

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan
November 2018: STRUGGLE

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

CHALICE & CANDLE LIGHTING
MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS By Rev. Kimberlee A. Tomczak Carlson (adapted)

It is not by chance that you arrived here today.
You have been looking for something larger than yourself.

*Inside of us there is a yearning, a calling, a hope for more,
A desire for a place of belonging and caring.
Through your struggles, someone nurtured you into being,
Instilling a belief in a shared purpose, a common yet precious resource
That belongs to all of us when we share.*

And so, you began seeking a beloved community:
A people that does not put fences around love.
A community that holds its arms open to possibilities of love.
A heart-home to nourish your soul and share your gifts.
Welcome home; welcome to our time together.

CHECK-IN

READINGS & Questions for Reflection (Feel free to respond to some or all, as the spirit moves):

“How do we nurture the soul? By revering our own life. By learning to love it all, not only the joys and the victories, but also the pain and the struggles.”

~Nathaniel Branden

From Rev. Rebekah: I recently attended an event where the speaker, a rabbi from Virginia, shared that we are at risk for not just “compassion fatigue”, but also “outrage fatigue” with the onslaught of toxic news and media engagement, in this polarized political and social climate. The rabbi’s reflection led me to consider *Struggle* with this mind.

Struggle is to stay present to the pain of others and mindful of how our thoughts, words and actions impact the world around us.

Struggle is to hold onto to hope and let it fuel action and engagement.

Struggle is to find moments of grace, compassion and forgiveness for ourselves and others.

Struggle is to call ourselves back to covenant: we remember, we forget, we remember again, we forget again, we remember again - who we are, whose we are, and who we strive to be.

Struggle is an opportunity for reflection, towards fuller spiritual integration.

Therefore, we take time to reflect, to quiet our thoughts towards the Greatest Good:

What 4 things I am grateful for today?

What 4 things am I grateful for in others or about life?

Where can I send some healing love to someone or somewhere in the world?

Who needs to receive the message clearly that I care about them today?

Who can I forgive and what can I let go of?

What am I most proud of about today?

What or who made me happy today? Did I tell them?

Did I laugh today? If not, where can I find a moment of joy tomorrow?

Where did I encounter struggle today, and how did I deal with it? Could I have done it differently?

Did my actions and decisions today contain a good balance of my heart and my head?

How did I live and demonstrate our UUCR mission to *Practice Courageous Love*?

Did today matter? If today was my last day, would I be happy with how I lived it?

How can I make tomorrow better?

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

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. Sarah Lammert

Go in peace, embraced by the light and warmth of our gathering.

Go in love, ready again to struggle on.

Go in beauty, shining forth like a lamp for freedom.

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE