

## Change/Transitions—UUFVB Covenant Groups—January 2016

### Chalice Lighting

May we know once again that we are not isolated beings,  
but connected, in mystery and miracle,  
to the universe, to this community and to each other.

**Check-in: How is your spirit right now?**

**Opening Reading (read responsively)**

**For nothing is fixed,**

*forever and forever and forever,*

**it is not fixed;**

*the earth is always shifting,*

**the light is always changing,**

*the sea does not cease to grind down rock.*

**Generations do not cease to be born,**

**and we are responsible to them because we are the only witnesses they have.**

*The sea rises, the light fails,  
lovers cling to each other,  
and children cling to us.*

**The moment we cease to hold each other,**

*the moment we break faith with one another,*

**the sea engulfs us and the light goes out.**

(Adapted from *Nothing Personal* by James Baldwin and Richard Avedon)

### **Topic Exploration**

Transitions are the cusp of change, a time of grasping and letting go, a time of sadness and of hope. Leaving home, leaving school, moving in with a partner, a new job, marriage, having children, moving away, a death of someone close, retirement--all times of transition in which we learn something about ourselves, about life. Our old patterns, momentarily swept away-- were we cleared out for some new delight? How have we turned our transition reflections into guides from beyond? (Rev. Glenn H. Turner)

The world is round and the place which may seem like the end may also be only the beginning. (*Ivy Baker Priest*)

Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending. (*Maria Robinson*)

No, this isn't about weighing 300 pounds and losing 150. It's about pivot points of a different sort. That is, before X happened life was such and such. After X happened, life was never the same, with "never the same" being not necessarily good or bad, just never the same. (Jerry White)

### **Questions / Sharing**

1. How have your transitions changed your life?
2. Do you believe "things happen for a reason"?
3. Tell about a major life-altering event where the change was either smooth and easy, or you had difficulty moving on.
4. Charlotte Bronte wrote in *Jane Eyre*, that "Remorse is the poison of life." Do you agree?
4. Share reflections on a current transition that is very alive for you now.

### **Closing Reading**

There's a trick to the Graceful Exit, I suspect. It begins with the vision to recognize when a job, a life stage, a relationship, is over and to let it go. It means leaving what's over without denying its validity or its past importance in our lives. It involves a sense of the future, a belief that every exit line is an entry, we are moving on rather than out...It's hard to learn that we don't leave the best parts of ourselves behind, back in the dugout or the Capital or the office. We own what we learned back there, the experience and the growth are grafted onto our lives. And when we exit, we can take ourselves along. Quite gracefully. (Ellen Goodman)

### **Check- out and reflection on today's session**

#### **Extinguish the Chalice**

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth,  
the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.  
These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

### **Housekeeping**