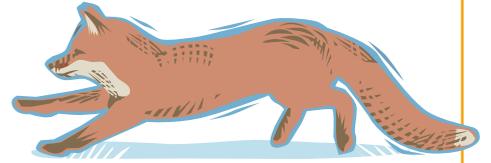


Families

WEAVE A TAPESTRY OF FAITH

LET'S NOT BE LUNCH

Fox and the Geese



The Power of We

One sunny mid-morning, young Goose and their siblings, cousins, parents, and grandparents came upon a gorgeous meadow full of lush green grass and plump ripe grains. Yummy!

They ate so much that their stomachs swelled right up until they almost touched the ground. They were so full they could barely move.

Meanwhile, Fox was out walking. "It seems like forever since I've eaten, and my stomach is rumbling," Fox thought. Coming around a curve in the path, Fox's nose twitched. Something smelled very sweet. A little further on, there in the meadow Fox saw more geese than could be counted. "Lunch," thought Fox, and began to salivate.

Fox snuck quickly in among the tall grass, trying to keep quiet. But Fox couldn't fool the geese. The sunlight glinted off Fox's great big teeth and long sharp claws.

Some of the geese began to quiver and quake. Some began to cry. Some hid their heads under their wings.

Goose was just as worried as the rest. The meadow had no escape. Except for the path where Fox waited, the meadow was surrounded by tall cliffs. And the geese were too full to fly.

But Goose took a deep breath. They weren't going to give in or give up! Goose took another deep breath and then called, "Fox! We know you are there. Before you eat us, please let us say one last blessing of thanks for this life we have lived."

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The Families pages are adapted from Tapestry of Faith lifespan faith development programs. uua.org/tapestry

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Fox salivated some more. Fox thought the geese might taste even sweeter after exercising their gratitude. "Go on, then, and say your blessing," Fox said. "While I wait, I will choose who'll be the tastiest among you."

Goose held their wings out to their siblings, cousins, parents, and grandparents. Soon all the geese were touching wings in a great big circle. They began to pray, "Gaggle, gaggle, gaggle."

Their blessing had rhythm. The geese added harmony. They began to dance a little while they kept on praying: "Gaggle, gaggle, gaggle."

Finally, Fox fell asleep.

Singing and dancing had helped the geese to nicely digest their feast. They left the meadow. When they passed the sleeping fox, Fox's teeth didn't look nearly so sharp nor their claws nearly so long.

Adapted from an Aesop's fable retold by Faye Mogensen in *Ancient Stories for Modern Times* (Skinner House, 2017).

EXPLORING TOGETHER

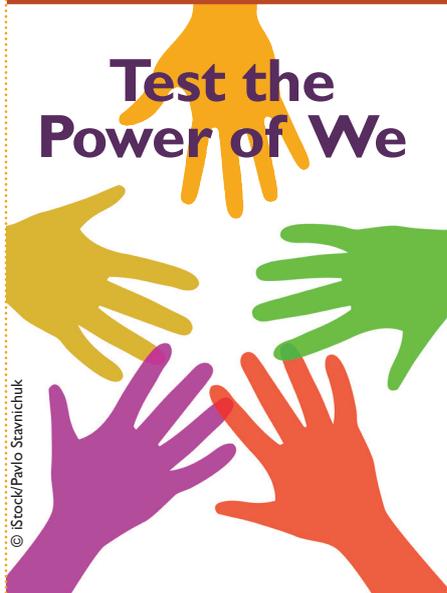
In the story, the geese save their own lives by coming together.

How did the geese discover "the power of we"? What did they do to escape the fox? ● Have you ever joined up with others to resist a threat? Stop a bully? Seek justice?

● **To make a big change, we need to work in big groups.**



Test the Power of We



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Hand Tap Challenge

You will need: 3+ people and a table ● Tell everyone to place their hands on the table in front of them, palms down. ● Have everyone pick up their right hand and place it on the right side of the left hand of the person on their right side. ● Instruct the group to tap, one hand at a time, in a clockwise direction. ● How easy or hard is it?

Try these change-ups ● Switch the direction of the tapping circle. ● Have every fourth hand tap twice. **End the game with an elimination round.** If a hand taps out of turn, that hand must leave the game. ● The owners of the last four hands win, "hands down."

"I" + Who = "We"

Everyone has their own self. That's "I." And every "I" can also say "we." Every single person belongs to groups with others.

Make a list of who you might mean when you say "we."

1. Start with people in your everyday life. Is "we" your family, siblings, or group of friends? You and a best friend? (It might be a dog or cat!)

2. What communities are "we" for you? Your neighborhood? Your school? Your UU congregation? A club, a chorus, or a team?

3. Think of people you identify with even if you don't personally know them. Your list might have "we, the people who are kids" or "we, the vegetarians." It might have "we, the people who know American Sign Language" or "we, the people with Asian heritage."

One Voice



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Lyrics from the song, "This Is the Sound of One Voice," © The Wailin' Jennys.



UU Kids Who Care for the Planet We Share

Humans have not treated our planet well. Some big problems are pollution of the waters, destruction of forests, and carbon fuel emissions. Scientists aren't sure we can reverse the damage to Earth's atmosphere. ● If you re-use and recycle plastic bottles and bags, you are helping. You can choose public transportation instead of a car. Small actions like this are great! ● Speaking out is also something you can do on your own. But we're louder and stronger when we speak together.

Toothpicks Unite!

You will need: A box of toothpicks ● Try to break one toothpick. How easy or hard was that? ● Now hold a few toothpicks in a bunch. Try to break the bunch. ● As you add toothpicks, the bunch will get stronger.



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4. Don't forget to add "Everyone!" Unitarian Universalists believe that all belong to the "we" of humanity.



© iStock/Nattakorn Maneeratandreaantunes

Levi Draheim, 11, is one of 21 kids suing the federal government for failing to protect them from the effects of climate change. The court case, *Juliana v. U.S.*, demands that the government stop supporting fossil fuels. "I'm representing youth, but, really everybody," said Levi. "If we win, the government has to put a climate recovery plan into place."



Charlotte Stuart-Tilley, 13, started School Strike for the Climate in Tallahassee, Florida, joining a global kids' movement. Every other week, during the school day, kids gather outside the State Capitol to



raise public awareness. They miss school to protest damage to the planet. "The original goal was to get the U.S. back into the Paris climate change agreements," said Charlotte. She said time is running out to keep our planet livable. Poor communities are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. All of humanity faces danger. Although the message of the school strike might make people a little scared, she said, "Being scared can unite people to fight what they're afraid of." We can give each other support and friendship to feel less afraid.

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© iStock/hemack

This is the sound of singing with you make it through...

voices three ● Singing together in harmony...

● This is the sound of one voice



© iStock/monkeybusinessimages

One people, one voice
A song for every one of us
This is the sound of one voice

Penguins Have the Power of “We”

By Rev. Marisol Caballero

In Antarctica, Emperor penguin dads, with their young tucked snugly under them, waddle into tightly packed huddles to keep warm during the coldest months. While the female penguins are on a long voyage for food, the male

penguins must endure a climate so harsh, Ted Scambos of the National Snow and Ice Data Center of the University of Colorado, Boulder, told *National Geographic*, “It’s a place where Earth is so close to its limit [of coldness], it’s almost like another planet.”

Like all of us, these penguins must make the best of their circumstances and find ways to thrive. Also similar to people, the only way Emperor penguins thrive is in community. They shuffle while they huddle, in spectacular group movements that look like dances, to ensure that none remain on the toasty inside of the huddle nor on the cold outskirts for too long. Believe it or



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not, the penguins are in danger, both individually and collectively, if any get too warm or too cold.

Similarly, our human family suffers, individually and collectively, when forces of power and privilege shuffle the same folks to the margins or disconnect them from community, time and time again.

Think about your community. Who gets support and resources? Is it the same people all the time? Might you have spent too much time in the warm center?

Could this be harming your family or someone else?

Why don’t human communities instinctively choreograph ourselves for equity and common good? We know what happens when some choose not to move, or when some are “frozen” by fear or circumstance. Truthfully, we endure harsh conditions in this world. A well-choreographed huddle is crucial. **Shuffle on, human family! Shuffle on.**

How does your community support people at its center?

What could it feel like to be put at the edge all the time?

How do people know when it’s time to move from the center and take a turn at the edge?

How can we each make way?



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If you come together with a mission, and it’s grounded with love and a sense of community, you can make the impossible possible.

– Congressman John Lewis

FAMILIES: WEAVE A TAPESTRY OF FAITH

Provided by the Faith Development Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association

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FIND OUT MORE

■ As a family, watch three marvelous minutes of Antarctica’s Emperor penguins. This PBS clip shows how male penguins huddle to protect their chicks and take turns keeping the group warm. [youtube.com/watch?v=OL7O5O7U4Gs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OL7O5O7U4Gs)

■ In traditional board games like Monopoly™ the players compete. Today, many games are cooperative. In Spirit Island™, recommended for ages 13+, players take the roles of “spirits” helping indigenous inhabitants protect an island from invading colonizers. Forbidden Island™, from GameWright, includes younger gamers in shared strategy. Download a no- or low-cost board game for family play; Preschooler in the Kitchen is \$2.99 at cooperativegames.com.

A great thing to do when playing as a family is for parents to ask the younger kids for advice. . . . It’s a great way to build their confidence and bond at the same time.

– The Board Game Family, www.theboardgamefamily.com