

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan  
September 2018: GROWTH

*It is good to be together – companionship is the heartbeat of our community. May your time of (re)connection be blessed! –Rev. Rebekah*

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING  
MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

*“Personal Spiritual Trainers” excerpted (adapted) from Nathan C. Walker*

*Come to me as your PST— your personal spiritual trainer. I’m serious. I want to see you move. I want to see you root yourself in a community Built on moral complexity and to hold one another to the ethic of intellectual honesty. I want to see you move beyond the religious hang-ups of your broken past and use your regenerative spirit to seize the day. I want to see you flex your moral muscles. I want to see you exercise spiritual practices to the point of training your mind and body and spirit to collaborate as a single, integrated, and dynamic entity. I want to hear you articulate your beliefs. I want to hear you articulate your faith to the point of having some moral relevance. I want to know that you are engaged in the moral issues of our time. I want to know what makes you afraid. I want to know if you are cultivating your doubts and your questions so that when you do take a stand, we can all trust your authenticity. I want to know the intricacies of how you are treating other people. Have you learned new ways to better your relationships? If so, share them. I want to know if you have learned to like yourself. Have you learned to love yourself? I want to know if you feel alive. I want to know if you feel like you belong, like you feel like you matter, because to me, you do. You do. Because you are my **personal spiritual trainers**.*

CHECK-IN

READINGS:

“Very early, I knew that the only object in life was to grow.” ~Margaret Fuller

“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.” ~Viktor E. Frankl

“Life does not call us merely to do over and over again what we have already done; nor does it call us to act out, as puppets, parts already assigned to us. No. In the midst of a situation which is itself ever changing, we are free to bring into realization new relationships of understanding and good-will, and new acts of courage.” ~Rev. Frank Holmes

“Growth is painful. Change is painful. But, nothing is as painful as staying stuck where you do not belong.” ~N. R. Narayana Murthy

“Spiritual development is not an accomplishment but a way of life. It is an orientation that brings its own rewards, and what is important is the direction of one’s motives.” ~David R. Hawkins

“Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth.” ~John F. Kennedy

“Spiritual opening is not a withdrawal to some imagined realm or safe cave. It is not a pulling away, but a touching of all the experience of life with wisdom and with a heart of kindness, without any separation.” ~Jack Kornfield

“Growth demands a temporary surrender of security.” ~Gail Sheehy

“Give yourself permission to see and feel the extraordinary events in your own life. In internalizing them, you also will find your perspective about life and its meaning will change, resulting in growth and expansion of your soul.” ~Susan Barbara Apollon

## 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.)

- ❖ Spiritual Growth often involves a level of discomfort. When have you needed courage to grow spiritually? Where/how are you growing now in your faith?
- ❖ What spiritual practices encourage your spiritual growth? Daily, seasonally, event based?
- ❖ As a religious community, how do we balance spiritual growth and acceptance of others? How does racial and social justice relate to spiritual growth?
- ❖ Forgiveness of self and/or others is often instrumental in spiritual growth. Who would benefit from forgiveness and what do you need from your SGM to proceed? (Even humble consideration is a form of proceeding...)
- ❖ What would you teach our children and youth about spiritual growth?

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. Theodore Parker)

*Be ours a religion which, like sunshine, goes everywhere.  
Its temple, all space; Its shrine, the good heart;  
Its creed, all truth; Its ritual, works of love  
Its profession of faith, divine living.*

Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet Again – Go In peace with love & joy in your heart!

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE