

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
Small Group Ministry Program  
**Growing Spiritually**  
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, Oregon, January 2011

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING OR SOUND A CHIME (2 to 3 minutes for this and silence and opening words)

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

Each of us brings a separate truth here,  
We bring the truth of our own life, our own story.  
We do not come as empty vessels. . .  
But rather we come as full people—  
people who have our own story and our own truth.  
We seek to add to our truths and add to our stories.  
This room is rich with truth, rich with experience.  
All manner of people are here: needy. . . joyful. . . frightened. . . anxious. . . bored. . .  
we all bring our truth with us.  
May we all recognize the truth and the story in everyone's life.  
And may we hear and honor the truths that we all bring as we gather together.  
Together we have truths.  
Together we have a story.  
Together we are a community.  
-Penny Hackett-Evans

CHECK-IN (up to 20 to 30 minutes total with up to 2 to 3 minutes per person)

TOPIC AND SHARING (up to 70 minutes for readings, questions, a few minutes for reflection and making notes if desired, individual sharing, optional open discussion at the end if the group agrees, with an optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

READINGS

By spiritual, I mean the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and much more trust-worthy than our egos—with our own, with one another, with the worlds of history and nature, with the invisible winds of the spirit, and with the mystery of being alive.  
-Parker Palmer

The kind of spirituality I value is one in which you get great joy out of contributing to life, not just sitting and meditating, although meditation is certainly valuable. But from meditation, from the resulting consciousness, I would like to see people in action creating the world they want to live in.  
-Marshall Rosenberg

The spiritual path – is simply the journey of living our lives. Everyone is on a spiritual path; most people just don't know it.  
-Marianne Williamson

The call to religion is not a call to be better than your fellows, but to be better than yourself. Religion is relative to the individual.

- Henry Ward Beecher

When we are in touch with being whole, we feel at one with everything. When we feel at one with everything, we feel whole ourselves. Wholeness is the root of everything that the words “health”, “healing”, and “holy” signify in our language and our culture.

-Jon Kabat-Zinn in “Wherever You Go There You Are”

QUESTIONS (Please respond to whichever question or questions you feel moved to answer. It is not necessary to respond to all of the questions. You may also respond to any of the readings that you find to be particularly meaningful.)

1. What were important spiritual, religious, or value related practices, experiences, and beliefs of your childhood?
2. What transitions have occurred as an adult in your spiritual, religious, or value related practices and beliefs?
3. What unanswered spiritual, religious, or value related questions do you have now?
4. What transitions do you anticipate might occur in the future in your spiritual, religious, or value related practices and beliefs?

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available, with optional open discussion at the end after all have shared)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (up to 5-10 minutes)

- Confirm next meeting date, time, location, and topic.
- Consider discussing the service project.
- Other

LIKES (celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met) and WISHES (mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)/CHECK-OUT (a few words or phrases from each who wants to share, up to 5 minutes total)

CLOSING WORDS (2 minutes for words, and closing)

And now we take our leave. Before we gather here again, may each of us bring happiness to another’s life; may we each be surprised by the gifts that surround us; may we each be enlivened by constant curiosity; and may we remain together in spirit ‘til the hour we meet again.

-Barbara Cheatham

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE OR SOUND A CHIME (and additional optional closing ritual if agreed to)

(Preparation for the facilitator. Please bring the SGM Facilitator Training Manual, paper and writing implements, the lesson plan, and your calendar/date book.)

Lesson plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry steering committee (Laura Adams; Dick Loescher, chair; Sandy Moses; Leora White) and Rev. Alicia Forsey 12/6/10