

## Spirituality

### Chalice Lighting

### Sharing of Joys and Sorrows (10 min)

### Silence (3 min)

### Shared Readings:

I define spirituality as the ability to see, feel, and live the big picture. It is the ability to feel connected with everything, to suffer gracefully, to keep things in perspective. People who make mountains out of molehills, who live only for the moment, or who can only care about the things and people that directly affect them are secular people, mundane rather than spiritual in their outlook. For some people, the “big picture” will include divinity, an afterlife, and other aspects of reality that are not a part of the physical world. But you can be spiritual without believing in any of these things. There’s plenty in this life we share to stay connected to. The fruits of that sense of connection, perspective, and knowledge of the whole are serenity and compassion.

Christine Robinson

*By spiritual, I mean the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and much more trustworthy than our egos—with our own, with one another, with the worlds of history and nature, with the invisible winds of the spirit, and with the mystery of being alive.*

Parker Palmer

A human being is a part of the whole, called by us *Universe*, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of

compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole nature in its beauty.  
Albert Einstein

*When we are in touch with being whole, we feel at one with everything. When we feel at one with everything, we feel whole ourselves. Wholeness is the root of everything that the words ‘health’, ‘healing’, and ‘holy’ signify in our language and our culture.*  
Jon Kabat-Zinn

Different people have different roads to follow, and we must go with others on the best road for them, not the one upon which we are most comfortable. And then we have different values...It is difficult for us to accept values very different from ours. Our task as spiritual companions is to encourage people in the development of their own values, not in accepting ours. We are only loving when we perceive differences and encourage others on their own unique ways.  
Morton Kelsey

*Help us to be ever faithful gardeners of the spirit, who know that without darkness nothing comes to birth, and without light nothing flowers.*  
May Sarton

### Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

**Round I** On the cover of this bulletin, brainstorm words and phrases that come to mind when you think of spirituality. Read two or three to the group. (5 min)

**Round II** Please share your thoughts and stories related to any of the quotes or questions in the homework or bulletin. (45 min)

**Round III** (Optional) Share anything significant to you that came up during Round II.

### Closing Words

### Song “Go Now in Peace”

### Group Business

## Covenant Groups

### Spirituality

#### The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group.
- to honor the group by letting the leader know if I will be absent and to come to the group one last time and say goodbye if I need to quit.
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others.
- to avoid cross talk, giving feedback or trying to fix anyone
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and not tell other people's stories.
- to listen to what others share with an open heart, and to share deeply in my turn.



## **Leader's Notes for Spirituality**

**Materials:** Pens and pencils for writing.

**Chalice Lighting:** You will need to choose one from your Leader's Manual

**Sharing of Joys and Concerns: (10 min)**

**Silence:** (3 min)

Give your group the gift of three minutes of silence. You might say these words: "Let us hold each other in silent support." or "Let us enjoy a few minutes of silence as we let go of the details of everyday life so that we may enter a more contemplative space."

**Shared Readings:** (5 min)

Go around your group letting each person in turn read from Shared Readings in the bulletin until all the readings have been read.

**Deep Sharing/Deep Listening:**

**Round I** (10 min) Make sure everyone has a pen or pencil. Brainstorm words and phrases that come to mind when thinking of "Spirituality." Go around the group and share two or three each out loud.

**Round II** (45 min) Share thoughts and stories related to any of the quotes or questions in the homework or bulletin.

**Round III** (Optional) Share anything significant to you that came up during Round II.

**Closing Words:** There's plenty in this life we share to stay connected to. The fruits of that sense of connection, perspective, and knowledge of the whole are serenity and compassion. Christine Robinson

**Sing:** Go Now in Peace

**Group Business:** Pass out homework.

## Spirituality

*It is the "I" behind the "I." It is between, behind, and in the eyes. It is the "I" we come in touch with when something in life takes our breath away. It is the desire to have that experience again and again. It is the desire to share that experience with other people. With it comes a feeling of belonging, of purpose, of meaning. It is a glimpse of something beautiful and mysterious that feels very far away and in every atom of our being at the same time. It is uniting.* This is one of many attempts to describe spirituality. This session is about how you describe spirituality in your life. Here is a spectrum of thoughts on spirituality:

*Maybe we're also spiritually shy. Ask UU's what their religious history is and they'll never stop talking, but ask about their current religious feelings, practices, hopes, and fears and you'll hear the sound of sheer silence. And since we don't say, we don't know this part of each other's lives very well and we don't get each other's support as much as we might. But I ask you, what's a church FOR, after all?* Christine Robinson

Spirituality is rooted in personal integrity, community, and love.....There's this strong desire not to deal with ambiguities and to put things into absolutes. Almost always when you put things into absolutes, you find that compassion suffers.

Sister Helen (of Dead Man Walking)

*The purpose of all spiritual teaching is to bring a quality of deep attention, a vibrant presence, into one's daily life, to remove the walls segregating the holy from the profane.* Mary E. Grigolia

Stripped of all its outer encrustations, spirituality emerges as a science, as scientific as any other, as verifiable in its results. Let any seeker take it up and let him create in the laboratory of the soul the conditions that are prerequisite; as sure as the day follows the night shall he rise into the Kingdom of God. Sant Kirpal Singh

*The trouble with steeling yourself against the harshness of reality is that the same steel that secures your life against being destroyed secures your life also against being opened up and transformed by the holy power that life itself comes from. You can survive on your own. You can grow strong on your own. You can prevail on your own. But you cannot become human on your own.* Frederick Buechner

1. Describe a spiritual experience in your life.
2. How do you define spirituality?
3. How are you intentional in your spiritual growth? For example, do you follow spiritual teachings? If so, please share. If not, what path might you be open to?
4. Do you feel comfortable talking about spirituality in this church? Why or why not? In your mind, what is "a church FOR, after all?" Is it related to your definition of spirituality?
5. What is your reaction to Buechner's words "you cannot become human on your own?" Do you share this belief? Why or why not?