

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene
Small Group Ministry Program

Inspiration

Lesson plan session January 2012

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.

-Albert Schweitzer

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

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

-John Quincy Adams

Don't ask yourself what the world needs, ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who are alive.

-Howard Thurman

Every flower must grow through dirt.

-Author unknown

The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen. Together, our vision widens and strength is renewed.

-Mark Morrison-Reed

Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.

-Berthold Auerbach

In our ecstasies of nature and friendship, sex and the arts, sports and thinking, travel, deprivation, celebrating and work, we are a channel through which beautiful memorable experiences flow, and we forget ourselves as we become that channel.

-Matthew Fox

An artist's duty is rather to stay open-minded and in a state where he can receive information and inspiration. You always have to be ready for that little artistic Epiphany.

-Nick Cave

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. Share about your experience(s) of being inspired, encouraged, or having a sense of awe, and why you felt that way.
2. What did you do, if anything, as a result of that inspiration?
3. In what ways have you been an inspiration to others?
4. Comment on ways individuals in your communities have inspired you.

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)

May we offer to one another, and to ourselves, the fruits of our lives, that others, in return, may be a source of inspiration to those whose lives they touch.

-Adapted from Howard Thurman.

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

11/17/11