

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry Program
Serving Our World
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, OR, May 2013

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 come together each time to honor and understand our lives. We bring our pasts and share them; our dreams and express them. We use words, silence, and gestures. Words can't define our lives, but they help us to reach out to each other, that we may be renewed, connected, unburdened.

-Adapted from Judy Mannheim

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

Any ordinary favor we do for someone or any compassionate reaching out may seem to be going nowhere at first, but may be planting a seed we can't see right now. Sometimes we need to just do the best we can and then trust in an unfolding we can't design or ordain.

-Sharon Salzberg

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.

We can not seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community...Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.

-Cesar Chavez

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

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

-Marianne Goldweber

First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you. Then you win.

-Mahatma Ghandi

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

-Flora Edwards

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. What makes up the world that you serve: inner life, family, friends, community, country, global?
2. Providing direct service to those in need, and working to change structures that lead to inequities, injustices, and suffering are both important. What do you resonate with doing?
3. What challenges and successes have you experienced in providing service?
4. Describe a situation where you were the recipient of service, and what that was like for 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.

-Consider handing out and/or sending by e-mail the Small Group Ministry evaluation form, which is to be completed and returned by the next session, number 10, which will be the final session of this year's SGM program.

-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)

As we leave may our sharing and our caring enrich us as we learn what it means for us to "serve our world".

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 (Lyn Fischrup; Bonnie Koenig; Dick Loescher, chair; Leora White)

March 18, 2013