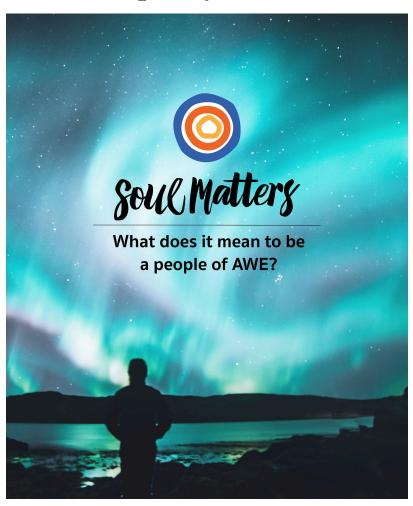


# South Fraser Unitarians

What does it mean to be a People of Awe?



SFUC Thematic Packet November and December 2020

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# What Does It Mean to Be a People of Awe?

This at least seems to me the main problem... How can we contrive to be at once astonished at the world and yet at home in it? ... How can this world give us at once the fascination of a strange town and the comfort and honor of being our own town?

- G.K. Chesterton

The path of awe seems well worn. It's a journey intended to bring us down to size. Pictures of our galaxy with a note that there are 100 billion more just like it. Videos of deep-sea creatures with bioluminescent bodies. Images of the northern lights that are utterly otherworldly. All of them remind us that the universe is vaster than we can imagine. All of them leave us with a sense of wonder that overwhelms. We are brought to the edge of what we can wrap our minds around. It's like staring into an incomprehensible abyss. One can't help but feel humbled and small.

But religion has never wanted us to stop there. Hold tight it says. I know it's hard but trust us: the path doesn't end with a deep darkness that doesn't care. Just stand at the abyss a bit longer. Lean in just a little bit more. And when you do so, suddenly an invitation emerges from that awe-full abyss. You look into the vast mystery and surprisingly, it stares back, as if to say, "Welcome home."

As physicists tell us, contemplation of the vast universe doesn't make them feel smaller, it makes them realize the larger story of which they are a part. We are stardust, as they say. From the vastness we came and to it we will return again. In other words, to be a people of awe is not so much about feeling small; it's about feeling connected.

And not just connected to the stars, but also to each other. Awe reduces our size *in order* to make room for something more than our personal needs, wants and worries. With our narcissism shrunk down to a reasonable proportion, it becomes possible to notice that we are not the only ones up there on the stage. It's in this way that looking up into the cosmos allows us to look across at each other. And it's a huge gift, because while being center stage and center of the universe can feel powerful, it's also a very lonely place to stand.

So friends, don't just look up at the stars over the next couple of months. Let that looking up also lead to you looking across. And in doing so, may you - like our friend G.K. Chesterton - not simply be astonished at the universe but also feel at home in it.

# **Our Spiritual Exercises**

New research is clear: Awe heals us!

It's like taking all of our pharmaceutical supplements, diets, daily gym visits, spiritual practices and life coaches and packaging them up in a single, perfect, cure-all pill. That's right, a daily dose of awe increases health, happiness, humility, creativity and a sense of connection! It does it all!

But here's the catch: Not all of us can take a daily trip to the Grand Canyon. Stunning sunrises don't happen every morning. Clouds and city lights cut us off from nightly views of the stars.

So, we need to find other ways to get our daily dose of awe. And that's what these spiritual exercise options are all about. Each of our options offer an easy and accessible way to connect to awe.

So, get to it. Find the ones that fits you. And remember, while we all commit to doing at least one of our monthly exercises each month, in this case, it doesn't hurt to double your dose!

#### **Option A - Collect Awe Stories**

One way to get more awe into our lives is to barrow it from others. That's right turns out we can feel awe when we listen to others share their awe stories.

So, this month, dive into some awe. Here's your assignment:

#### **Collect Five Stories of Awe**

Anyone is fair game. Life Partners. Parents. Siblings. Neighbors. Co-workers. Even strangers! Take them out for coffee or just ask if they have 5 minutes. Sure, you'll be nervous. It's a peculiar thing to ask people about. But trust us, everybody's got a great awe story, and everybody is secretly dying to share it!

Before you come to your group, spend a bit of time comparing and contrasting the stories. Which of those similarities or key differences spoke to you? Where was the gift (or challenge) in that for you?

#### **Option B - Remember the Awe of All You Are**

It's not easy to look at ourselves with awe. Awe is reserved for majestic objects *outside* us. But, as poet Joy Harjo reminds us, the most breathtaking and life-transforming experiences come from remembering that there isn't really a separation between that which is "out there" and us. We are connected to the awesome world around us. Those relationships make up our "larger self." And noticing that larger self is one of the most humbling and awe-filled experiences we can have.

So, this month, let Joy Harjo lead you through the awe of your larger self, through the awe of all you are. Here's how:

- Read over Harjo's poem, *Remember*, numerous times: <a href="https://poets.org/poem/remember-0">https://poets.org/poem/remember-0</a> (Another creative version here: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE4yRvaW170">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE4yRvaW170</a>)
- Notice how each line represents a different part of your larger self.
- Then, following each line, one by one, find a way to engage and honor each of those various parts of yourself.

In other words, treat her poem as a list: the sky, the sun, your birth, the wind, the earth, language. Use the month to create a moment of connection with each, using Harjo's words to help you notice how each is a dimension of you.

#### **Option C – Widening the Circle of Concern**

Join Rev. Samaya on Saturdays from 1-2 pm with your Black Lives Matter signs or any other sign promoting racial justice. For one hour we stand in front of Sunnyside United Church, our usual service location when it's safe to meet in person, letting our community know that we take our mission statement seriously to heart when we say that we care by working for a just and sustainable world.

Come to your group ready to share what the experience meant to you and how it helps to widen the circle of concern you have for the world.

#### Option D – Leaning into Hinduism Spiritual Practice for November

In Hinduism, sound is believed to be the seed and origin of creation. Om, sometimes spelled Aum, is the primordial sound. Our "leaning in" spiritual practice this month will be to engage with mantras. In the Wise Words section of this packet, there are three mantras listed. The words are in the ancient sacred language of Sanskrit. We have provided a translation (courtesy of Exploring World Religions workbook 2013 ed.). The links provided will allow you to listen to the mantras and experience them. Choose one to engage with or check them all out. Pay attention to what you feel physically, emotionally, mentally as you hear them. Does listening more than once change your experience? If you chant as well as listen, does that change your experience?

#### **Option E – Leaning into Christianity for December**

December is the month of Advent for our Christian cousins. It is a season of waiting and anticipation. It is the beginning of their liturgical year. They await the birth of Christ at Christmas. This has many layers of meaning and understanding. As we 'lean into' the Christian tradition let us consider the essence of the message that he brought – to **love** and care for one another including those less fortunate than ourselves to count no one outside the circle of concern, to challenge corrupt power systems with the **hope** of equity, to strive for **peace** in our own lives and among all people and to find and acknowledge **joy**'s abundant presence.

You are invited to light Advent candles this month, create a wreath or alter if you like, set time aside to meditate/reflect on the week's attribute.

Offered here are edited words from Greta Vosper.

- Week  $1 \mathbf{Hope} \mathbf{May}$  we hold fast to hope's patient possibilities. May we lift them high that they might catch the light of our dreams and shine bright in our broken world.
- Week 2 **Peace** May we inspire the world with peace. May we touch it to our lives that in every place of stress, frustration, or fear, we might feel the presence of peace easing our hearts and transforming our lives.
- Week 3 **Joy** May we create joy in all our surroundings as we share gifts, meals, and simple pleasures with family and friends. May the easy gift of a smile bring the power of joy's touch to those we meet through these busy days.
- Week 4 **Love** May love flow from our hearts with abundance filling every moment with the season's gifts of hope and peace and joy. May it be shared truly and deeply that all who encounter it be charged with its message and become, themselves, the agents of love.

#### Option F - Find Awe in Our Recommended Resources

Our recommended resources are full of wisdom about what it means to be a people of and a person of awe. Engaging these resources and finding the one that especially speaks to you is a spiritual practice in and of itself.

So, if none of the above exercises call to you, engage the recommended resources section of this packet as your spiritual exercise for the month.

Set aside some regular time throughout a week to go through them and meditate on them until you find the one that most expands or deepens your understanding of belonging. After you've found it, consider printing it out and carrying it with you or pinning it up so you can continue to reflect on it throughout the weeks leading up to your group meeting. Come to your group ready to share where the journey led you.

# **Your Question**

As always, don't treat these questions like "homework" or a list that needs to be covered in its entirety. Instead, simply pick the single question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out what being a part of a people of blessing means for you and your daily living. So, which question is calling to you? Which one contains "your work"? Where is that question trying to lead you?

- 1. Can awe be anticipated? Do we wait for awe to be present?
- 2. Who taught you the most about "living in awe"?
- 3. Has age impeded or assisted awe for you?
- 4. How as the *location* of awe changed for you over time? Has it shifted from the stars to the woods? From the birth of planets to the birth of your child? From the physical feats your body allows to the storied wrinkles of your hand. What now leaves you most in awe when you look at it?
- 5. Have you ever turned to the stars for support? Comfort? Escape? Connection?
- 6. Is awe calling you to feel smaller or bigger?
- 7. What if we need awe to be good?
- 8. Have you ever sat in the middle of nature and it suddenly came to life? What gift did that experience leave you with?
- 9. Is it possible that awe is where God is found?
- 10. Do you most often complain about your body or stand in awe of it?
- 11. When was the last time you stood in awe of your life partner?

- 12. When was the last time you stood in awe of your child?
- 13. Can you imagine someone standing in awe of you?
- 14. **What's your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it. Or maybe the question or call you need to hear is waiting in one of the quotes listed below. Consider looking there!

# **Family Faith Formation**

# **Books and Readings on Awe**

#### On the Night You Were Born, by Nancy Tillman

Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4Dd0Dkym3E

"On the night you were born, the moon smiled with such wonder that the stars peeked in to see you and the night wind whispered. "Life will never be the same." - Amazon

We are in awe each time there is new life born.



# **Family Activity**

Prepare for Chalica! Chalica is a holiday designed by Daylene Marshall. For those that don't know, Daylene was our Director of Religious Exploration at one time. She designed the holiday in 2005 as a way for families to have a holiday that comes from our Unitarian Universalist principles. It is a week long event with families coming together each day.

Chalica begins on the first Monday in December and lasts seven days. Each day, a chalice is lit, and the day is spent reflecting on the meaning of that day's principle and doing a good deed that honors that principle. Not all Unitarian Universalists celebrate Chalica, but it has a growing following.

To prepare to celebrate, you'll want to gather seven candles that can be lit over the week. Gather around at a mealtime and light your chalice together as a family in honour of each one of our seven principles and discuss ways you are already living out this principle in your daily lives and consider additional ways you can. To get you started:

• Day One, Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> – light your chalice for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Additional activities to engage in include helping someone in need, writing to someone in

- prison, or engaging in a peace offering such as inviting someone to dinner or making an apology to that person.
- Day Two Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> light your chalice for justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. On this day you can spend time in a soup kitchen or donate some of your gently used clothing. You can also make a promise to yourself to speak up when you see cruel or bullying behaviour whether it's online or in person.
- Day Three Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> light your chalice in honour of the acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. For this day, you might want to take time to make yourself a chalice to use at home and discuss what it means. You could also gift the family with a hymnal or talk to an elder in the congregation about what they believe.
- Day Four Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup> light your chalice for a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. On this day, take time to teach someone something you know, or learn something new from someone else.
- Day Five Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup> light your chalice for the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. Take time on this day to work for a cause by writing to your elected officials, or to help the congregation with a task that needs doing or on a committee that needs some additional help. See Rev. Samaya for some ideas.
- Day Six Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup> Light your chalice for world peace, liberty and justice for all.
   Make plans to join Rev. Samaya from 1-2 pm outside Peninsula United's Sunnyside location engaging in social activism.
- Day Seven Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> Light your chalice as a sign of respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. On this day, start a compost heap, plant seeds, or get cloth bags and use them instead of plastic or paper ones

# **Family Movie**

#### The True Meaning of Crumbfest

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Scsnf4EYMpo

A movie that celebrates the wonder and awe of kindness. "Winner of the Ann Connor Brimer Award for Children's Literature; over 17,000 copies in print; animated Christmas special on TELETOON, with the spin-off series Eckhart The True Meaning of Crumbfest is the story of a curious little mouse named Ekhart, who sets off to discover the truth about that most abundant time of year called 'Crumbfest,' when bounteous crumbs miraculously appear in the old Prince Edward Island farmhouse in which he lives. ... this a heartwarming tale of the magic that happens when the 'Outside' and the 'Inside' come together." - Amazon

# **Companion Pieces**

#### Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

The following resources are not required reading. We will not analyze these pieces in our group. Instead they are here to companion you on your journey this month, get your thinking started and open you to new ways of thinking about what it means to be part of a people of belonging.

#### **Word Roots & Definitions**

Our expression "awe" is rooted in the Greek word *áchos* which also gives us the word ache. That vastness we experience in awe opens an ache in the heart, and by doing so, expands it.

"Awe is the feeling of being in the presence of something vast that transcends your understanding of the world." *Dacher Keltner* 

"Awe: An experience of such perceptual vastness you literally have to reconfigure your mental models of the world to assimilate it." *Nicholas Humphrey* 

#### Wise Words from the Hindu Tradition

#### GAYATRI MANTRA

Sanskrit:

Om.

Bhur bhuwa swaha

Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi

Diyo yo nah pracodayat

Om

**English Translation** 

I meditate on the brilliant light of the One worthy of worship
Source of all worlds; may that One illuminate
Our minds

#### Gayatri Mantra sung by Shankar Mahadevan

#### The Asato Ma

(From the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Upanishads are sacred scripture in the Hindu tradition)

Sanskrit

Om, Asato Maa Sad Gamaya Tamaso Maa Jyotir Gamaya Mrityor Maa Amrtam Gamaya Shanti, Shanti, Shanti

#### English Translation

O Lord, Lead us from the unreal to the real.

Lead us from darkness to light.

Lead us from death to life.

Peace, Peace, Perfect Peace.

Two options are listed. Which one resonates with you?

- Asato Ma Sadgamaya With Lyrics Early Morning Chant Peace Mantra Rajshri
- <u>Asato Ma music by Ravi Shankar</u> (produced by George Harrison) chant starts about 2:30 into the recording.

Om Namath Shivaya

Sanskirt

Om namah Shivaya Shivaya namah, Shivaya namah om Shambhu Shankara namah Shivaya Girija Shankara namah Shivaya Arunachala Shiva namah Shivaya

#### **Explanation**

- Om the primal creative force containing all other sounds
- Namah to bow or to honour the name of
- Shivaya Lord Shiva is the divine power that dissolves or brings to a close the creative cycle
- Shambhu causing great happiness; description of Shiva's beneficent aspect in the reintegration of new life
- Shankara used to refer to Shiva in his role as creator
- Girija "mountain born" Refers to Shiva's wife Parvati, who is the daughter of Himavat, the personification of the Himalayas. Together Shiva and Parvati represent the union of divine potential and divine energy.
- Arunachala a large hill in South India and a pilgrimage site sacred to Shiva.

#### Om Namah Shivaya - Krishna Das Live! Songs With Lyrics

This is long - 15 minutes but is a great illustration of how the chanting and repetition of mantras can lead to ecstatic states. Example of how call and response is sometimes used in mantra chanting. Krishna Das has many different mantras on YouTube.

<u>Chant Om Namah Shivay</u> for 108 times\*(source: The Divine Mantras) Again, long but it takes time to chant On Namah Shivay 108 times!

\* 108 is a number of the wholeness of existence - believed to connect the sun, moon and earth. There are said to 108 pithas or sacred sites throughout India, 108 Upanishads (sacred text), 108 marma points (energy points in the body used in Ayurveda medicine); mala (prayer beads) traditionally have 108 beads.

#### Om (Aum) Chanting

There are lots of Om chanting meditations on YouTube. Here are a couple of examples, pick another one, or simply chant Om without a guide.

- Om Mantra 5 minutes deep meditation
- Om Mantra Meditation 11 minutes

#### **Wise Words from the Christian Tradition**

#### The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky is gone, When the kings and the princes are home, When the shepherds are back with their flock, The work of Christmas begins:

to find the lost,

to heal the broken

to feed the hungry,

to release the prisons,

to rebuild the nations,

to bring peace among the brothers,

to make music in the heart. Howard Thurman

May every one of us know a midnight clear, a midnight and a dawn and daytime when we know our desert and know the shape of our journey. May we hear the love songs sung by all good angels and learn to sing them wherever our lives take us. May peace be the spirit of our hearts and the work of our hands. And may joy and hope ever accompany our footsteps. *Libbie D. Stoddard* 

#### Wise Words on Awe

On the way to the play, we stopped to look at the stars. I felt in awe.

And then I felt even deeper in awe at this capacity we have to be in awe about something.

Then I became even more awestruck at the thought that I was, in some small way, a part of that which I was in awe about. Lily Tomlin

Seven to eleven is a huge chunk of life, full of dulling and forgetting. It is fabled that we slowly lose the gift of speech with animals, that birds no longer visit our windowsills to converse. As our eyes grow accustomed to sight they armor themselves against wonder. *Leonard Cohen* 

Were the sun to rise but once a year, we would all cry out...How glorious! Our hymns would rise up, our thanks would ascend. O God, ...Give us new eyes... and vision to see the world anew. A Jewish Prayer Book

The other world is this world rightly seen. *Nisargadatta Maharaj* 

You see, I have never felt the need to invent a world beyond this world, for this world has always seemed large and beautiful enough for me. I have wondered why it is not large and beautiful enough for others — why they must dream up new and marvelous spheres, or long to live elsewhere, beyond this dominion … but that is not my business. We are all different, I suppose. *Alma Whittaker*, in *Elizabeth Gilbert's The Signature of All Things* 

Everything was glowing with heaven's unquenchable enthusiasm... I tremble with excitement in the dawn of these glorious mountain sublimities, but I can only gaze and wonder. Our camp grove fills and thrills with the glorious light. Everything awakening alert and joyful... Every pulse beats high, every cell life rejoices, the very rocks seem to thrill with life. The whole landscape glows like a human face in a glory of enthusiasm. The mountains, the trees, the air were, effused, joyful, wonderful, enchanting, banishing weariness and a sense of time. *John Muir, writing about his first visit to Yosemite*.

The sense of awe and mystery, for some reason, has gotten greater as I've got older. I'm not sure why. Maybe because many of us, as we get older, we start thinking more about the fact our life is going to come to an end, and we become a bit more religious and philosophical. If you don't have conventional religious belief, as I don't, I think in a way thinking about the mystery of one's own consciousness and the universe is a sort of compensation for that in some ways. *Henry Marsh* 

Don't let the world become familiar don't forget the sheer strangeness of being alive. Don't forget the sheer strangeness of being here on the surface of this spinning globe. Don't forget the sheer strangeness of being this body that breathes and blinks and heals and grows a miracle of precision and complexity. Don't forget the strangeness of seeming to be a ghostly self that lives inside your body, that has attached itself to your form, that seems to stare out from your eyes and can spin webs of logic, create alternate abstract worlds. Don't forget the sheer strangeness of this world of form where matter pulses with consciousness. It's a strangeness even stranger because it's not hostile or indifferent but right and reassuring, somehow warm and welcoming, like a chaos that was always planned a riddle that makes perfect sense a cacophony of meaning, full of hidden harmony. Steve Taylor

One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, "What if I knew I would never see it again?" *Rachel Carson* 

Awe is an intuition for the dignity of all things, a realization that things not only are what they are but also stand, however remotely, for something supreme... Awe enables us to perceive in the world intimations of the divine... to sense the ultimate in the common and the simple; to feel in the rush of the passing the stillness of the eternal. What we cannot comprehend by analysis, we become aware of in awe. *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel* 

What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe? Why does the universe go to all the bother of existing? *Stephen Hawking* 

Away from the immense, cloistered in our own concepts, we may scorn and revile everything...
But we can never sneer at the stars, mock the dawn or scoff at the totality of being. *Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel* 

Awe imbues people with a different sense of themselves, one that is smaller, more humble and part of something larger... Even brief experiences of awe, such as being amid beautiful tall trees, lead people to feel less narcissistic and entitled and more attuned to the common humanity people share with one another. In the great balancing act of our social lives, between the gratification of self-interest and a concern for others, fleeting experiences of awe redefine the self in terms of the collective. *Paul Piff and Dacher Keltner* 

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. They to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: Their eyes are closed. *Albert Einstein* 

Wonder takes our breath away, and makes room for new breath. That's why they call it breathtaking. *Anne Lamott* 

Awe makes things new again. And that makes it the best drug in the world. Jason Silva

#### Singularity, Marie Howe

"would that we could wake up to what we were

— when we were ocean and before that
to when sky was earth, and animal was energy, and rock was liquid...
before we came to believe humans were so important..."

People go abroad to wonder at the heights of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motions of the stars, and they pass by themselves without wondering. *Saint Augustine* 

You sing your song in your own key, in your own beautiful voice, and the cosmos listens, reverently. *Rev. Victoria Safford* 

Here dies another day
During which I have had eyes, ears, hands
And the great world round me;
And with tomorrow begins another.
Why am I allowed two? *G.K. Chesterton* 

Let me keep my mind on what matters, which is my work, which is mostly standing still and learning to be astonished. *Mary Oliver* 

#### Movie and Book

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

#### **Songs and Music**

Find songs that celebrate and put you in touch with awe on our Soul Matters Spotify playlist.

Click here to check them out!

You can explore all of our Spotify playlists from other months <u>here</u>.

And the same playlists are also on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvXOKgOQVYP7FakTmnWoJaY2hfzZ1DDAa

#### **Online**

#### A History of Everything, Including You

Jenny Hollowell

Video Meditation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17bU94OYyxQ

Audio: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKtcbZ4qVBY

Text: http://www.bluephoto.biz/blog/2012/08/a-history-of-everything-including-you-by-jenny-

hollowell/

In awe of the very grand and the very particular sweeping story of which we are a part... "Can you believe it?!"

#### The Trouble with Everything - Radiolab Podcast

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2MGAEKFfdY

(Starts at minute 13:30)

On the awesome and infinite universe(s), humility and the ability to ask better questions, with a bit of an argument about faith and science in the face of awe.

#### The Night the Sky Fell Down Upon Us

Maya Rogers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFDNESYxMcA&fbclid=IwAR1yDImwppUoqQD-i1EVjGQF00zRcsexDkTIzm37OMGxs0Fd6TP2AnPKMzs

Finding connection, feeling awe and slipping into self-transcendence... all put to music!

#### Beethoven - spoken poetry

Shane Koyczan

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppwowTJg0mI&t=142s

The awesome story and gift of Beethoven. "For a moment it was like joy was a tangible thing..."

#### **Reality is Gorgeous**

Alan Watts

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nsjAOchF7M

"Don't you realize that sitting around here in this room with our ordinary everyday faces and clothes, we are sitting smack in the middle of the beatific vision and that this is infinity and eternity precisely. This is God."

#### An Awe-inspiring Expression of Awe!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\_continue=37&v=uRhgERhMcGg

#### If You Want to be Awe Inspired...

Christopher Hitchens

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXEiKPxCSdA

Articles

#### Why Do We Feel Awe?

Dacher Keltner

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why do we feel awe

On the power of awe to increase our caring, creativity and health... just to name a few!

# How Awe-Inspiring Experiences Can Make You Happier, Less Stressed And More Creative

Carolyn Gregoire

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-psychology-of-awe n 5799850

"Here are 5 things you should know about awe, and how the emotion can boost your well-being and quality of life..."

#### **Future Themes**

Theme packets will be posted to our website, surreyunitarians.ca, on the Thursday prior to the theme starting. If you'd like to join a small group, please contact Rev. Samaya. Small groups typically meet:

- the third Monday evening of each month (except in November when the group will meet on the last Monday evening of the month); and
- the fourth Wednesday afternoon of each month.

Themes for the 2020-2021 year have been set! Look forward to the following:

January and February—What does it mean to be a people of resilience? March and April—What does it mean to be a people of wisdom? May and June—What does it mean to be a people of play?



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