

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan
JULY 2018: Independence

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. Gregory D. Miller, adapted)

*This fire is a reminder of the light within us all;
the yearning for freedom, the longing for truth,
the flame of intuition, the torch of conscience.
We dedicate this time together to the remembrance of this Holy Light.*

CHECK-IN

READINGS:

“The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.” ~Denis Waitley

"The power of transgression is the archetypal foundational story of the Bible because we transgress; because we want to break our own codes, sometimes of morality, sometimes of ethics, sometimes of the power structures... because there is freedom in transgression, and there is power in transgression." ~Ester Perel

“Follow the path of the unsafe, independent thinker. Expose your ideas to the danger of controversy. Speak your mind and fear less the label of 'crackpot' than the stigma of conformity.” ~Thomas J. Watson

"Remember to get carried away. To be grounded is for plants."
~Tarriona "Tank" Ball, Tank and the Bangas

“The freedom to doubt, to question, to be content to live in Mystery is central to the liberal religious tradition. Like the process of evolution itself, the path that we follow—our practice—is not easy or simple. It isn't without its dead ends or its disappointments. It doesn't guarantee that all of our conclusions will be final or that we will ever find an answer to all of our questions. But also like the process of evolution, it is filled with great expressions of beauty and awe that are sometimes born of great struggle and at other times come as unexpected grace.”
~Rev. Stephan Dodenhoff

“It is very nearly impossible... to become an educated person in a country so distrustful of the independent mind.” ~James A. Baldwin

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 of these readings focus on Independence as a way of thinking. How does Independence move in your life as a spiritual orientation?
- ❖ When and how did you first feel Independence as a part of your faith journey?
- ❖ How is living with Independence spiritually challenging? What makes it easy? Hard?
- ❖ How does the sacred work in the world through Independence?
- ❖ Who in your life lives with complete spiritual Independence? How would you like that to weave into your life path?
- ❖ Take a moment to reflect on your home and living/working space. What in your life symbolizes or connect you to Independence?
- ❖ What would you teach our children about Independence of heart? Of spirit?

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 Rev. Rhys Williams, adapted)

*Remembering our spiritual, courageous ancestors
who forsook oppression with security to gain freedom with opportunity,
may we go forth to master ourselves by accepting duty with responsibility,
by showing balance in our judgments and by having breadth of vision in our deliberations.
May we be exemplars of that spirit, moving forward with conviction and commitment,
with unity and without uniformity, with our families of heart to serve the truth that sets us free. Amen.*

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE