



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Service

Opening and Chalice Lighting

I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold service was joy. - Rabindranath Tagore

Quiet Reflection

The world cannot always understand one's profession of faith, but it can understand service.
- Ian Maclare

Sharing/ Check-In

Take two or three minutes to share how you are spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. You can speak or you can pass. We want to know how you are in this moment.

Topic Readings

From *How Can I Help?* by Ram Dass & Paul Gorman

“Somewhere deep within many of us is a vision of how helping would flow from trust in ourselves and in others. Or perhaps we might recall images of life in a town in which doors didn't have to be locked, responsibilities were more commonly shared, and going out of your way was hardly out of the ordinary. Or maybe we find ourselves yearning for a future society where the care of others wouldn't have to be mandated. Service wouldn't be a duty, it would be a habit—the way of natural compassion.

And yet...

Although at times helping may happen simply in the way of things, all too often helping isn't happening at all. Even if it is, it can be anything but natural: self-conscious, half-hearted, begrudging. How much are we willing to give, and what are we holding on to? How do we really feel about the place of helping in our lives? We needn't go deep beneath the surface before we encounter our ambivalence. We note the interplay of generosity and resistance, self-sacrifice and self-protectiveness.” (P. 9)

“ So we face an interesting situation. Our impulses to care for one another often seem instinctive. The more we're able to act on them freely, the more opportunity we have to feel whole, and be helpful.”

Each word of comfort, each act of compassion is a small bonfire during dark nights. But these tiny flickering flames, the simple gestures of loving hearts will add up and will eventually save the world. Salvation is not something we have to wait for, but as good Unitarians, we should do something about it. Because we can. Because we can, therefore we must.

- Dr. Imre Gellérd

Break/Quiet Contemplation

Sharing/Deep Listening

Speak about this topic in any way that is comfortable to you. If you choose to use the questions, focus on just one or two, as this will allow you to go deeper into the topic.

- Tell us about how you felt about our Small Group community service.
- When have you been in a situation in which someone outside of your family, a person, a community, society, helped you?
- Is service an important part of the way you live your beliefs? Tell of a time when you had a strong positive or negative experience with volunteering and how that influences how you integrate service into your life now.
- Describe a time when, to paraphrase Dr. Gellérd, you reached out to someone or when someone reached out to you, with a simple gesture of the heart. What feelings did this gesture evoke?
- When wanting to help or serve others, what obstacles have you faced that kept you from taking action? What did you do, or do you wish you could have done, to overcome these?
- There is a need for service on a person-to-person level and for service on a broader level, working for change locally, nationally, or internationally. Based on your experiences, does one appeal to you more? If so, how or why?
- Does payment for service influence how you feel about serving? Or being served?

Discussion

This is a time to supportively respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.

Checkout/

Likes & Wishes

What did you like about this meeting? What would you like to see change at future meetings?

Announcements

Closing Reading/ Extinguish Chalice

What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us.

What we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal. -Albert Pine