark parts of the day and shorter hours of sunlight. This is a sign that the earth is moving in its orbit around the sun. What a wonder it is that our days change because of the tilt of the earth and the spinning planet we call home! Hooray for the sun!

Family Quest of the Church of the Larger Fellowship

Dec. 2014



We Honor...

"Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influence of the earth."

— Henry David Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau (July 12, 1817-May 6, 1862) grew up attending a Unitarian church. Henry David became known as a famous writer and thinker about nature and spirit. He felt that noticing the signs and wonder in nature

brought him the very closest to the Spirit of Life. He walked in the woods almost every day and paid close attention to the animals, plants and changes in season.

Thoreau spent just over two years living by himself in a small cabin on the shore of a pond called Walden Pond. During this time the calm rhythm of his days



helped him quiet his mind and think big thoughts about the world. When he moved back into the house of his friend Ralph Waldo Emerson, he wrote a book about what he learned while he lived in his little cabin. Today people all over the world still read that book to help them think about nature, spirit and our big world.

Talk About It!

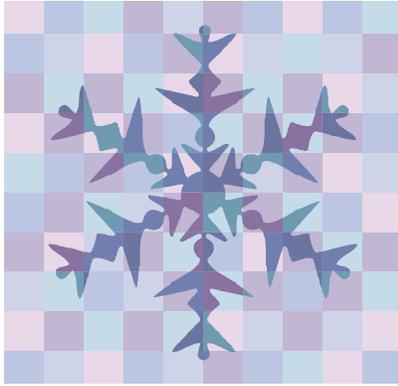
- ☺ Do you like to go for walks outside, even in the winter?
- ☺ Why do we sometimes feel closer to everything and everyone else in the world when we are outside? Can we find ways to bring that wonder inside with us?
- ☺ What do the words "Spirit of Life" mean to you? Do they mean different things to different members of your family? What do you think Henry David might have thought about the "Spirit of Life"?
- ☺ What might it be like to live alone in a small cabin in the woods?

Act...

Sometimes we get so busy in our every day lives, that we forget to take time to just be.

Just be? Yes!

Have you taken a day away from electronics? How about a day to have only one or two activities, and to fill



the rest of your time with a walk or time spent looking out of a window, noticing what you see.

Maybe you could be like Henry David Thoreau and take notes on

what you see, or you could just

watch and notice things. If it's cold where you are, maybe there is frost on the leaves or windows. Have you noticed how beautiful the ice crystals are? Or how about the pattern in a spider's web? The calm beauty of nature is all around us, every day. We just have to take time to notice! What do you think you might see?

Nurturing the Spirit

Henry David Thoreau spent time outside in the woods to help him hear what some people call the "still small voice" inside.

Different people find different ways to hear that quiet voice inside. Some people paint, or play music. Some people build with Legos or clay. Have you ever tried to hear your own still small voice?

Finding the Still Small Voice

- Take a walk in the dark without flashlights. Try walking for 10 minutes taking quiet steps.
- Lay on your back after dark and look up at the stars. Remember that the stuff that the stars are made of is exactly the same stuff that YOU are made of!
- Place the palm of your hand on your belly and feel your hand rise and fall as you breathe.

What does it look like where you live? Is there snow? Sun? Rain? Draw a picture!

Practicing the Principles

Our seventh UU Principle states:

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We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things.

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Keeping our planet Earth, safe and whole is important to UUs all over the world.

If we can work together by supporting laws that protect our earth, choosing to buy things that are made with the health of the planet in mind when we can, and changing our own behaviors we will find that we are living our UU principles!

Traditional Blessing

May the long time sun
Shine upon you,
All love surround you,
And the pure light within you
Guide your way on.

(see links for YouTube video)

Video Intro to Thoreau: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jy6v8DjXgoI>

Thoreau and his Cottage <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session5/sessionplan/stories/59343.shtml>

Traditional Blessing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8eoEv1tnTU>