

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan DECEMBER 2018
THRESHOLD

May your time together be meaningful and full of warm connection! -Rev. Rebekah

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING

OPENING WORDS: "Midwinter" by the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker

In midwinter the world comes indoors and is our guest of honor.

Arms hug the arriving logs that clatter in to take their place by the fire.

Mouths kiss the prickly branches of holly so elegant in green and red.

The forest, which we've called and asked to come, travels long roads to get here.

Finally she arrives, tired, but still bursting with the energy of high mountain cascades and starry nights.

She tumbles across the threshold to be fussed over until she is comfortably settled in the living room.

Soon the whole house is filled with the world's presence.

And it is up to us now to make her feel at home.

Let this be the year we fully welcome the world, and treat her right, and lift our glasses in a toast to her,
and thank her, and keep our resolutions, and mean it when we say,

Joy to the World.

CHECK-IN

READINGS

"There is a point at which things happen. Water in a teakettle must reach 100o C (at sea level) before it will boil. The air temperature must drop below 0o C before rain will turn to snow. So it is with humans, as well. Most of us will tolerate almost anything (pain, sadness, loneliness) to a certain point. Then we find we no longer can. We have reached our "change" point. We are no longer able stay the same. We have reached a threshold over which we must cross." ~ "Crossing the Threshold", Dr. Lisa Mosconi

"The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind." ~Khalil Gibran

O God of many names, the personal and mysterious,
We have come to a quiet time, an interior place,
a place for the deepening of spirit, the enrichment of soul.
Let us have the courage to sit in the unknowing,
To look for the answers even if they are to sit with our own questions,
To be willing to be authentic with ourselves,
To be ready to bring our face to the world.
Let us sit in that quiet depth.
~Rev. Katie Kandarian-Morris

"Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, opportunity transient. To act is easy, to think is hard; to act according to our thought is troublesome. Every beginning is cheerful: the threshold is the place of expectation." ~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"When you have done your best, confronted your fear of committing to color and form, and dared to step over the threshold into the unknown, you will invariably find your own voice." ~Michele Cassou

"During [a] time of contemplation, we are existing in a transitional place that Buddhists call the "bardo state." This is a time of suspended animation; a time of waiting. It is a time of "liminality," which comes from the Latin word *līmen*, meaning "a threshold." Existing in the liminal/bardo/contemplative state can be frustrating and exhausting. It is during this time that we will continue to feel all of the things that help us to understand that we must change: pain, sadness, loneliness. We continue to see that we are stuck. Yet we can't seem to move forward. That is, until we reach the point at which things must happen; the moment at which we must proceed." ~"Crossing the Threshold", Dr. Lisa Mosconi

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.)

~ What spoke to you from the readings?

~ Which of the readings about "Threshold" connect to your understanding of faith and being UU? What wisdom comes from "Threshold" as a spiritual concept?

~ "Threshold" is a place of waiting, a place of possibility, a place of transformation. "Threshold" asks for patience and quiet - asks for boldness and movement. "Threshold" is the space between known, unknown; being sheltered, being exposed; certainty, and mystery.

Where are you on or near a "Threshold" in your spirit? Are you stuck or choosing to stay still? What do you need to cross over that Threshold?

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available)

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 to close the circle)

CLOSING WORDS by Rev. Eric Williams

*Blessed is the path on which you travel. Blessed is the body that carries you upon it.
Blessed is your heart that has heard the call. Blessed is your mind that discerns the way.
Blessed is the gift that you will receive by going.
Truly blessed is the gift that you will become on the journey.
May you go forth in peace.*

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE