

Discussion Guide

Welcome

Welcome, names and check in, offer overview of this gathering to explore the theme (including time expectations):

The practice of active engagement: How are we working for a just and compassionate society.

Chalice Lighting

We light our chalice with the words from UU the vote, an American Unitarian movement to get folks out to vote:

Justice work is deeply spiritual work. As we move through this moment our hearts, minds, and bodies are informing our work. Our joys and weariness are constantly shifting, but community is always our anchor. We are creating hope together.

Covenant

Review the covenant as agreed upon at the last meeting. As participants become more familiar with the covenant, you can change up how you refer to it. For example, you might ask people to name the phrase that feels most meaningful or important to them today. (Don't forget to mention that it's fine to repeat phrases).

- Speak as personally and deeply as we wish--or not. It is always okay to pass.
- Speak kindly about ourselves and others.
- Speak from our own experiences.
- Hold confidentiality. Share your experience of the conversation, not other people's stories.
- Listen respectfully. Avoid giving advice or asking probing questions about others' lives.
- Be aware of power differentials. Consider our own and others' identities and how these identities shape the impact of our contributions.
- (Include any agreements added by your group)

continued . .

Check In

Offer one of these questions or one of your own or combine the check in with the covenant exercise suggested above.

- How goes it with your spirit?
- What's on your mind and heart today?

Conversation

This month we are exploring our experiences of active engagement and the practices that help us work for a just and compassionate society.

People are welcome to offer their responses to the service, the reflection questions, their experience with one of the practices, or anything from the theme packet. You may choose to begin with a go-round or simply let the conversation flow, making sure everyone has a chance to share. If there is a lull, let the silence sit for a time, then offer up a question to continue the conversation.

Optional Starting Questions

- How has your experience of engagement in working for social and environmental justice changed over the arc of your life?
Or
- Share a story of an experience of active engagement that led to an important learning for you, about yourself.

Sharing Silence

Before closing the session with the check out and chalice extinguishing, offer a minute of silence to give people a moment to process all that has been said and to share a time of quiet together. Alternatively, or in addition, you could include a time of silence before starting the conversation.

Leaving

From this conversation about active engagement, what resonated most for you, or what are you taking with you?

Closing Words

Extinguish the chalice

May we support one another in nurturing our sense of belonging. Blessings on us all.