

NEW YEAR – ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

(Adapted from the session developed by Rev. Helen Zidowecki)

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

“The Ceaseless Flow of Endless Time”

The ceaseless flow of endless time no one can check or stay,
we'll view the past with nor regret, nor future with dismay.
The present slips into the past, and dream-like melts away,
the breaking of tomorrow's dawn begins a new today.
The past and future ever meet in the eternal now,
to make each day a thing complete, shall be our New Year vow.

~John Andrew Storey, *Singing the Living Tradition* #350

PURPOSE: We come together to build connections and talk about what deeply matters to us.

CHECK IN: What you share may be about your physical or spiritual health, cares or concerns for loved ones, issues you are facing. What are you leaving behind to be here today?

READING OF GROUP COVENANT

FOCUS: *New Year – Endings and Beginnings*

Each person in the group speaks uninterrupted; if time remains, general response and conversation are welcome.

Different cultures celebrate the New Year at different times. Regardless of when the New Year is celebrated, the focus is on letting go of the past so there can be rejuvenation for the New Year. January is named for the Roman God Janus, who looks back over the last year and forward to the New Year.

Questions for reflection:

As we begin the New Year, share *accomplishments* of your last year. What are you bringing forward into the New Year? Or.....What are you *leaving behind*? How does this feel?

How might you transform yourself or your life in this New Year?

What are you *beginning* in this New Year?

What qualities do you have within yourself to make this year the kind of year that you would like it to be?

Do you typically make New Year's resolutions? Why or why not? What has your experience been?

CONFIDENTIALITY CHECK: Is there anything that you shared here today that you would like held confidential? Otherwise, this is a reminder that we treat each other's sharing with kindness and respect.

CHECK OUT

CLOSING WORDS:

“What we call a beginning is often the end and to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.” ~T.S. Eliot

So honor the beginnings in life: Birthdays, new moons, the first day of each month, the beginning of each new day, and the inhaling of each breath...~ .Rev. Helen Zidowecki, January 2008