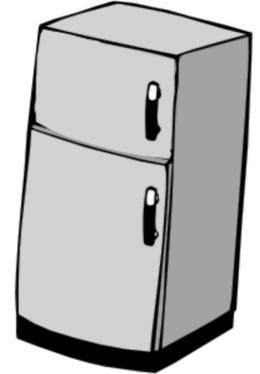




# RE-Frigerator Page



## We Celebrate...

Our theme for April is Miracles. What would you call a miracle?

Some people say that miracles are supernatural events caused by God. They would say that God breaks in to the world to help someone who is special, or to show God's power.

Some people think that by definition a miracle is something that can't possibly have happened. They would say that what some



people call miracles are just examples of people wanting to believe an event is magical or caused by God when it really is just unlikely, but ordinary.

Another way to understand miracles is to say

they are things that amaze us and cause us to be filled with wonder. We might not understand how they possibly could have happened. Or we might fully understand a clear scientific explanation, but still be amazed and filled with wonder.

If you look at miracles that way, the world is full of miracles, starting with the fact that we are here and alive and prepared to be witnesses to miracles!

**Family Quest  
of the Church of  
the Larger  
Fellowship**

April 2018



## We Honor...

One of the most amazing stories of our tradition is a story of two men who came together in a miraculous way.

John Murray lived in England, where he became convinced of the truth of Universalism—that God loves everyone, and that no one would be sent to Hell when they died. He preached this good news—until his own life turned terrible. His wife and young child both died, and was unable to pay his debts.

He decided to start over in a new place, and was able to get passage on a ship to New York. But af-

ter the long trip across the sea, fog rolled in, and the ended up stuck off shore in New Jersey.

Now, in that very place lived a man named Thomas Potter who was a Universalist, and had built a chapel, dreaming of a Universalist church. But he was not a preacher, and there were no Universalist preachers anywhere around.

And so it happened that Murray came ashore on a small boat, looking for food to take back to the people who were stranded on board. And he went to the house of Thomas Pot-

ter. Who greeted him, saying, "Ah, here is the preacher who I've been waiting for!"

But Murray had no intention of going back to being a preacher. He was headed to New York. But eventually Potter convinced him that if the wind didn't change, and they were still stuck on Sunday, that he would preach in Potter's chapel.

The wind didn't change. And so John Murray preached, and stayed. He ended up preaching all over the colonial US, and he is considered the founder of Universalism in America.

## Talk About It!

- ☺ How would you describe what a miracle is?
- ☺ Have you ever witnessed something that seemed like a miracle to you?
- ☺ If you wished for a miracle, what would it be?
- ☺ What ordinary things seem miraculous to you?



## Act...

What would it take to work miracles? Unless you've gotten an invitation to Hogwarts, it's unlikely that you'll be making things appear and disappear, or change shape, anytime soon.

But it might still be possible to work miracles, at least in some sense of the word. After all, a miracle is something that is not only wonderful, but also amazing. It is something that no one saw coming.

You've probably heard the saying: "Practice random acts of kindness." Those acts are really kind of little



miracles, good things that no one ever saw coming. Making a miracle might be as small as picking up all your scattered belongings without

being asked, or leaving a kind note for a neighbor. You could make a miracle for someone at school by asking a kid who is alone to join you for lunch. You could make a miracle for a teacher or coach by thanking them for the things they have taught you—the more details the better.

Having a magic wand would be very cool, but there's also something to be said for knowing that you can make miracles with your own, human powers.

## Nurturing the Spirit

One way to nurture your spirit is to practice finding wonder. People who are never impressed by anything may think they are cool, but they might well also be bored and unhappy.

The more you practice being amazed and delighted by what you see around you, the more your spirit grows its ability to live surrounded by amazement and delight.

So maybe you would like to keep a miracle journal. Try to find something each day that seems miraculous to you—something that filled

you with wonder, or that was a joyful surprise. It could be something you did, or something you saw—even something you remembered.

Every day, write down in your journal one miracle, however small. You might find that you have a hard time coming up with new things to bring you wonder. But you might just find that the more you look, the more wonderful things you find.

**Draw something that you think of as miraculous.**

## Tapping the Sources

The first of our list of sources of our living tradition: is

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life.

Well, that's kind of a mouthful! It might help to know that

"transcending" means "going beyond yourself." So the very first thing on the list of where our religion comes from is a conviction that everyone, all around the world, experiences a sense of wonder that draws us out beyond ourselves to see the mystery that surrounds us.

Which is to say that while UUs affirm the use of reason and science in understanding our world, we are also people whose hearts and spirits

are open to mystery and wonder, to things that are outside the realm of what science can explain.

All through our lives we are on the lookout for those miracles that feed our spirits and connect us to the mysteries of life and growth and love and creativity.

Read more about John Murray: <http://uudb.org/articles/johnmurray.html>