

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry Session Plan

“Now Comes the Mystery”

Katrina VanBrugh, Allen Avenue UU Church, Portland, ME, Sept. 19, 2011

Opening Words:

Henry Ward Beecher, 19th Century evangelist, spoke the following at the moment of his death: "Now comes the mystery." Every culture around the earth and throughout history has attempted to define the mystery. What do you think happens after death?

Check-in/Sharing: How are things with you today?

Discussion:

Do you believe in heaven and/or hell? What are these like, if so?

How much influence does the religion/spiritual practice of your family of origin have on your current beliefs?

Do you believe that consciousness just slips away?

Have you ever had a brush with death and what thoughts were in your mind at that moment?

Have you ever been present at a death? What did you see/feel?

Much as we may try to avoid the thought, we will all have to face the mystery. Are you scared or eager to find out what awaits us on the other side?

Check-out/Likes and Wishes: How was the session for you?

Closing Words:

All the major religions of the world envision some sort of life after death, be it Heaven and Hell, Purgatory, Valhalla, Jannah, Reincarnation, or Resurrection at the Second Coming. Is this all just wishful thinking or is there really some sort of continuation of the human soul after death? As we affirm every Sunday, at Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church, “We believe in Truth. The quest for Truth is (our) sacrament”...Likewise, “We believe in the sacredness of life-to the end that all souls shall grow into harmony with the divine.” As we extinguish this chalice, may its flame continue to burn in our souls, however we conceive that entity, and may the light guide us into harmony with the divine. May we all find our Heavens, but not too soon!