

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

SMALL GROUP SESSION

“CONNECTIONS”

First Universalist Church UU, Auburn, ME, Rev. Glenn Turner, Nov. 2016

Adapted from First Unitarian Church of San Francisco, CA

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING

“A good friend is a connection to life- a tie to the past, a road to the future, the key to sanity in a totally insane world”

- Lois Wyse

“When we get too caught up in the busyness of the world, we lose connection with one another - and ourselves”

- Jack Kornfield

"We clasp the hands of those that go before us,  
And the hands of those who come after us.  
We enter the little circle of each other's arms  
And the larger circle of friends,  
Whose hands are joined in a dance,  
And the larger circle of all creatures,  
Passing in and out of life,  
Who move also in a dance,  
To a music so subtle and vast that no ear hears it Except in fragments."

- Wendell Berry

SILENT REFLECTION

CHECK-IN: (40-50 minutes)

FOCUS: “CONNECTIONS “

The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.

- Frederick Buechner

A human being is a part of the whole called by us the universe, a part limited by time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”

- Albert Einstein

We are into a holiday season which has come to celebrate and reinforce “connections” - connections with family and with friends. We’ve gathered with family and friends at Thanksgiving. We’ve gone from carving the turkey to carving out time to write Christmas Cards and Holiday Letters. We look at our list of friends and make decisions about whom to add and whom to cull. We think about gifts and gifting - giving careful thought to our choices, including organizations, soup kitchens, food pantries in our giving. It is indeed a time of remembering, thinking about, and strengthening our connections.

## DISCUSSION:

Speak about connections in any way that is comfortable to you. If you choose to use the questions, focus on just one or two, as this will allow you to go deeper into the topic.

Think of those you remember fondly from the past (as a child, a teen-ager, a young adult, in middle age) -

What are your memories? What were the qualities of the people who connected with you? How did you feel when you were with them"

- Who/What are the most important connections in your life now?
- In what ways do you want to increase, alter, or broaden the connections in your life now?
- What are the qualities in a relationship that you value most?

## LIKES AND WISHES

### CLOSING WORDS:

Humankind has not woven the web of life.

We are but one thread within it.

Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together.

All things connect.”

- Chief Seattle