



## Choices We Make

Covenant Group Session Plan

Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina

Adapted from the session by First Parish Church of Stow and Action, MA, 2018.

Revised by Denise Frick during the Covid 19 pandemic. Date: May 2, 2020

**Welcome, Chalice Lighting:** Renewal, resolve, resolution, reflection, response, repetition, resurrection —all are the stuff of second chances, third chances, and more. As we find ourselves on another journey around the sun, let us kindle our chalice that its light might show us the way. Let us kindle our chalice that its flame might warm our hearts as we open our hearts to one another.

~Rev. Jan Carlsson-Bull, UU Minister

**Personal Check In:** Briefly share something from your life since we last met and how you are feeling now.

### Opening Words

We are here to abet creation and to witness to it,  
to notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature  
so that creation need not play to an empty house.

~Annie Dillard, *Singing the Living Tradition*, reading # 419

### Questions for Sharing and Discussion:

1. What were some difficult choices in your life? What transitions resulted from making those decisions?
2. What are some of the decisions you have made of which you are most proud? Why?
3. What has been helpful to you in making difficult decisions?
4. Please name any of your current choices related to the pandemic and describe how you feel about them.

### Readings – see below

**Sitting in Silence** (Reflect on questions and readings)

**Sharing and discussion-** This is a time to speak without interruption and for deep listening. Deep listening means no interrupting, no fixing, no saving, no advising, and no setting each other straight. Please share one or more responses to the session questions.

After each person has shared once, respond to something another person said or relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.

### Closing reading

Life is made of choices. Remove your shoes or scrub the floor. ~Anonymous

### Announcements/Plans

**Check out:** As we close today, how are you feeling now?

### Extinguish the Chalice

## Readings

### Choices

Yesterday, there were fewer cars at the Arrivals dock at the Portland airport than there were dogs being walked on my block.

Yesterday, a friend reported a clandestine meeting—a walk with her elderly mother—careful to keep a six-foot distance as they strolled together in the sunshine.

Yesterday, schools were closed, and bars, and restaurants. We no longer gather, laughing, in bustling crowds of strangers who might become friends.

But today, people in Italy sang together out their balconies. Meals on Wheels drivers put bags of food on doorknobs, backed up six feet, and waited to see if the seniors were okay.

Today, the technology that we swore was killing our relationships—those phones our youth sink into, ignoring the world in front of them—is saving us. Letting us gather, see one another's faces.

Tomorrow, fewer people will sicken and die if we keep our distance today. Imagine if all difficult choices had such clear and obvious results— And then living as if they do.

~ Marcia Stanard, UU Minister

Our choices define our lives. When reflecting on choices we've made, we may feel regret or great joy. As we look to our choices for the future, we may feel excitement or trepidation. Sometimes choices are obvious, sometime completely evasive. Making choices requires courage, conviction and, often, a leap of faith.

This is as true in everyday life as it is in battle: we are given one life and the decision is ours whether to wait for circumstances to make up our mind, or whether to act, and in acting, to live.

~Omar Bradley

Your choice of people to associate with, both personally and business-wise, is one of the most important choices you make. If you associate with turkeys, you will never fly with the eagles.

~Brian Tracy

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything - all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important.

~Steve Jobs

Every test in our life makes us bitter or better, every problem comes to break us or make us. The choice is ours whether we become victim or victor. ~Anonymous

Everyone makes mistakes in life, but that doesn't mean they have to pay for them for the rest of their life. Sometimes good people make bad choices. It doesn't mean they're bad, it means they're humans.

~Anonymous

It is our choices....that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities. ~J.K. Rowling