

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry Program

Living Peace

Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, OR, February 2015

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

We gather this day in expectation and in hope. To this gathered circle we bring memories and connections, hopes and fears and aspirations. May we renew again that fellowship which is deepened and enriched by our sharing. May we be reminded again of the wider horizons of our human community. May we hold one another in that esteem that makes family of us all.

-From UU Community Church of Augusta, Maine

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 there is to be peace in the world, there must be peace in the nations.

If there is to be peace in the nations, there must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace in the cities, there must be peace between neighbors.

If there is to be peace between neighbors, there must be peace in the home.

If there is to be peace in the home, there must be peace in the heart.

-Lao-tse

Peace, in the sense of the absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. It will not remove the pain of torture inflicted on a prisoner of conscience. It does not comfort those who have lost their loved ones in floods caused by senseless deforestation in a neighboring country. Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free.

-Dalai Lama

The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness with the universe and all of its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.

-Black Elk

Nonviolent (Compassionate) Communication: a process and language of compassionate, empathic communication, which intends to establish a quality of connection that leads to everyone's needs being met peacefully, to encourage compassionate giving. Attention is focused on what is alive at present in us and others, considering observations, feelings, needs, and requests.

-Adapted from Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD

I like to believe that people in the long run are going to do more to promote peace than our governments. Indeed, I think that people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it.

-Dwight D. Eisenhower

QUESTIONS and REQUESTS (Please respond to any of the questions, requests, and readings you feel moved by. It is not necessary to respond to all of them.)

1. What would the words “as you go your way in peace” be like for you if that were a reality?
2. Share your experience with war or strife and how that impacted you.
3. Tell about striving for peace on a personal, community, or global level, and what you learned.
4. From your point of view is war or violence or the use of force ever justified?

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). Alternatively, this agenda item can be done after the check-in, if the group decides to do that.

-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)

Go in peace. Live simply, gently, at home in yourselves. Act justly. Speak justly. Remember the depth of your own compassion...Crave peace for all people in the world, beginning with yourselves, and go as you go with the dream of that peace alive in your heart.

-Mark L. Belletini

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.)

Session plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry steering committee (Lyn Fischrup; Bonnie Koenig; Al Landy; Dick Loescher, chair).

February 6, 2015