

## UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan AUGUST

### Families by Choice, Families by Blood

*May your time together be meaningful and full of warm connection! -Rev. Rebekah*

#### CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING

#### MOMENT OF SILENCE

#### OPENING WORDS: *IT IS GOOD TO BE TOGETHER*

With thankful hearts we have come together to celebrate the bounty of the day, to bask in the warmth of this community, to share with friends the tides of our lives, to entertain, perennially, our hopes for a better future.

We join together to resist injustice and inequality, wherever they may be found.

Our hearts are touched by the human need we feel around us, whether far away or within reach of our hand.

We come here, to be together, because this is how we believe our lives are best lived: in questioning and in conversation, in compassion and in service, in gratitude and in joy, in companionship, and in love.

It is good to be together.

#### CHECK-IN

#### READINGS

The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life. ~Richard Bach

My family is my strength and my weakness. ~Aishwarya Rai Bachchan

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They came through you but not from you and though they are with you yet they belong not to you. ~Khalil Gibran

I would rather start a family than finish one. ~Don Marquis

A family is a risky venture, because the greater the love, the greater the loss... That's the trade-off. But I'll take it all. ~Brad Pitt

Happy or unhappy, families are all mysterious. We have only to imagine how differently we would be described - and will be, after our deaths - by each of the family members who believe they know us. ~Gloria Steinem

I don't have to look up my family tree, because I know that I'm the sap. ~Fred Allen

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“That's what people do who love you. They put their arms around you and love you when you're not so lovable.” ~Deb Caletti

“There is no such thing as a "broken family." Family is family, and is not determined by marriage certificates, divorce papers, and adoption documents. Families are made in the heart. The only time family becomes null is when those ties in the heart are cut. If you cut those ties, those people are not your family. If you make those ties, those people are your family. And if you hate those ties, those people will still be your family because whatever you hate will always be with you.” ~C. JoyBell C.

I woke up one morning thinking about wolves and realized that wolf packs function as families. Everyone has a role, and if you act within the parameters of your role, the whole pack succeeds, and when that falls apart, so does the pack. ~Jodi Picoult

### MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

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

1. What spoke to you from the readings?
2. Do any of the readings connect to your understanding of your faith or being UU?
3. Where is the sacred in your understanding of family of choice, family by blood..?
4. What wisdom comes from the institution of the family and what challenges?
6. What would you like the children of this congregation, our faith tradition and our community to know and understand about families and family life?

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)

### MOMENT OF SILENT GRATITUDE

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)

### CLOSING WORDS & Extinguish the Chalice or Candle

*And now, may we have faith in life to do wise planting that the generations to come may reap even more abundantly than we. May we be bold to bringing to fruition the golden dreams of human kinship and justice. Thus we ask that fields of promise become fields of reality.*

*- V. Emil Gudmundson*