



Guest at Your Table 2027

Religious Education Activities

Activities Across the Ages

Suitable for Sunday morning programming or a family event

Theme: Next Door, Across Borders, and Around the World

In these **Guest at Your Table** activity ideas, we will explore, at various age levels, what it means to be a good neighbor next door, across borders, and around the world. At the youngest ages, we'll notice how people are people everywhere on any side of a border. With children who are a little older, we'll wonder together why we have borders, who do they serve, and how to be good neighbors across borders. With middle school youth, we'll celebrate similar human experiences that young people share, even when their contexts look very different and make connections on a human level with some of this year's guests who are UUSC partners. With high school youth, we'll discuss four dimensions of a global web of connection and injustice – voice, home, identity, and neighboring – through the stories of this year's UUSC Guest at Your Table partners, honoring both the reality of unjust systems and the creative possibilities for better ways of being human together that are based not on domination or exploitation but on care.



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The activities below can fit into your typical Sunday morning time between your usual group openings and closings or be combined for an all-families event with your congregation – or, even better, with your neighbor congregation!

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Values and Theological Grounding

These activities draw on some key UU values that you may wish to hold up:

1. Interdependence – we honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.
2. Pluralism – we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.
3. Justice – we work to be diverse, multicultural Beloved communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.
4. Equity – we declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.

They are also grounded in some key aspects of our Unitarian Universalist theological heritage.

1. Love (whether one understands that as God's love or love inherent in the universe) falls equally on everyone all over the world and is a spiritual resource we can all tap into.
2. What harms and puts life most at risk are human-made systems of domination, exploitation, and oppression, which are often enforced by violence.
3. Humans have a responsibility to care for one another with love and compassion and to help dismantle these harmful systems to create conditions for the full flourishing of all life.
4. This world is the site of the sacred, and it will not be replaced by another one on the far distant horizon of time.
5. After death, whatever happens will happen the same for everyone, (humans will not be divided into the "saved" and the "damned") so we are called to honor our shared destiny by learning how to get along in this life.



PRE-K / K

Whoever You Are, Wherever You Are, All Over The World

At the youngest ages, the primary learning goal is to understand that people are people everywhere all over the world. For young children, it's easier to imagine loving and caring for people in their family and nearby neighbors. Our Unitarian Universalist values and theological worldview ask us to stretch our imaginations to include those who live differently from us and live very far away from us in our circle of love and moral concern.

Read Aloud:

A book we love geared to this age is **Whoever You Are** by Australian author Mem Fox. It's available used for about \$5 on many websites.

[Here is a read aloud of the book on YouTube.](#) It is the innate knowing children have of our human similarities beneath the differences that sometimes divide us as we get older that we want to reinforce at this age.

Author background: Mem Fox was born in Melbourne, Australia and grew up in Zimbabwe near a city called Bulawayo. After many years living and going to school with her neighbors, the government told her parents that because she was white she had to go to school with other white children. She was heartbroken to suddenly leave her friends. She writes,

To make matters worse, when I went to the white school I had to wear shoes—I hated shoes—and of course I spoke with this African accent and I was laughed at and teased and bullied. I remember sitting in the girls' toilet and crying very quietly so no one would hear me. My heart was broken. I was six years old.

I think I knew by the age of six that I wasn't different really. I knew we were all kids. I knew some kids were great, some kids were mean, some were good at sport, some were good at art, and others were terrific at reading or maths. I knew, deep down, that skin colour made no difference and I wondered why adults and the government thought that it did.



Conversation:

If your group can sit still for some conversation, you may want to ask questions like these either afterwards or as you're reading the book:

- ▶ What makes you laugh?
- ▶ What makes you cry?
- ▶ What hurts your feelings?
- ▶ What brings you joy?

If the children's comments are relatable, draw out in the conversation whether what was shared might be true for anyone else too? Ask if you think someone, somewhere else in the world might ever feel the same way?

Song:

Ask ... Does anyone know how to count to five in another language besides the one your group shares? Let the kids show the group if they can. Tell the group there are about 7,000 languages spoken in the world, and let it sink in just how big of a number that is! Say something like, "People all over the world use different languages to talk about all those shared experiences of being human that we just talked about. But like the book we just read told us, there are some things that are the same in any language – like tears, blood, and laughter."

Then listen to this song, [We All Laugh in the Same Language](#) by Marla Lewis, or teach the chorus if you have skills to do so. After a few verses, consider inviting everyone to dance together while listening to it!



GRADES 1 - 5

Exploring Borders

At the youngest ages, the primary learning goal is to understand that people This activity explores some of the positive and negative impacts of borders of various kinds. The children explore being good neighbors across borders and which kinds of borders make that easier. As Unitarian Universalists we affirm the right of people to self-determination, self-governance through democratic processes, and the choice to covenant with others in religious communities. Our Unitarian Universalist values and theological worldview ask us to stretch our imaginations to include those who live differently from us and across borders of all kinds in the circle of love and our moral concern.

You will need to use your knowledge of who is in the room with you and gear the questions and pacing to your actual children.

Supplies needed:

- ▶ Flipchart and markers or other way to make a visible list
- ▶ Printed images of the various kinds of borders below
- ▶ Building supplies – either Legos, building blocks, or something more creative like a collection of tissue boxes, toilet paper rolls, milk cartons, masking tape, etc.

Posing a Question:

Gather your group around and do your group's opening ritual. Then pose this question: *"What is a border and what does it do?"*

Make a list in a visible way of what the kids say. You may have to ask probing or follow-up questions. If they don't get to them, you can add these points:

- ▶ A border separates something from something else
- ▶ A border keeps some things in and other things out
- ▶ A border defines (or gives shape to) a space



Then ask: *“Where in our world do we find borders?”* Make a list in a visible way of what the kids say. If they don’t get to them, you can add these points:

- ▶ Walls of our houses and congregations
- ▶ Fences around our yards and animal pastures and parks
- ▶ Borders of our towns, cities, states, and countries
- ▶ Borders in art and pictures
- ▶ Our skin, cell membranes of all our cells

Explore the positive and negative impacts of borders:

Ask your group: *“What are some good and bad things about borders?”*

Make a list in a visible way of what the kids say. If they don’t get to them, you can add these points:

Positive:

- Keep animals from running away
- Keep cold weather and bugs out of our where we cook and eat and sleep
- Help people know where the edges of places are
- Helps us know who is the group that we are making decisions with
- For our cells, it keeps the different kinds of cells separate – good for us otherwise we’d be a big blob.
- For communities, like a church community, borders can help a group develop a common culture based on shared values, language, and way of doing things and let others take action to become part of that group.



Negative:

- Limits where we can walk and play and travel
- Made by people long ago without input from people living there now.
- Separate people who love each other (refer to the story for all ages).
- Make it difficult for people to find safe places to live, especially people fleeing war and people forced to move because of climate changes.
- Help wealthy and powerful communities and countries stay that way and make it harder for people from poorer places to have the same opportunities.
- Weather, fires, diseases, earthquakes don't care about city, state, and national borders and sometimes they make it harder to solve the world's biggest problems together.

Exploring Different Kinds Of Borders:

Show the group some pictures of different kinds of borders (attached below). Ask what they notice about the different kinds of borders and have a conversation about how easy and hard it would be for things like food, building supplies, people, animals, diseases, wildfire or floods to get across the different borders. What kinds of borders would it be easier to be a good neighbor across? Which would be harder?

Ask what kind of border your kids would like to see around a church, town/city, state, country? Why? What UU values are relevant to this consideration?

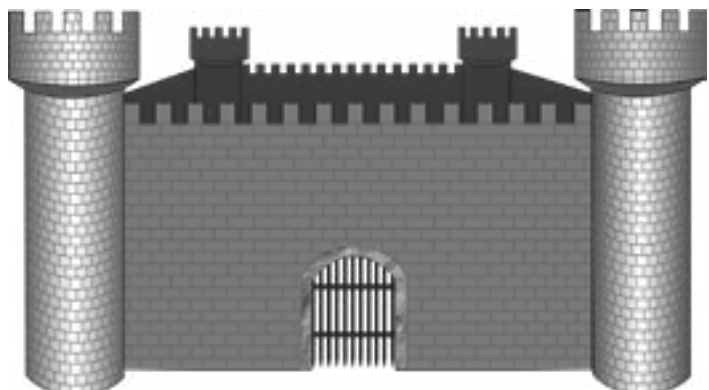
If your group has capacity for it, explore the possibility of a porous border, like the walls of a church or the membrane of a cell or the edge of a city.



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Royalty Free Border Examples:





GRADES 6 - 8

For your middle school group, you may choose to do the elementary-aged activity but draw out more of the nuance. You might consider leading the conversation towards holding the complexity of borders, acknowledging that some form of organized community and governance requires defined spaces, while also recognizing that the way national borders are currently enforced causes tremendous human suffering. The question of who benefits from any particular border and who is harmed by it is often a revealing question to ask.

Here is another possibility for sixth through eighth grade:

Circles Of "Like Me"

Supplies needed:

- ▶ Open floor space for movement
- ▶ Three story cards – one per Guest – printed or displayed on screen (text provided below)
- ▶ *Optional:* brief images from each partner printed or displayed on screen between rounds
- ▶ *Optional:* music from Haiti, Mexico, or Ukraine playing softly as students enter

Preparation:

Read through all three partner stories before the session. You don't need to be an expert – in fact naming your own not-knowing is powerful modeling for this age group. The goal is not to teach about Haiti, Latin American men in migration, or Roma people comprehensively but to create a genuine moment of human recognition and connection.

A Note On Facilitation Tone: Middle schoolers will disengage immediately if this feels preachy or like a lesson about "How To Feel About Injustice." Keep your own affect curious and genuine. Let the stories do the work.



Opening (3 minutes)

After your opening ritual, gather students in the open space. Say something like:

"We're going to do something a little different today. Instead of sitting and talking, we're going to move. I'm going to read some prompts, and I want you to respond with your whole body – moving to one side of the room or the other, or finding a spot that feels right. There are no wrong answers. And between rounds I'm going to share a brief story about real people in other parts of the world who are our UUSC Guests At Your Table this year. Your only job is to pay attention – to yourself and to them."

Establish the two sides of the room: one side for YES, one side for NO. The middle is always available for "it's complicated" or "I'm not sure."

Round One: *Joy and Belonging* (8 minutes)

These prompts open with recognition and warmth. Students should feel the pleasure of discovering commonality. Read each prompt slowly. Give students time to move and look around at each other before moving to the next.

- ▶ Move to YES if you love music
- ▶ Move to YES if food is a big part of your family's life
- ▶ Move to YES if you have a place that feels like home to you
- ▶ Move to YES if you've ever felt like your neighborhood or community was misunderstood by people who don't live there
- ▶ Move to YES if you've ever wanted to tell your own story in your own words

Pause after the last prompt. Let students look around.

Say: *"Hold that last one. Here's someone who felt exactly that way."*



Story Card 1 – Haiti / AyiboPost

Read aloud or have a student read:

Widlore Mérancourt grew up in Jérémie, a city in Haiti. As a teenager he loved reading newspapers – but he noticed something. The news never talked about his neighborhood, his community, or the real reasons things were hard where he lived, like the history of France’s enslavement of Haitian people or French and U.S. economic exploitation. The stories from the outside world about Haiti focused only on violence and crisis – never on the resistance, the creativity, the full humanity of the people there. So at 15, Widlore started working at his local radio station. Eventually he founded AyiboPost – a news organization committed to telling the complete story of Haiti, in Haitian voices, for Haitian people. “It’s not that [crises] are not happening in the country,” he says, “but to make us whole, to capture the true humanity of this country, we need a more complete story. We need to talk about not just the struggles, but also the resistance.”

Brief pause.

Then ask: *“What did you notice? What stayed with you?”*

Take one or two brief responses – don’t over-process. Keep the energy moving.



Round Two: *Belonging and Home* (8 minutes)

These prompts go a little deeper – into questions of belonging, movement, and what home means.

- ▶ Move to YES if you've ever moved – to a new home, a new school, a new place
- ▶ Move to YES if moving was hard
- ▶ Move to YES if you've ever had to leave somewhere you loved
- ▶ Move to YES if you know someone who had to leave their home and couldn't go back
- ▶ Move to YES if you think everyone deserves to have a place that feels like home

Pause. Let students look around.

Say something like: *"For some people, home isn't a place on a map. It's something they carry with them."*

Story Card 2 – Mexico City / Casa Tochán

Read aloud or have a student read:

In Mexico City there is a place called Casa Tochán. "Tochán" (toh-CHAN) is a word from the indigenous Náhuatl language meaning "our home." Casa Tochán is a home for men who are migrating – traveling through Mexico, often fleeing danger or looking for safety and a better life. Many of them have left everything behind. At Casa Tochán they find food, medical care, legal help, social services, as well as art programs to help men build new skills and express their masculinity in new ways. "Casa Tochán is more than a shelter," say the people who work there. "It's a home." The word Tochán says it clearly – home belongs to anyone committed to caring for one another across borders.



Brief pause. Then ask: *"What does it mean that they chose that word – our home – for this place?"*

One or two responses. Keep moving.

Round Three: *Identity and Belonging* (8 minutes)

These prompts introduce the experience of being othered, misunderstood, or defined by others.

- ▶ Move to YES if you've ever felt like an outsider
- ▶ Move to YES if someone has ever made assumptions about you because of how you look or where you're from
- ▶ Move to YES if your community or culture has ever been misrepresented or stereotyped
- ▶ Move to YES if you've ever had to fight to be seen as a full human being
- ▶ Move to YES if you believe every culture has something worth knowing and celebrating

Pause. Let the weight of this round settle.

Say something like: *"There are people who have been fighting to be seen as fully human for hundreds of years."*



Story Card 3 – Ukraine / Chiricli and Roma People

Read aloud or have a student read:

Roma people have lived across Europe for centuries – and have never settled in just one place. Their home is their culture – their language, their music, their dance, their traditions, their way of life. For hundreds of years Roma people have faced discrimination, violence, and attempts to erase their culture. They were enslaved. They were targeted in the Holocaust. Public institutions often refuse to recognize their history. They face major barriers in accessing medical treatment, employment, education, and social mobility. In Ukraine, a woman named Yulia Kondur founded an organization called Chiricli (Cheer-EE-klee) – which means “bird” in the Romani language. “Birds are very free,” she says. “They fly wherever they wish; they’re lively and happy. The same is true for Roma people; we want to be free and not isolated.” Chiricli has advocated for the protection of Roma people for nearly three decades. They use education to train public officials about Roma culture and to mobilize Roma communities. They also trained mediators – both Roma and non-Roma people – to speak up for Roma rights and help communities understand each other across differences. Today those mediators work in 15 regions across Ukraine, even as the country faces war.

Brief pause. Then ask: *“What does it mean to define your home by your culture rather than by a place on a map?”*

One or two responses.



Round Three: *Justice and Possibility* (5 minutes)

These final prompts invite students into their own values and vision.

- ▶ Move to YES if you think where you were born should determine whether you're safe
- ▶ Move to YES if you think it should NOT determine that
- ▶ Move to YES if you believe people everywhere want things like safety, belonging, the chance to tell their own story
- ▶ Move to YES if you think young people can be part of changing things
- ▶ Move to YES if today you felt a little more connected to someone you've never met

Let students stay where they are after the last prompt. Look around the room together.

Closing Reflection (5 minutes)

Bring students into a circle – seated or standing.

Ask two or three of the following – choose based on energy and time:

- ▶ What surprised you today?
- ▶ Which story stayed with you and why?
- ▶ Where did you feel most connected to someone far away?
- ▶ What's one question you're leaving with?

Close with something like:

"The people whose stories we heard today – Widlore in Haiti, the guests at Casa Tochán, Yulia and the Roma communities in Ukraine – they don't know we were thinking about them this morning. But we were. And that's how a web of connection gets built – one moment of recognition at a time. I hope you'll share this experience with your families as you learn more about UUSC's Guests at Your Table in the coming weeks."



GRADES 9 - 12

High schoolers can begin to engage ideas around this year's Guest at Your Table theme in more abstract ways, reflecting on some of the larger patterns and systems of injustice that impact us all, and especially some of UUSC's partners. At the same time, scaffolding from experiences and things they already know is meaningful. In this activity, youth encounter four dimensions of a global web of connection and injustice – voice, home, identity, and neighboring – through the stories of this year's UUSC Guest at Your Table partners. Rather than receiving a pre-built web, they build it themselves, feel it break, and then reimagine what a more just web could look like. The session moves from building to breaking to reimagining – honoring both the reality of unjust systems and the creative possibilities for better ways of being human together that are based not on domination or exploitation but on care.

Rebuilding The Web - A New Variation On A Familiar Activity

Supplies needed:

- ▶ Open floor space – enough for sitting in a circle on the floor
- ▶ A large ball of yarn
- ▶ A second ball of yarn in a different color for the rebuilding round
- ▶ Four story cards – printed, one per small group or displayed on screen
- ▶ Index cards and markers for each youth
- ▶ Optional: images from each partner community displayed on a screen

Preparation:

Read all four partner stories before the session. You don't need to be an expert on Haiti, Latin American migration through Mexico, Roma people in Ukraine, or US immigration policy. What you need is genuine curiosity and a willingness to sit with complexity alongside the youth.

The session has three distinct movements – building, breaking, and reimagining. Each has a different emotional tone. Building is energetic and



creative. Breaking is sobering and should be allowed to land without rushing. Reimagining leans towards expansive and hopeful. Let yourself feel the shift between them – the youth will follow your lead.

Opening (3 minutes)

After your opening ritual, gather youth in a circle on the floor. Hold up the ball of yarn and say something like:

“Today we’re going to build something together – and then break it – and then try to imagine building it differently. We’re going to need all of you for this. Not just your hands but your minds and your hearts.”

Give each youth an index card and a marker. Ask them to write one word or phrase – something they care about, something that matters to them, something they don’t want to lose. It could be a person, a place, a value, a dream. Give them 60 seconds. They don’t have to share it – it’s theirs. Tell them to hold onto it.

“Whatever you wrote – that’s your strand in the web we’re about to build.”

Movement One: *Building the Web* (12 minutes)

The Web of Connection

Let the group know that you will be building a web of connection by hold the end of the yarn and tossing the ball across the circle to someone, saying:

“I’m connected to you because...”

Invite the youth to complete the sentence with something genuine – a shared experience, a value, something you noticed about them, something human. That person holds their strand, then tosses the ball to someone else completing the same sentence.

Continue until everyone is holding a strand and a web has formed.

Take a moment to look at it together.

Say something like: *“This is us. This is what some of our connections look like.”*



Expanding the Web (3 minutes)

Now introduce the four partner communities – one at a time. For each one, read the story card or ask a youth to do so, then add a new strand to the web by tossing the yarn to someone and naming the connection.

“We are connected to AyiboPost in Haiti because...”

Invite youth to complete the sentence. Multiple people can call out responses. Then physically extend the web – have one youth hold a new strand that represents that community, stretching the web outward.

Do this for all four partners, so the web now extends beyond the circle to include voices from Haiti, migrants in Mexico City, the Roma communities in Ukraine, and CAPAS communities across the US.



Story Cards – Read between web extensions

Story Card 1 – Haiti / AyiboPost

The strand of voice and truth-telling

Widlore Mérancourt grew up in Jérémie (zheh-reh-MEE), Haiti. When he was 15 and started working at the local radio station, he noticed something troubling – the news never told the real stories of his community. International media parachuted in to cover only violence and crisis, never the resistance, never the full humanity of Haitian people, never the deeper causes like the history of France’s enslavement of Haitian people or French and U.S. economic exploitation. He decided that if he were to continue to pursue news media, he would produce accountable journalism: elevating local, frontline voices, exposing human rights abuses, talking about the root causes of things, and telling stories often untold. So, he founded AyiboPost – an independent news organization committed to accountability journalism in Haitian voices, for Haitian people. It isn’t easy. Journalists at AyiboPost have been personally threatened by gang leaders. The psychological weight of covering violence is enormous. Mérancourt does his best to protect his staff. “The draft can wait,” he says. “Your mental health cannot wait.” But AyiboPost does not waver. “Haiti is not just catastrophe,” says Mérancourt. “It’s also resistance. It’s also creativity...It’s all part of the larger story of Haiti. We provide, and we are, the living proof.”

Possible connection prompt: We are connected to AyiboPost because we also live in a world where some stories get told and others don’t – and because the stories we hear shape what we think is possible.



Story Card 2 – Mexico City / Casa Tochán

The strand of home and belonging

In Mexico City there is a place called Casa Tochán (toh-CHAN) – a word from the indigenous Náhuatl (NAH-wah-tl) language meaning “our home.” Casa Tochán is a home for men who are migrating, often fleeing danger or searching for safety. At Casa Tochán they find food, medical care, social services, and legal help. But they also find something less expected – a more holistic approach to wellness, including art programs and workshops like screen printing where guests create things with their hands, build real skills, and express who they are. These workshops are designed to strengthen both psychological health and practical abilities at the same time, because the people at Casa Tochán understand that healing and growing happen together. Casa Tochán also pays careful attention to what it means to be a man – “empowering, informing, and encouraging them to express their masculinity through an approach that differs from the prevailing norm,” explains Tochán’s psychologist and coordinator. Staff, volunteers, and guests work as partners in a shared project. Staff and guests alike know that “Casa Tochán is more than a shelter; it’s a home.” As the Executive Director says: “Love is not reflected in the individual, but in the collective.”

Possible connection prompt: We are connected to Casa Tochán because we also know that belonging is about more than having your basic needs met – and because we are also figuring out what it means to be in community across differences.



Story Card 3 – Ukraine / Chiricli and Roma People

The strand of identity and freedom

Roma people have lived across Europe for centuries and have never settled in just one place. Their home is their culture – their language, their music, their traditions, their way of life. For hundreds of years Roma people have faced violent discrimination, enslavement, and attempted genocide. The Roma people have rightfully resisted assimilation – and been punished for that resistance. They face major barriers in accessing medical treatment, employment, education, and social mobility. In Ukraine, Yulia Kondur founded Chiricli (Cheer-EE-klee) – which means “bird” in the Romani language. “Birds are very free,” she says. “They fly wherever they wish – and it’s the same for Roma people. We want to be free and not isolated.” Chiricli has advocated for the protection of Roma people for nearly three decades. They use education to train public officials about Roma culture and to mobilize Roma communities. They also train mediators – both Roma and non-Roma people – to advocate for Roma rights and help communities understand each other across differences. Today those mediators work in 15 regions across Ukraine, even as the country faces war. Chiricli is proof that a people can refuse erasure – and that neighbors can be trained to advocate for their rights with them.

Possible connection prompt: We are connected to Chiricli because we also live in a world that tries to define who belongs and who doesn’t – and because we also believe that different cultures and identities are worth protecting.



Story Card 4 – United States / CAPAS

The strand of active neighboring

In 2019 a Unitarian Universalist minister named Rev. Dottie Mathews founded the Community Accompaniment Program with Asylum-Seekers – CAPAS – after volunteering at the US-Mexico border. CAPAS pairs UU congregations with people seeking asylum, offering housing, meals, and responding to other needs. They connect guests to legal help, ESL classes, and mental health resources. Hosts provide holistic social support, throwing birthday parties for kids of families in migration and helping to mark holidays, hosting quinceañera celebrations, or whatever else a neighbor needs. When one CAPAS guest – a man from Haiti – faced a frightening ICE check-in, his congregation showed up. Forty UU congregants stood outside the field office. When the ICE officers saw the crowd, they released the man. In another case, a young woman severely traumatized in detention was met by a CAPAS family who had everything she needed – accessible housing, community, patience, and time. After more than a year she lives independently. “Extraordinary things are possible,” says CAPAS, “when a group of committed neighbors decides to create communities of radical welcome.”

Possible connection prompt: We are connected to CAPAS because this is happening right now, in congregations like ours – and because neighboring is something we can actually do.

Pause after all four strands are extended.

Look at the web together. It now connects everyone in the circle to each other and to communities in Haiti, Mexico City, the Roma community in Ukraine, and UU CAPAS congregations across the US.

Say: *“This is what the web of interdependence actually looks like. Hold your strand. Feel the tension. Notice what happens when everyone holds on.”*

Gently tug your strand. Everyone feels it.

Say something like: *“That’s real. What happens to one part of this web affects every other part.”*



Movement Two: *Breaking the Web* (5 minutes)

Say: *"Now I want to show you something else."*

Ask youth to think about the systems you've just heard about – the ones that make life difficult in Haiti and dangerous for journalists, that force people to leave everything behind and travel to a new country, that have persecuted Roma people for centuries, that separate families at borders.

One youth at a time, ask the youth to choose one unjust system to speak out and drop their strand.

Then another.

Then another.

Watch the web sag and collapse as strands are released.

Sit with the silence for a moment. Don't rush past it.

Then ask – just one question, and let it breathe:

"What does it feel like to watch the web go slack?"

Take two or three responses. Brief ones are fine. The feeling is the point.

Movement Two: *Breaking the Web* – continued

Now hold up the second ball of yarn – a different color.

Say something like: *"The web we just built – that first web – was built on the systems we've inherited. Some of its strands connect us in beautiful ways. But some of its strands hold some people up by pulling others down. What if we tried to build it differently?"*



Movement Three: *Reimagining the Web* (15 minutes)

Ask everyone to pick up their index card – the word or phrase they wrote at the beginning.

Say: *“Whatever you wrote – consider if that’s what you want to bring into the new web. Maybe it’s something else. Take a moment to think of one thing you deeply wish would be part of the new web. That’s your contribution to a different way of organizing the world.”*

Begin passing the new yarn. This time the prompt changes:

“I am connected to you, and I bring _____ into the web.”

Each person names what they’re bringing – from their card or from what they’ve heard today – and tosses the yarn.

After the new web forms, introduce a series of open questions – not to answer definitively but to hold together:

- ▶ “What would a web look like where AyiboPost didn’t need to fight for the right to tell Haiti’s full story?”
- ▶ “What would a web look like where Casa Tochán existed because people wanted community – not because people were fleeing danger or places that are unlivable?”
- ▶ “What would a web look like where Roma people were celebrated as neighbors rather than persecuted as strangers?”
- ▶ “What would a web look like where no family had to make a plan for what happens to their children if they are deported?”

After each question, pause and let youth respond – briefly, popcorn style. Don’t process deeply. Let the images accumulate.

When the new web is complete, look at it together.

Say something like, *“This web – the one we just built – doesn’t exist yet. But the people whose stories we heard today are already building it. AyiboPost is building it. Casa Tochán is building it. Chiricli is building it. Unitarian*



Universalists who participate in CAPAS are building it. And so are we – every time we choose connection over fear, every time we show up for a neighbor, every time we refuse to think that what's in the mainstream media is the whole story about a group of people."

Closing Reflection (5 minutes)

Remain in the circle with the new web still held between you. Ask two of the following – choose based on energy and time:

- ▶ "Which strand of today's web will you still be thinking about tomorrow?"
- ▶ "What did you learn today that you didn't know when you walked in?"
- ▶ "Where did you experience UU values showing up?"
- ▶ "What's one word for what you're carrying out of this room?"

End with something like:

"The people we heard about today – in Haiti, in Mexico City, in Ukraine, in communities across this country – they didn't know we were thinking about them this morning. But we were. And that matters. You are part of a web that is larger than this room, larger than this congregation, larger than this country. Hold your strand."

At this point you can read the room to decide how you want to dismantle this web. Some groups like to cut a piece for everyone to tie on each other's wrists. Some choose to take a picture and then carefully set it down on the floor.

Facilitator Notes

On the breaking moment:

This is the most important moment to protect. Do not fill the silence after the web goes slack with explanation or reassurance. Let it sit. Middle and high schoolers are rarely given permission to feel the weight of hard things in an education setting – this is that permission here at church. Ten seconds of silence is not too long.

On the reimagining:

Resist the urge to make the rebuilt web feel triumphant or resolved. The point is not that everything is fine – it's that imagination is a form of resistance and that building differently is possible and worth doing. Hold the tension between grief and hope.

**On small groups:**

For a group of 5-6, the web building works beautifully in an intimate circle and the connections feel very immediate. For a group of 12-15, the web becomes visually dramatic and the breaking moment is more visceral. Both are powerful in different ways.

On facilitator authenticity:

If you don't know something about Haiti or Roma history or US immigration policy – say so. “I don't know enough about that to answer well, but it's worth finding out” is exactly the right modeling for this age group. Youth can smell performance from across the room.