

Session 8: Jewish and Christian Teachings

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Session Metadata	
Session	8
Title	Jewish and Christian Teachings
UU Source	Jewish and Christian Teachings
Unit	3rd Source: Jewish and Christian Teachings
Head / Hands / Heart	Head
Has Exercise	No
Has Ritual	No
Has Spiritual Practice Presentation	Yes
Special Blocks	None

Preparation

Email to Participants

Our next session will be on concepts of both Jewish and Christian teachings.

At our next session on [date], we'll start our reflection on this UU source:



Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

UUA

Unitarian Universalism was born in Christianity and Christianity was formed in the time of Judaism. In order to better understand how we embrace the Source today, we will be reading and hearing from more contemporary Jewish Unitarian Universalists and Christian Unitarian Universalists and how the Source affects their lives.

Jewish and Christian teachings are rooted in the Bible, yet there are questions about who wrote the Christian Bible and how much was actually written during the life of Jesus. The Hebrew Scriptures, or Tanakh, are composed of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), Prophets, and Writings, also known as The Hebrew Bible. Christianity arose from Judaism, so we will begin with reading texts by and about Jewish Unitarian Universalists.

There are more readings and videos here than you likely have time to delve into. Choose some options from Judaism and some from Christianity as your time permits.

Readings on the Intersection of Judaism and Unitarian Universalism:

- **[“Tambourines and Teshuva”](#)** by Rev. Dana Olandt from Jewish Voices of Unitarian Universalist Voices. You can purchase this as an optional book: **[Jewish Voices in Unitarian Universalism](#)** edited by Leah Hart Landsburg and Marti Keller, to read more stories at the intersection of Judaism and Unitarian Universalism.
- **[“Kindness to the Thousandth Generation”](#)** by Ana Levy-Lyons in *UU World*, March, 2020. Note that if you print this out, it has God's name included, which is treated as a living being by Jewish people and thus should not be destroyed.
- **[“Tikum Olum: Repairing the World”](#)**

Optional Readings and Videos

- Learn about the theology of **[Jewish Religious Holidays](#)** found in the resource section of Unitarian Universalist Jewish Awareness.
- **[Unitarian Universalism and the Jewish Tradition](#)**, Rev. Chris Buice. (11 min 30 sec)

Readings on the Intersection of Christianity and Unitarian Universalism:

- **[“To Keep One's Soul”](#)** by Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley found in Christian Voices of Unitarian Universalists. You can also purchase the optional book **[Christian Voices in Unitarian Universalism: Contemporary Essays](#)** edited by Kathleen Rolenz to read more stories at the intersection of Christianity and Unitarian Universalism. Permission

granted by [Rev. Dr. Clyde Grubbs](#), Bowen-Wheatley's husband.

- [“The Faith of our Christian Unitarian Universalists*,*”](#) a pamphlet by Rev. Stephen Kendrick.
- [“Trading Messiah for Mentor”](#) various Unitarian Universalist views on Jesus.

Related Video

- [“Rev. Jake Morrill and Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason about Unitarian Universalist Christianity.”](#) The VUU from Church of the Larger Fellowship #211. Begin with Jake Morrill at 9:15.

Optional Reading

- [“Historical Sketch of Jesus”](#) (part of a chapter) by Rev. Scotty McLennan from [Christ for Unitarian Universalists: A New Dialogue with traditional Christianity.](#)

Reflection Questions

- What surprised you in these readings and videos?
- What is your personal connection to, or understanding of, Christianity and Judaism?
- Where do you see Christian or Jewish theology lifted up in Unitarian Universalism?

If you have not yet emailed your responses to the feedback questions below to me, please do so before our next session. This is a chance to weigh in on any concerns they have so your group can reset and refocus as needed. Please cut and paste the questions below when you email me.

1. What is working well?
2. What is not working well?
3. What would you like to change?

Thinking of you all and looking forward to our time together!

Session Plan

Chalice Lighting and Silence

“ My hope is that we always strive to see past the labels we tend to put on one another, that we avoid the “other-ing” we can easily slip into when we don’t see eye-to-eye theologically, and that we celebrate the essence of what we share in

a tradition rich with dialogue and diversity steeped in an unshakable understanding of the inherent worth and dignity of all human beings, whatever their beliefs. Cricket Potter

Cricket Potter from the essay “Learning to Love the Questions” in [*Christian Voices in Unitarian Universalism: Contemporary Essays*](#), Skinner House Books.

Today’s music is [Leat Sabbah](#), Avinu Malkeinu (4 min 43 sec)

Let’s take a few minutes of silence to bring ourselves fully into this circle.

Check-In

What are you carrying in your heart tonight? How is your spiritual practice or spiritual companioning going?

Covenant Review

Use whatever process your group has established to stay current with the covenant. Use this time to discuss any feedback that has been received (what in the group is working well/not working well/could be changed).

Is there anything about the covenant that we should address?

Spiritual Practice Presentation

Reflection

We’re starting our reflection on this UU source:

“Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God’s love by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

UUA

Reflection Questions

- What surprised you in these readings and videos?
- What is your personal connection to, or understanding of, Christianity and Judaism?

- Where do you see Christian or Jewish theology lifted up in Unitarian Universalism?

So What?

How does this reflection relate to your spiritual journey? What are you inspired or challenged to do next?

Gratitude and Closing

Have everyone focus on the chalice. Each person, as moved, says one or two words about something from this session for which they are grateful or how they are feeling in this moment. After everyone has said a word, close with a brief statement of thanks and appreciation. Possible closing music: [Spirit of Life](#) as sung by the Orange County UU Choir.

Revision #2

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