

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan
May 2018: BEAUTY

It is good to be together – companionship is the heartbeat of our community. May your time of gathering be blessed! -Rev. Rebekah

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS (by Rev. Gary Kowalski, adapted)

*We gather here together:
to seek the truth, to grow in love, to join in service;
to celebrate life's beauty and find healing for its pain;
to honor our kinship with each other and with the earth;
to create a more compassionate world, beginning with ourselves;
to wonder at the mystery that gave us birth;
to find courage for the journey's end;
and to listen for the wisdom that guides us
in the quietness of this moment.*

CHECK-IN

READINGS:

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting, a wayside sacrament. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

The human soul is hungry for beauty; we seek it everywhere - in landscape, music, art, clothes, furniture, gardening, companionship, love, religion, and in ourselves. No one would desire not to be beautiful. When we experience the beautiful, there is a sense of homecoming. ~John O'Donohue

People are like stained - glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within. ~Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

I think scars are like battle wounds - beautiful, in a way. They show what you've been through and how strong you are for coming out of it. ~Demi Lovato

But he who dares not grasp the thorn should never crave the rose. ~Anne Bront

For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone. ~Audrey Hepburn

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart. ~Helen Keller

We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words - to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. ~C. S. Lewis

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” – 1 Peter 3:3-4

The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of those depths. ~Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old. ~Franz Kafka

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

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

- ❖ Many reflections on Beauty focus on inward beauty, how do you see your own Beauty?
- ❖ What messages did you receive as a child about Beauty, what would you teach our children now?
- ❖ How does Beauty relate to how we care for one another in beloved community?
- ❖ How do you struggle with Beauty?

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 (by Tom Schade)

*My friends,
There is a power at work in the universe.
It works through human hands,
but it was not made by human hands.
It is a creative, sustaining, and transforming power
and we can trust that power with our lives.
It will sustain us whenever we take a stand on the side of love;
whenever we take a stand for peace and justice; whenever we take a risk.
Trust in that power.
We are, together, held by that power.*

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE