



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Transitions

As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world...as in being able to remake ourselves. -*Mohandas K. Gandhi*

The real art of conducting consists in transitions. - *Gustav Mahler*

...transition is the psychological process we each go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, but transition is internal. – *William Bridges*

Chalice Lighting (1 min.)

May the flame here lit
Be to us a symbol of the torch
That is passed from hand to hand and life to life -
Of caring and concern and the passion of involvement
Which have marked the men and women of our liberal faith
For many generations.
- *Philip R. Giles*

Opening Reading (1 min.)

Oceans
I have a feeling that my boat
has struck, down there in the depths,
against a great thing.
And nothing
happens! Nothing...Silence...Waves...

- Nothing happens? Or has everything happened,
And are we standing now, quietly, in the new life?

- *Juan Ramon Jimenez (translated by Robert Bly)*

Quiet Reflection (2 min.)

It is the province of knowledge to speak
And it is the privilege of wisdom to listen.
– *Oliver Wendell Holmes*

Sharing/Check-In (35 min.)

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.

Quiet Reflection (1 min.)

Let's join together now in quiet meditation as we honor what everyone has shared, as well as those joys and sorrows we still hold in silence. May our delight and celebration multiply each other's joys, and may our comfort and healing lessen each other's sorrows.

Topic Reading (2 min.)

Anxiety
Fill me with anxiety, O Life!
Electrify me, make me nervous
Beyond any staid concern
For those things which challenge
Placid, flaccid ways, anachronisms of being.
Keep me tense, a-tiptoe,
Blinking at the novel,
Reaching out for those things
Just beyond my fingertips;

So that I may make patterns,
Dream dreams, fashion worlds
Which will beat with life.
For I would be a man
And on the move.
- Arthur Graham, *Parts and Proportions*

**Break/ Quiet
Contemplation**
(10 min.)

The only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes - *Marcel Proust*

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind is part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter into another.
- *Anatole France*

Before you can begin something new, you have to end what used to be. Before you can learn a new way of doing things, you have to unlearn the old way. Before you can become a different kind of person, you must let go of your old identity. So beginnings depend on endings. The problem is, people don't like endings. –
William Bridges

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. To keep our faces toward change, and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate, is strength undefeatable.
- *Helen Keller*

**Sharing/Deep
Listening**
(35 min.)

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.

- Transitions can be smooth or bumpy. They may bring up a wide range of emotions—anticipation, uncertainty, grief, celebration, confusion, stress, and excitement, to name just a few. Have you drawn on personal or spiritual resources to help you through times of transition? If so, are ones that have been particularly effective or ineffective?
- Think about some of the meaningful transitions in your life. Did you respond differently when the change was one that you chose to make versus one that was outside of your control? Were there other factors that you felt affected the duration or the intensity of your transition?
- Have you had times when the transition period between one situation (or state of being) and another seemed too short or too long? Would you have felt or responded differently if you had (or hadn't) had as much time as you did?
- This gathering may seem like a transition as group members decide whether or not to commit to Small Group Ministry for the church year. What hopes, concerns, or feelings do you have tonight?

Discussion
(15 min.)

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

**Commitment to
Small Group**
(10 min.)

With an agreement not to cross-talk, to question, or to try to change anyone's decision, please let the group know whether you plan to continue with this Small Group for the remainder of the church year.

**Checkout/
Likes & Wishes**
(5 min.)

*What did you like about this gathering?
What would you like to see change at future gatherings?*

Announcements (1 min.)

**Closing Reading/
Extinguish Chalice**
(2 min.)

We receive fragments of holiness, glimpses of eternity, brief moments of insight.
Let us gather them up for the precious gifts that they are, and, renewed by their
grace, move boldly into the unknown.
- *Sarah York*