

Do-It-Yourself Chalices!

by Beth Dana

Drawings by Joo Young Choi

It has happened to all of us. We're planning a worship service - at a conference, a retreat, a youth group meeting - and there's NO CHALICE! What can you do? Be creative! Here are some ideas for how to create a chalice out of objects you'd typically find around a house or church.

Simple Yet Spiritual:

Arrange votive candles in a circle on an altar. You can also place other sacred objects or stones in the middle of the circle.

The Terra Cotta Flower Pot Chalice:

If you have a flower pot and a flower pot base, you've got a chalice! Turn the flower pot upside down and balance the base on top of it. Put a votive candle in the base. This type of chalice can either be glued together with a glue gun, or kept separate so that it's more portable. Terra cotta flower pot chalices can be personalized by painting or decorating them as you wish! Decorate them to represent your own UU identity. Write words around them like "Truth, Love, Justice."

If you choose not to glue or attach the base to the pot, you can use it during a check-in. Every person takes a turn holding the flame on the base while checking in, passing it around the circle. When everyone is done, the flame goes back on its base in the center of the circle. (Idea thanks to Steve from the *reach-I* email list for Religious Educators)

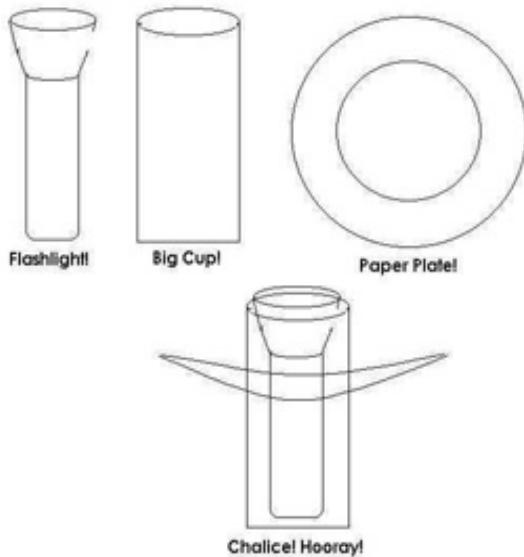
The Kitchen Cupboard Chalice:

All you need is a cup and a bowl. Turn the cup upside down, and place the bowl (right-side up) on top of it. Then place a votive candle in the bowl.

The Camping Gear Chalice:

With a flashlight (the flame), a big cup, and a paper plate you can create a chalice in your own kitchen! Place the flashlight, light shining

up, into a big cup. Then cut a circle in the middle of a paper plate just big enough to fit around the outside of the cup.



The Gigantic Chalice:

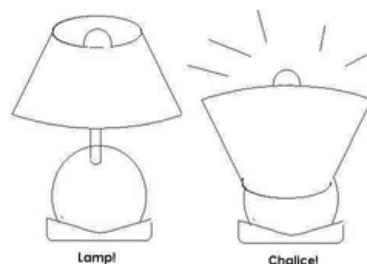
If you like to do things *large scale*, you can create a chalice out of a bird bath! This can be a spur of the moment solution, or a more long-term chalice for your youth group. Everyone can contribute by painting or drawing something meaningful on it. What a lasting spiritual model of teamwork! (Idea thanks to Nan Moore, DRE in Chatham, MA.)

The Tea Party Chalice:

"Once when the roads were covered with ice and too dangerous for us to drive to church, one of my elementary school aged children turned a tea cup upside down and placed a saucer on top and placed a small votive candle on the saucer to serve as our chalice." Learn from the creativity of young children, and create a tea party-themed chalice! Tea cups and saucers come in all sizes, colors and designs, so these chalices can be very unique. (Idea thanks to Josie Rosenthal-Goodman.)

The Lighting Fixture Chalice:

This chalice is extremely simple to create. All you have to do is find a traditional lamp, with a base and a lamp shade, then turn the lamp shade upside down. Let the glow of the light bulb shine like a flame!

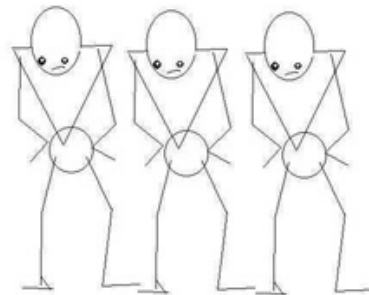


The Build-At-Home Altar:

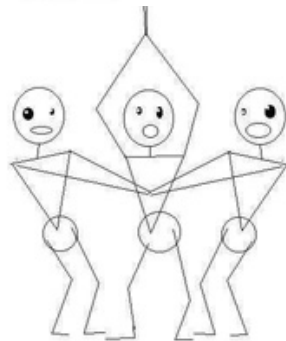
All you need is a chalice table, a chalice pillar, and a chalice top. The chalice table could be a bench, a step stool, or a desk. The chalice pillar could be a vase, a brick, or a block. Top this with a cup or a bowl, and you've got a chalice! Personalize your altar with plants, rocks, or other objects. (Idea thanks to Laurel Burdon, DRE in Brookfield, MA.)

The People Chalice:

Got three people? You've got a chalice! Caution: This chalice does not and should not involve fire. It's a very creative solution, however, to this common dilemma.



Mere mortals!



Chalice!

The Lego™ Chalice:

If New York City toy store F.A.O. Schwartz can make a 7-foot tall Empire State Building out of Legos, why not make a chalice? You can make it as simple or as elaborate as you want.

Good luck! And may you never be without a chalice!