

## Service

Unitarian Universalist Community Church, Augusta, Maine 8/22/2023

**Opening Word:** “Service is both a path and an outcome of spiritual growth” UUCC  
Small Group Ministry offers opportunities to deepen the spiritual resources by fostering the spiritual growth of our members as we serve our community and beyond in ways large and small, immediate and longer term.

The important thing is moving together beyond ourselves to experience our connection with the larger world.

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

### Topic/Activity

#### NOTES AND QUOTES

I slept and dreamt that life was joy.

I awoke and saw that life was service.

I acted and behold service was joy.

- Rabindranath Tagore SGM Session: Service, Cambridge

The call to service is a yearning for the heart to live and move beyond ourselves. Love, compassion and gratitude lead many to a life of service. Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat, *Spiritual Literacy*

Empowerment begins with loving and nurturing the self first in order to quench the thirst of those who need us. -Marianne Goldweber

In helping others, we shall help ourselves, for whatever good we give out completes the circle and comes back to us. Flora Edwards

Groups grow stronger and last longer when the members work together as well as bond over discussions of their lives. When service grows out of core values of the group these are not separate activities. They build on and reinforce each other. *Covenant Group News* June 22, 2008, North Shore Unitarian Church, Deerfield, IL,

The world cannot always understand one’s profession of faith, but it can understand service. Ian Maclare, Session: Service, Hayward, CA, 2017

Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. -Martin Luther King, Jr.

Members of our groups may already be active in the congregation. People provide service both individually and with various groups within the community, as well as with a small group. Small Group Ministry provides services and supports services provided by others.

Groups that just talk all the time, well, they just talk all the time. Groups need to get up and do something together, where members roll up their sleeves, rub elbows, get to know each other in a different way, and gain the satisfaction of making a contribution together.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION (From Session Plan on Service, Cambridge, MA)

- Describe a time when you reached out to someone or when someone reached out to you, with a simple gesture of the heart. What feelings did this gesture evoke?
- When wanting to help or serve others, what obstacles have you faced that kept you from taking action? What did you do, or do you wish you could have done, to overcome these?
- A powerful intimacy can develop when groups work together to serve. Describe a time when you felt this and what it meant to you.
- Has service been important in your spiritual life? If so, how and what kind?
- Have you ever felt at a loss due to lack of opportunities for service in your life?

## UUCS SMALL GROUP MINISTRY BUILDING BLOCK

We work on concerns that affect the church and larger communities. Joint activities are a way to learn about each other's interests, increase the connection with the congregation, and give from the abundance of our group. Our service supports the congregational functions (buildings and grounds, meals and hospitality, programs). and enhances connection with the wider UU world as faith in action.

Let us reflect briefly on Service.....

Service as connection – What connections do we make as we provide service?

Service is ongoing – impact of services may be immediate or long-term, includes the broader community

Service as hospitality – Eating together, sharing essential life activities

Service is for/to each other in our group, including ourselves

Service as doing and receiving

Select an activity that your group has done, is doing or perhaps would like to do. Discuss that activity or event using the “Guidelines for Enhancing Service”. *SGM Quarterly, January 2009*

\*How can or did the planned service *involve* the group members? Consider resources (time, money, transportation, health, etc.) and various ways for group members to participate. Who is included/who is not included? For example, raising money implies that everyone is able to contribute financially, which may not be the case.

\*Are the activities *that are or were selected of interest to the members of the group*? The group needs to connect with the activity on a meaningful level.

\*How does or did the service activity *enhance the spiritual development* of the group members and/or the development of the group itself?

\*What need will or did the service *help fill* in the congregation or community?

\*Is the service activity *practical*?

**SERVICE COLLAGE** Focus on service that the group has done over the years. Create a visual related to that activity.

Service activities, for example, include

- Service to group participants and SGM itself
- Hospitality
- Congregational support
- Facility needs (Building and Grounds, repairs, etc.)
- Service beyond our community
- Service ideas

Give a short note about the service (meaning of contribution, identifying details) that can be read as the visual aid is added to the Service Collage.

**Checking-out, Likes and Wishes:** How was this session for you?

**Closing Words and Extinguishing of Chalice**

What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us.

What we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.

- Albert Pine SGM Session: Service, Cambridge