

40/40/40

for the Earth!

40 YEARS of Earth Day / 40 DAYS of commitment/
40 UUs in your congregation stand up for the Earth
April 18 - May 27, 2010



Favorite UU Table Graces

Many Unitarian Universalists share an intentional moment before a meal, to dwell in gratitude and remind ourselves of our ongoing commitment to use our gifts in service of our values. Such “table graces” create a space of centering and deepening, and give thanks for the effort and delight involved in bringing food, family, and friends together. Table graces can be silent, spoken, or sung, perhaps as a chalice lighting, perhaps not. The specific forms and words are less important than the intention, and cumulative effect, of pausing in gratitude for and awareness of life’s gifts and potential. Enjoy the sampling below, and send more examples to the 40/40/40 blog at www.tr.im/40blog.

[Sung] From you I receive, to you I give,
Together we share, and from this we live.
(Joseph and Nathan Segal, *Singing the Living Tradition* #402)

[Sung] All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing ye aloud with cheerful voice;
Let hearts in exultation swell;
Come now together and rejoice
(William Keith, *Singing the Living Tradition* #370)

Loving spirit, be our guest,
Dine with us, share our bread,
That our table might be blessed
And our souls be fed. (Rev. Gary Kowalksi)

The food which we are about to eat is Earth,
Water, and Sun, compounded through the
alchemy of many plants. Therefore Earth,
Water and Sun will become part of us.
This food is also the fruit of the labor of
many. We are grateful for it. May it give us
strength, health, joy, and may it increase our
love.
(Traditional Unitarian grace)

May we hold hands quietly for a moment...
feeling love flow around us and through us,
knowing that as we give it away there is
always more here. Amen. (Unknown)

It is a blessing to be.
It is a blessing to be here.
It is a blessing to be here now.
It is a blessing to be here now together.
(Other phrases, ranging from silly to serious,
may be added.)
Amen. (Traditional Unitarian Universalist)

Let us walk away from the table with more
sustenance than we had, with more joy that
we had, and with more appreciation of each
other than when we had when we came to
this table. (David Kimball)

May we come to know what is good in us, to
use what is good in us, and to share what is
good in us with one another. Amen. (Donald
T. Marshall)

For what we are about to receive, let us be
truly thankful to those who prepared and
served it. In this festivity let us remember too
those who have none, those who cannot share
this plenty, those whose lives are more
affected than our own by war, oppression and
exploitation, those who are hungry, sick and
cold. In sharing in this meal, let us be truly
thankful for the good in our lives, and may
we commit once again to bringing more good
to the world. (Author Unknown)

Spirit who is all things to us; Presence in which we live and move and breathe and have our being: What a gift to be here together, sharing our food, our spirit, our selves! We ask no blessing upon this food, nor upon ourselves, because the blessing is always here, if we but pay attention.

What we do ask is for the courage and wisdom to be mindful of thy great blessings. We ask, O Holy One, that we remember to cherish this food, savoring the tastes, the smells, the feel, the miracle of nourishment to our bodies, gifts of our lovely earth. We ask, too, that we remember to cherish each other, to taste and savor our relationships, to understand that what we know of the sacred we know through these bodies and through these connections of friendship and love.

Grant us the wisdom to pay attention; grant us the generosity and the strength to open our hearts. So be it. Blessed be. Amen. (The Rev. Elizabeth L. Greene)

Let us think thrice while we are gathering here for this meal.

First, let us think of the people we are with today, and make the most of the pleasure of sharing food and drink together.

Then, let us think of the people who made the food and drink and brought it to us, who serve us and wait on us, and who clear up and clean up after us.

Finally, let us think of all the people all over the world, members with us in the human family, who will not have a meal today. (Nicolas Walter)

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.

Blessed art Thou, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam borei pri ha-etz.

Blessed art Thou, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe who creates the fruit of the tree. (Traditional Jewish blessings)

God is great! God is good!
And we thank you for our food. Amen.
(Traditional Christian children's grace)

This ritual is One.
The food is One.
We who offer the food are One.
The fire of hunger is also One.
All action is One.
We who understand this are One.
(Traditional Hindu blessing)

May we be well, happy, and at peace. May we be free from pain, hunger, and suffering. May all beings be well, happy, and at peace. May they be free from pain, hunger, and suffering. (Traditional Buddhist blessing)

Add your own favorite table graces here, and send them to the 40/40/40 blog at www.tr.im/40blog.

Some of my own favorite table graces: