

## Let Us Give Thanks

Let us give thanks for a bounty of people.

For children who are our second planting, and though they grow like weeds and the wind too soon blows them away, may they forgive us our cultivation and fondly remember where their roots are.

Let us give thanks:

For generous friends ... with hearts as big as hubbards and smiles as bright as their blossoms

For feisty friends as tart as apples;

For continuous friends, who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us that we've had them;

For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible;

For handsome friends, who are as gorgeous as eggplants and as elegant as a row of corn, and the others, as plain as potatoes and as good for you;

For funny friends, who are as silly as Brussels sprouts and as amusing as Jerusalem artichokes, and serious friends, as complex as cauliflowers and as intricate as onions;

For friends as unpretentious as cabbages, as subtle as summer squash, as persistent as parsley, as

delightful as dill, as endless as zucchini, and who, like parsnips, can be counted on to see you throughout the winter;

For old friends who wind around us like tendrils and hold us, despite our blights, wilts and witherings;

And finally, for those friends now gone, like gardens past that have been harvested and who fed us in their times that we might have life thereafter;

For all these we give thanks.

Rev. Max Coots

Unitarian Universalist Church  
Canton, New York

Grace for 2016 retreat

Words during any potentially stressful interaction with another - I hope they serve you well.

### **The "Just Like Me" Mantra**

(When saying the words below, focus on the individual you are frustrated with.)

*Just like me, you are seeking some happiness in your life.*

*Just like me, you are trying to avoid suffering in your life.*

*Just like me, you have known sadness.*

*Just like me, you want to be loved.*

*Just like me, you were once an innocent child.*

*Just like me, you are a spirit on a journey.*

We're all trying to be good to one another, and little soul-reminders like this can help us get there, especially when the going gets tough.

# COME, HAPPINESS

Happiness,  
you're not what everyone says:  
some flashy friend  
who shows up with fireworks,  
trailing fame and glory.

You are more like a raindrop,  
governed by mysterious principles.  
You fall from the sky  
and hit—*plop!*—with  
a cool kiss of surprise.

Or maybe you're a heartbeat,  
always there,  
speaking in your low, soft voice,  
pumping, warming, strengthening  
under the surface of things,  
just doing your work.

Happiness, you're like a breeze  
sucked in by eager lungs.  
You fill and feed us,  
and yet somehow, in the exhale,  
you are shared.

So come,  
come to us, Happiness.  
Bathe us with your cool spray.  
Fill us with your splendid breath.  
Help us do your work.

from a book titled *What the Heart Knows: Chants, Charms & Blessings*  
— written by Joyce Sidman and illustrated by Pamela Zagerenski.



# Beatitudes for the Weird

**Blessed are the weird people -**  
poets, misfits, writers, mystics  
heretics, painters & troubadours...  
for they teach us to see the world through different eyes

**Blessed are those who embrace the intensity of life's pain and pleasure,** for they shall be rewarded with uncommon ecstasy.

**Blessed are ye who see beauty in ugliness,**  
for you shall transform our vision of how the world might be.

**Blessed are the bold and whimsical,**  
for their imagination shatters ancient boundaries of fear for us all.

**Blessed are ye who are mocked for unbridled expression of love in all its forms,** because your kind of crazy is exactly that freedom for which the world is unconsciously begging.

**Blessed are those who have endured breaking by life,** for they are the resplendent cracks through which the light shines.

~ **Jacob Nordby**

(with inspiration from Jesus Christ, Rumi, John Lennon and other weird people)

[www.BlessedAreTheWeird.com](http://www.BlessedAreTheWeird.com)

(author unknown)  
A poem came to mind :

The Butterfly doesn't long to  
be a fish

The fish doesn't long to be  
a bird

The bird doesn't long to be a  
butterfly.

It is enough to be a bird.  
It is enough to be you. You are  
enough.

## Portuguese Coconut Custard Tarts

Makes 12 cupcakes

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1¼ cup milk
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup (200g.) granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract or vanilla, orange extract
- 1 ½ cup sweetened shredded coconut

Instruction:

1. Preheat the oven to 375F. Adjust the oven rack to the middle position. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with 12 paper cupcake liners.
2. Dissolve the cornstarch in ¼ cup milk. In a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar together with whip until well combined. Add the cornstarch mixture, remaining milk, melted butter, lemon extract mix well, and hold in coconut at the end.
3. Ladle the custard into the paper cups, filling each ¼ inch from the top. (make sure to stir the custard frequently as you are filling the cups to keep the coconut well distributed.).
4. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the coconut is nicely browned. Cool completely in the muffin tin before serving.

For makes 24 cupcakes: Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2¼ cup milk
- 6 large eggs
- 2 cup (200g.) granulated sugar
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 4 teaspoons lemon extract or vanilla, orange extract
- 3 cups sweetened shredded coconut

*You may add 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) flour if you wish!*

## ***True Happiness 'Wrap-Up'***

FCCPA/UCC Women's Retreat - January 22-24, 2016

Susan Davis

I like to take what I **knew** to help me understand the **new**. As we prepare ourselves to leave this incredible weekend, I had a "wrap-up" thought that might help me, and possibly all of us. I thought about the word:

### **Holistic**

But I pondered and thought, it could be spelled in another way: **Whole-istic!**

We have come from a **holy** experience and a **holy** place; but, we have also used our **whole** self - using all of the Multiple Intelligences - to understand, experience, and reflect upon our weekend together.

We have tapped into all the ways we could know and learn about "True Happiness." We have shared in many ways and on many levels to **express our true happiness**.

We have:

**Used our five senses:** seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling;

**Used our brain**, expressing our happiness in words and language  
(Verbal/Linguistic Learner)  
as well as through reasoning and numbers (Logical/Mathematical Learner);

**Experienced nature**, observing and understanding the natural world  
around us (Naturalistic Learner);

**Sung and listened** to music and sounds (laughter!!) around us  
(Musical/Rhythmic Learner);

**Moved our bodies** (Bodily/Kinesthetic Learner);

**Experienced person-to-person relationships** (Interpersonal Learner); and

**Had spiritual experiences** through self-reflection, awe, and inner feelings!  
(Intrapersonal Learner).

***As we WRAP-UP our weekend of happiness;  
let us WRAP UP this happiness in a present  
and carry it home  
to present it to our family and friends!***





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## Kids in church!

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?" One child answered, "Mary." The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?"

A little kid said, "Verge."

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

The kid said, "Well, you know, they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

3-year-old Reese:

"Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen."

A little boy was overheard praying:

"Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it.

I'm Having a real good time like I am."

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all

the way home in the back seat of the car.

His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy

replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian

Home, and I wanted to stay with you guys."

**I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's**

**Prayer for several evenings at bedtime.**

**She would repeat after me the lines from the prayer.**

**Finally, she decided to go solo.**

**I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to**

**the end of the prayer:**

**"Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail.**

**One particular four-year-old prayed,**

**"And forgive us our trash baskets**

**as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."**

**A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to**

**Church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"**

**One Bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."**

**Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting**

**Together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud.**

**Finally, his big sister had had enough.**

**"You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."**

**"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked.**

**Angie pointed to the back of the church and said,**

**"See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."**

**A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.' Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"**

**A father was at the beach with his children when the four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked. "He died and went to Heaven," the Dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"**

**A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their Six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"**