

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
**"Faith"**  
Covenant Group Curriculum, River of Grass Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation, Davie, FL

**Opening Meditation/Music/Silence/Chalice Lighting** (whichever one(s) you choose to do)

**Opening Words:**

“Between the finite limitations of the five senses  
and the endless yearning of humans for the beyond  
the people hold to the humdrum bidding of work and food  
while reaching out when it comes their way  
for lights beyond the prism of the five senses,  
for keepsakes lasting beyond any hunger or death.

    This reaching is alive.

The panderers and liars have violated it and smutted it.

    Yet this reaching is alive yet  
    for lights and keepsakes.”

- Carl Sandburg, *The People, Yes*

**Check-in/Sharing**

**Topic/Readings:**

**Facilitator: Please read this quote aloud and ask the folks assembled to reflect for a moment on what faith means to them. Also ask them to set a sense of how faith plays a role in their everyday lives. You may want to inquire of them, as well, about the times when faith seems most difficult for them.**

“I want to invite a new use of the word faith, one that is not associated with a dogmatic religious interpretation or divisiveness. I want to encourage delight in the word, to help reclaim faith as fresh, vibrant, intelligent and liberating. This is a faith that emphasizes love and respect for ourselves as a foundation. It is a faith that uncovers our connection to others, rather than designating anyone as separate and apart.

The faith I describe does not require a belief system, is not necessarily connected to a deity or God, though it doesn't deny one. This faith is not a commodity we either have or don't have - it is an inner quality that unfolds as we learn to trust our own deepest experience.

When our efforts to help seem futile, we can trust that in another time and place there may be unexpected results. When we're trying to address a problem, improve the state of the world, help an alcoholic friend, comfort a grieving child, it might all appear to be going nowhere. Yet our actions are like planting seeds in the ground. We don't know for sure when they will bear fruit, and what looks like failure may be a time of gestation. Our faith in working toward the good can

be sustained if we don't harshly measure the success or failure of our actions by the immediate, and apparent, results."

- *Sharon Salzberg, Buddhist Teacher*

### **Likes and Wishes/Feedback**

### **Closing Words:**

"No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new heaven to the human spirit."

- *Helen Keller*

Amen. May you live in blessing.