

## Curiosity

1 I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift would be curiosity. **Eleanor Roosevelt**

2 Thinkers aren't limited by what they know, because they can always increase what they know. Rather they're limited by what puzzles them, because there's no way to become curious about something that doesn't puzzle you. **Daniel Quinn**

3 Children, be curious. Nothing is worse (I know it) than when curiosity stops. Nothing is more repressive than the repression of curiosity. Curiosity begets love. It weds us to the world. It's part of our perverse, madcap love for this impossible planet we inhabit. People die when curiosity goes. People have to find out, people have to know. **Graham Swift**

4 Those with less curiosity or ambition just mumble that God works in mysterious ways. I intend to catch him in the act. **Damien Echols**

5 Practice listening to your intuition, your inner voice; ask questions; be curious; see what you see; hear what you hear; and then act upon what you know to be true. These intuitive powers were given to your soul at birth. **Clarissa Pinkola Estés**

6 Often peace is taught as the fourth mark of existence. This isn't the peace that's the opposite of war. It's the well-being that comes when we can see the infinite pairs of opposites as complementary. If there is beauty, there must be ugliness. If there is right, there is wrong. Wisdom and ignorance cannot be separated. This is an old truth — one that men and women like ourselves have been discovering for a long time. Cultivating moment-to-moment curiosity, we just might find that day by day this kind of peace dawns on us, and we begin to understand what all the books have been talking about.

— **Pema Chodron**, *When Things Fall Apart*

## 7 Grandmother

I hadn't asked her much,  
just how she felt,  
and she told me all about her day,  
and how she'd washed the sheets,  
and how she could not understand

why the towel got so heavy  
when it was wet.  
She'd also sunned the mattresses,  
such tired bones and so much to do,  
and my eyes filled with tears  
when I thought of how i was simply  
going to say "Salaam" and walk away  
and so many words would have been  
trapped inside her.  
I would have passed by as if  
what lay between those bedclothes  
was just old life  
and not really my grandmother.

### **Sameeneh Shirazie**

8 Creativity – on the page and in our lives – begins with curiosity, the posture of an open heart and mind. How do we keep our curiosity alive and well in these times of so much closed thinking? **Karen Hering**

9 What a wonderful combination of words! Holy curiosity. Our ability to wonder, to inquire, to welcome what is new, and to keep our minds open to truth when and where we find it — surely this is one of the most miraculous qualities that human beings possess. Maintain an open mind today. Ask questions. Acknowledge truth when you find it. Pray to be led by holy curiosity.

**Barbara Bartocci**

### **10 Wandering and Wondering**

If the wilderness wandering we read about in Scripture were reframed as a time of wonder, it would be an entirely different experience! I see the difference between wandering and wondering like this:

Wandering is a coping mechanism of avoidance that tries to minimize what is uncomfortable.

Wondering is an active pursuit of questions and a willingness to risk the tension in the unknown.

Wandering is a way to steer clear of the stress that comes from a deep concern about the direction that might be best for you and others around you.

Wondering is a heightened curiosity about God, yourself, others, and the world that, while often uncomfortable, is full of passion and intrigue.

Wandering is motivated by fear, confusion, apathy, and an endless search for novelty.

Wondering is motivated by passionate uncertainty about the mystery of God and the excitement that comes with discovery.

Throughout the story, God was inviting a different approach. And God still offers that invitation to us — to take on a posture of wonder.

**Stephanie Williams O'Brien**, *Stay Curious: How Questions and Doubts Can Save Your Faith*

### **For Reflection and Discussion**

A To be curious is “to be eager to know or to learn.” Does that sound like you? Are you becoming more or less curious?

B How has your curiosity served you well? Has your curiosity also led to some bad outcomes?

C What are you curious about lately?

D What does curiosity have to do with your experience at All Souls?

---Mary Beth Hatem, for covenant groups at All Souls Church, Unitarian