



# Exploring Solidarity

## *Religious Education Activity*

### ▶ Exploring Solidarity

“I believe that love, care and solidarity makes our lives possible and makes our communities powerful and soft at the same time. Love, care and solidarity build bonds and relationships that can’t be easily destroyed by the violence and injustice.”

*- Ian Zdanowicz, Co-director, Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP)*

**Educator Notes:** Unitarian Universalist faith formation is an invitation to stretch into relationships of care across the earth. This Guest at Your Table (GAYT) resource from your Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is an exploration of the concept of solidarity. We hope that it will be a joyful exploration of the concept and plant seeds of mutuality instead of saviorism.



## The Big Idea

Solidarity is an idea that describes a feeling of unity - a sense of togetherness - based on respect. Solidarity encourages us to support one another, even if our lived experiences are different from each other, not out of pity, but out of connection.

## Chalice Lighting

Tiny sparks create warm fires.  
Small drops of rain create vast oceans.  
We are small, but we are not alone.  
Together, our love grows to hold the whole world.  
We light our chalice in solidarity with all children on earth today.

~ Deanna Vandiver

## Stories

### ***Together***

**by Mona Damluji, illustrated by Innosanto Nagara**

**ISBN-13: 978-1644210840**

Social justice kids book creator Innosanto Nagara has collaborated with poet and activist Mona Damluji for a beautiful creation that juxtaposes individual action with the power of people acting together. As the global justice partners with UUSC tell their stories, we are invited into recognizing our own power and the greater power of working together in solidarity. You may choose to invite children to notice what creature each page couplet has in common and share that with you at the end of the story (Frog!). You may then invite them to notice if the way the frog showed up was the same or different on each page couplet. If this feels juicy, spend time sharing about how we can be different and connected with care.



## ***“The Parrot and the Eagles”***

as told by Rev. Laura Randall and illustrated by Hannah Moy

<https://vimeo.com/uusc/theparrotandtheeagles>

*CN: Please note, this story contains a forest fire as a central plot point.*

Inspired by the Jataka tales, a collection of Buddhist stories from India, “The Parrot and the Eagles” is a story of honoring frontline leadership and choosing solidarity, a story about the importance of imagination, teamwork, and doing the right thing even when the right thing might be scary.

### **Understanding, Creating, and Practicing Solidarity**

*Below are several possibilities for embodied and imagination integration of the concept of solidarity. You are invited to choose the ones that most closely match the joys and skills of the group you are learning with.*

- Draw examples of things that are easier or more fun when you do them with other people than when you try to do them alone.
- Tell/write a story of a time when you felt like the parrot. Tell a story of a time when you acted like the eagles.  
OR  
With a friend, imagine some more pages for the book Together – what are more things that is one way if it is done by itself and another way if it is done with a collective – a group?
- Find examples outside of plants and creatures who are stronger together than alone. (Perhaps share some of the examples named in Together for a prompt)
- Organizing for Change: One of your friends in this group needs ice cream. They asked an adult and the adult said no without really listening. How might you practice solidarity with them? (This could go a lot of ways, which is of course, part of the fun. If your group needs structure/prompting, you might encourage them to try asking one at a time, asking with a friend, everyone asking for ice cream together!!!)



- Alone/Together game: Everyone is invited to try doing something alone, then to try again with the gathered collective (untying a lot of complicated knots, creating a tall block tower, making a quilt/banner square and then putting them all together to make a collective quilt/banner, ...)
- Collective Rainbow: give each child a few different colors of the rainbow (ROYGBIV) – slips of paper, glass stones, ribbon, blocks, ... - and invite them to gather in solidarity with other children with different rainbow colors to create collective rainbows. This can scale as big or as small as your capacity and imagination.
- Creating a Solidarity Wreath  
*Supplies:*
  - Construction paper in various colors
  - Scissors, including left-handed scissors, to share
  - Color pencils/markers/stickers
  - Glue or glue sticks
  - A large sheet of poster board

You can invite children to be a part of a solidarity wreath. Each child is invited to trace their hands - you can also trace feet, adapting for accessibility. Once traced, everyone is invited to cut out the paper hands/feet (with assistance, if necessary), and decorate them. Children can add their names and/or a feeling/ or a skill they like to share. As the shapes are completed, children are invited to gather around while an adult assembles the shapes into a wreath on the poster board. You may want to glue the wreath with fingers/toes facing outward in the circle. As the glue dries, if there is time, check in with the group and talk about what this activity brought up for them, where you might put the wreath and/or share a picture of it with family and friends.

## Taking it Home

Remember: Solidarity is an idea that describes a feeling of unity - a sense of togetherness - based on respect. How will you describe this idea to your family? What might your family do to practice this big idea?