

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
SMALL GROUP MINISTRY
Main Line Unitarian Church, Devon, PA
Friendship
April 2003

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting: From Dinah Marie Mullock Craik

“Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words but pouring them all right out—just as they are—chaff and grain together, certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping—and with the breath of kindness, blow the rest away.”

Reflection/Personal Sharing/Prayer (approximately 30 minutes)

(The facilitator should briefly remind the group of confidentiality/anonymity, that this is not the time for cross conversation, etc.)

Focus Reading: From Max Coots UU Minister

“Let us give thanks:
For generous friends...with hearts...and smiles as bright as their blossoms;
For feisty friends as tart as apples;
For continuous friends, who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us that we’ve had them;
For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible;
For handsome friends, who are as gorgeous as eggplants and as elegant as a row of corn, and the others, plain as potatoes and as good for you;
For funny friends, who are as silly as Brussels sprouts and as amusing as Jerusalem artichokes, and serious friends, as complex as cauliflowers and as intricate as onions;
For friends as unpretentious as cabbages, as subtle as summer squash, as persistent as parsley, as delightful as dill, as endless as zucchini, and who, like parsnips, can be counted on to see you throughout the winter;
For old friends, who wind around us like tendrils and hold us, despite our blights, wilts, and witherings
And, finally, for those friends now gone, like gardens past that have been harvested, and who fed us in their times that we might have life thereafter
For all these we give thanks.”

Focus Questions:

Tell us something about some of your childhood friends, during your youth, and adult years.

What did you like about them?

How did they make you feel?

How much of a priority do you place on friendship?

What things limit your friendship?

What could you do to develop your friendships?

Checkout/Likes and Wishes

(This is the time for facilitators to ask participants what they liked about this meeting and what they might wish for future meetings. This is also the time for any discussion of logistics.)

Closing Words & Extinguishing Chalice: From Peter Meinke, adapted

“I wish all my old friends knew each other—
the very least they deserve
is the pleasure of each other’s company.
We’d go down by the river
And the rocks would hum with this rich collection of men and women
They would look around and see themselves
No longer isolated...
And their talk would burst like spray in the sunlight
and I would smile, saying nothing...
a small white bird [singing] in my heart.”