

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Session Plan

Home

First Parish Church of Stow and Action, MA

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

“ ‘tis a season of homecomings, when we gather around common tables and forge uncommon memories – some of them blessings, some of them otherwise, home being what it is.

Let us gather now in a common circle and forge uncommon connections, uncommon memories, through this circle in which we are at home.” — *Circle Ministry First Parish UU Cohasset, MA*

Check-in/ Sharing: This is a time to mention briefly any major issue or event on your mind that you would like to share.

Topic: Home

While we like to think of Home as a place of safety and sanctuary, where we are accepted and nurtured, that is not always the case. For some it is where they feel threatened physically or emotionally by those who should be their caregivers, and must hide their true selves in order to survive. Some think of home as the place where they lived in their childhood, while others struggle to build a home that fits them as adults. Still, some others say they have never felt at home.

“Home is much more than a building or piece of ground. It’s an emotion, a deep-rooted sense of welcome and permanence and belonging. It’s a safe, intensely personal realm where you can permit yourself to throw off everything that isn’t fundamentally, essentially you. It’s a complex, messy stew of throat-catching slants of light, kitchen smells, and -déjà vu. If you’re lucky and the place has been around for a while, it can connect you- through faint pencil marks on a door jamb or scrap of old wall paper in a closet – with people you never knew. Some people have a home from childhood; others spend a lifetime looking for it. Once you recognize it, you’re bound to it forever – even if it sits in an extreme locale. Even if it disappears.” — *Dwight Young, Thoughts on Home*

“Out of wood and stone, out of dreams and sacrifice, the People build a home. Out of the work of their hands and hearts and minds, the People fashion a symbol and a reality.

A home may be where you can trust one another so surely that you can dare to share the deep fires that burst into anger as much as the sweet spring waters that swell with laughter.” — *Eileen B. Karpeles, A Meeting Place*

“Home is where the heart is.” — *Pliny the elder, Roman philosopher*

“I long, as does every human being, to be at home where I find myself.” — *Maya Angelou, author, poet*

Questions for Discussion:

1. What does home mean to you? Is it a place or places, present or past? Or is it more connected with persons than with place? Or is home a state of mind which you can access anywhere you are, even in solitude?
2. Could you share any memories of how you felt in your childhood home?
3. Can you describe any places or people who gave you some of what you needed in a home?
4. Has the meaning, the actuality, or experience of “home” changed for you over time? If so, how?
5. If you were to create your own home, how would you make it the kind of home you would want?

(Group will take a few minutes to consider topic and questions followed by sharing)

Wrapping Up: How did you like this topic and session?

Closing Words:

“Never make your home in a place. Make a home for yourself inside your own head. You’ll find what you need to furnish it – memory, friends you can trust, love of learning, and other such things. That way it will go with you wherever you may journey.” - *Tad Williams, American author*

(Adapted in part on session plans used by Circle Ministry at First Parish UU Cohasset, MA and Small Group Ministry, The Mountain)