

Fellowship Circle Resources - Topics: Living Simply

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting

"Why should we live in such a hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. I wish to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life. I wish to learn what life has to teach, and not, when I come to die, discover that I had not lived. I do not wish to live what is not life, living is so dear, nor do I wish to practice resignation, unless it is quite necessary. I wish to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, I want to cut a broad swath, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms. If it proves to be mean, then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it is sublime, to know it by experience, and to be able to give a true account of it."

--Henry David Thoreau

Check-in

The facilitator should briefly remind the group of confidentiality/anonymity, that this is not the time for cross conversation, etc.

Focus: Living Simply

Many of us would like to live more simply, to simplify our lives. But not many of us are likely to follow Thoreau's example and build a cabin in the woods. Take ten minutes to answer individually the following questions: What are the demands in my life that keep me too busy? What needs or forces in me keep me too busy? What do I push aside? What would I be willing to give up? Take time to share as a group. As a closing question, ask:

What one thing are you willing to try before our next meeting that will move your life closer to your own goals for a simpler and more meaningful life?

Note: it might be helpful to have pens and paper available for people to use as they answer the questions.

Check-Out: likes and wishes

The facilitators ask participants to briefly say what they liked about this meeting and what they might wish for future meetings. This is also the time if there are any "housekeeping" announcements to be made: next meeting place (if rotating), who'll bring opening reading (if rotating), who'll bring snacks, etc. This is also the time to bring to the group's attention any church-related announcements.

Closing Reading

"May the light around us guide our footsteps, and hold us fast to the best and most righteous that we seek. May the darkness around us nurture our dreams, and give us rest so that we may give ourselves to the work of our world. Let us seek to remember the wholeness of our lives, the weaving of light and shadow in this great and astonishing dance in which we move." --Kathleen McTigue

[Adapted from the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta, Maine]