

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS at Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church

Lighting of the Chalice

The chalice (a drinking vessel and a flame) were adopted by the UUA as a logo and has become the focus of worship for many congregations. At the beginning of the service a candle is lit in a chalice and these or similar words are recited in unison:

We light our flaming chalice
To illuminate the world we seek
In the search for truth may we be just
In the search for justice may we be loving
And in loving may we find peace

Candles of Concern and Celebration

During the service all present are invited to light candles of concern and celebration and to share with the congregation significant joys, sorrows and milestones that have transpired recently in their lives. After the last candle is lit, words may be spoken in unison.

The Water Service

This service has traditionally occurred on the first Sunday after Labor Day when members gather to begin the new church year. Participants are invited to pour vials of water gathered from summer travels and experiences into a common container and share those stories. The communal water is used throughout the year for other services, such as dedications. Some is saved each year and mixed with the next year's water, so that we begin the water service with water from our journey through the years.

Service of Remembrance

This service is held on the Sunday prior to Halloween. Members are invited to submit the names of loved family members or friends who have died during the previous year. They are remembered during the service with readings, music and prayer.

Christmas Eve Service

This multi-generational service is held on Christmas Eve evening and includes special music, readings, and stories. Typically members bring visiting family members who have come to spend the holidays.

Easter Flower Communion

This service, which is held in many UU congregations across the country and originated in Czechoslovakia, celebrates the beauty of spring and is held on Easter Sunday. Participants bring flowers and place them in vases. During the service, children carry baskets of flowers throughout the sanctuary, distributing them to those present.

Bridging Ceremony

This service held toward the end of the school year honors the church's graduates.

Service of Recognition

Members who have served the church during the preceding church year as board members or chairs of councils or committees are recognized and thanked in June. The officers of the board are introduced.