

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan
Simplicity

May your time together deepen your connections – mind, heart and spirit! -Rev. Rebekah

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

To Remind Ourselves What Is Real By Elena Westbrook, adapted
In a world ravaged by violence, by hatred,
by conflicts that seem eternal and insoluble,
sometimes the only thing we can do is be still for a moment
to remind ourselves what is real:
the sun that rose this morning, the dirt under our feet,
the air whispering in and out of our lungs.
For this time, try just to be present in each moment as it unfolds.
Your simple attention is what makes these moments holy.

CHECK-IN

READINGS

“As you simplify your life, the laws of the universe will be simpler; solitude will not be solitude, poverty will not be poverty, nor weakness weakness.” ~ Henry David Thoreau

“Everything is complex and everything is simple. The rose has no why attached to it, it blooms because it blooms, how no thought of itself, or desire to be seen. What could be more complicated than a rose for someone who wants to understand it? What could be simpler for someone who wants nothing? The complexity of thinking, the simplicity of beholding.” ~Andre Comte-Sponville

“Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius—and a lot of courage—to move in the opposite direction.” ~E. F. Schumacker

“Voluntary simplicity means going fewer places in one day rather than more, seeing less so I can see more, doing less so I can do more, acquiring less so I can have more.” ~John Kabat-Zinn

“Unnecessary possessions are unnecessary burdens. If you have them, you have to take care of them! There is great freedom in simplicity of living. It is those who have enough but not too much who are the happiest.” ~Peace Pilgrim

“I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures.” ~ Lao Tzu

“Simplicity of living, if deliberately chosen, implies a compassionate approach to life. It means that we are choosing to live our daily lives with some degree of conscious appreciation of the condition of the rest of the world.” ~Duane Elgin

“Complexity is enemy of execution”. ~Anthony Robbins

“Find ecstasy in life; the mere sense of living is joy enough.” ~Emily Dickinson

“That’s been one of my mantras – focus and simplicity. Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it’s worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains.” ~Steve Jobs

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 makes simplicity in our lives so challenging? What fears do you have in setting the intention toward simplicity?
2. What is the role of simplicity in your spiritual life? In your role as parent/partner/friend/family member? Does simplicity change over time in our lives?
3. Which reading(s) speaks to (y)our intention of embracing simplicity as a spiritual gift or lifestyle?
4. What is the relationship between joy and simplicity?

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

*“Within each of our hearts there is a most glorious light.
Go forth, and let its spark help you understand what troubles both you and others;
Go forth, and let its light of reason be a guide in your decisions;
Go forth, and bring its ray of hope to those in need of help in both body and spirit,
that they may find healing;
Go forth, and fan the flames of passion to help heal our world;
Go forth, and spread the warm glow of love, pushing back the darkness of the world;
Go forth, and share your glorious light with the world.*

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE