



**HELP! Giving, Receiving and Asking for Help**  
Greenville UU Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina  
Covenant Group Session Plan

**Welcome, Chalice Lighting:** Here we are, together in this space. By our love and by our covenant, we make this a holy place. We light the chalice of Unitarian Universalism in honor of the light that lives in each of us, the light that shines among us, and the light we bring into the world

**Opening Reading:**

It's not the load that breaks you down; it's the way you carry it.

~ Lena Horne

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

**Questions to prompt and guide discussion:**

1. When you give, does it matter why or how you do it? Does it matter how a gift or help that you give is received?
2. What has helped or hindered you in asking for needed help?
3. It may be easier or more difficult to ask for help, depending on the situation... What is easier or harder for you to ask for, and why?
4. What role, if any, does prayer have in your life when you need help?
5. What help do you feel is available through this fellowship? If you should need that help, how comfortable are you in asking for it?

**Sitting in Silence** (Reflect on the questions as you prepare to hear the readings)

**Readings – see below**

**Sharing** - 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.

**(This is usually a good time to take a brief break)**

**Open Discussion** -This is a time to respond to something another person said about the topic or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared their thoughts on this topic. Continue to practice deep listening.

**Closing reading:**

When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed.”

~Maya Angelou

**Announcements/Plans**

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

**Extinguish the Chalice**

## Readings

Lean on me when you're not strong  
And I'll be your friend; I'll help you carry on.  
For... it won't be long 'til  
I'm gonna need somebody to lean on.

~ from *Lean On Me* by Bill Withers, hymn 1021 in *Singing the Journey*

I have one life and one chance to make it count for something. I'm free to choose what that something is, and the something I've chosen is my faith. Now, my faith goes beyond theology and religion and requires considerable work and effort. My faith demands -- this is not optional -- my faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference. I may ask for help when I need it, but I do it, and I will keep doing it. ~Jimmy Carter

When you ask for what you need and receive what people and the world have to give, you open up pathways you couldn't see before, stimulate your imagination in ways that could not happen before, and have energy that was not previously available to you.

~Amanda Owen, *The Power of Receiving*

Gracious acceptance is an art which most never bother to cultivate. We learn that we should always be willing to give, but we forget about accepting things, which can be much harder than giving. Accepting another person's gift is allowing him to express his feelings for you."

~ Alexander McCall Smith, *Love Over Scotland*

You are never strong enough that you don't need help. ~Cesar Chavez

One of the greatest barriers to connection is the cultural importance we place on "going it alone." Somehow we've come to equate success with not needing anyone. Many of us are willing to extend a helping hand, but we're very reluctant to reach out for help when we need it ourselves. It's as if we've divided the world into "those who offer help" and "those who need help." The truth is that we are both.

~Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are*

Everybody wants to save the Earth; nobody wants to help Mom do the dishes.

~ P.J. O'Rourke, born 14 November 1947, American political satirist

This is the hardest of all: to close the open hand out of love, and keep modest as a giver.

~ Friedrich Nietzsche

The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.

~Barack Obama

A father watched as his young son struggled unsuccessfully to lift a heavy stone.

"Are you using all your strength?" the father asked.

"Yes, I am", said the impatient, frustrated boy.

"Perhaps not," said the father, "I am here, happy to help, if only you would ask."

~ Author unknown

When I was younger, so much younger than today,  
I never needed anybody's help in any way.  
But now these days are gone, I'm not so self assured,  
Now I find I've changed my mind and opened up the doors.  
Help me if you can, I'm feeling down  
And I do appreciate you being round.  
Help me, get my feet back on the ground,  
Won't you please, please help me?  
~ excerpt from *Help!* by The Beatles (John Lennon / Paul McCartney)

Asking is the beginning of receiving. Make sure you don't go to the ocean with a teaspoon. At least take a bucket so the kids won't laugh at you.

~ Jim Rohm, *Beginning Quotes*, (September 17, 1930 – December 5, 2009) American entrepreneur, author and motivational speaker.

Asking for help does not mean we are weak or incompetent. It usually indicates an advanced level of honesty and intelligence. ~ Anne Wilson Schaef, Author, spiritual teacher and healer.

There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments.

— Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed*, Kenyan environmental political activist and Nobel laureate.