Woven FAITH

OCTOBER 2026 Theme:
Living the Questions

Adults (U.S.) Small Group Ministry on Living the Questions

Part of Living Our UU Values Curriculum (https://www.uua.org/lifespan/curricula/woven-faith/living-values/curriculum)

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Introduction

Please watch a brief video introduction (Vimeo) (https://vimeo.com/1220908778) of this month's theme.

Supply List

- Chalice and candle

Table of Activities

Element	Description	Time
Opening Words and Chalice-Lighting	Come, Hearts that Are Open	1 minute
Introducing Woven Faith Small Group Ministry	Information about the program	2 — 3 minutes
Community Agreements	How we're together + values covenant	3 — 5 minutes
Check-In	What has your attention	3 — 15 minutes
Focus Reading	The Invitation, by Oriah Mountain Dreamer	2 minutes
Centering	Moment of silence	1 minute
Focus Questions	Living the Questions, curiosity, learning	15 – 45 minutes
Closing Words	We Laugh, We Cry	1 minute
	Total Time	**30 — 90 minutes**

Opening Words and Chalice-Lighting (1 Minute)

> Come hearts that are open
>
> and hearts that are closed by trials and sorrows, loss and misgivings.

Come seekers,

searching for answers, for respite, or a space to unleash your joy.

Here all are welcome, no excuses are needed, nor explanations.

Bring your whole heart and let it be touched.

As we light our chalice, the symbol of our faith,

this moment belongs to each of us

- *Rev. Diane Rollert, Canadian UU minister*

Introducing Woven Faith Small Group Ministry (2 — 3 Minutes)

Small Group Ministry is an opportunity for individual spiritual growth, while developing relationships of substance and depth. These groups encourage deep listening and personal reflection. They are not groups designed for discussion or supporting individuals. Instead they invite participants to turn their attention to the experiences of others as well as to reflect honestly and deeply on their own experiences.

Participants are asked to share openly and deeply. These groups value listening deeply without interrupting or responding, starting and ending on time, committing to all sessions, and confidentiality.

The Small Group Ministry sessions follow the monthly themes of Woven Faith. They are written to be used by various types of groups. The sessions are designed by a team of Unitarian and Unitarian Universalists from around the globe, intentionally bringing a broader perspective to our spiritual deepening to de-center the U.S. American expressions of faith and invite UUs of all ages to see themselves within our global community.

Each session follows the same basic format and is led by a facilitator who is also an equal participant in the group. Each member agrees to follow the covenant, which each group can make together and hold each other to the agreements.

Community Agreements (3 — 5 Minutes)

We agree together on how we'll be in this space:

- We listen without interrupting, with one person speaking at a time
- We keep what is shared here confidential and private
- Share our own experiences, be willing to be vulnerable
- We don't give advice unless it is asked for
- You can always pass or only speak briefly
- Share the space: speaking only once until all have had the opportunity to speak
- Phones are put away or on silent
- Additional language to add if meeting online: We keep focused on the group, without additional tabs or digital distractions.

Our Covenant

Our covenant is in our shared UU values, all centered around LOVE:

- Interdependence: *We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.*
- Pluralism: *We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.*
- Equity: *We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.*
- Transformation: *We adapt to the changing world.*
- Generosity: *We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.*
- Justice: *We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.*

Check-In (5 — 15 Minutes)

As you arrive in this space, what is one thing that has your attention today?

Focus Reading (2 Minutes)

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dream, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the centre of your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals or have become shrivelled and closed from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide it, or fade it, or fix it. I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own; if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic, remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself. If you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul. If you can be faithless and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see Beauty even when it is not pretty every day. And if you can source your own life from its presence. I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand at the edge of the lake and shout to the silver of the full moon, 'Yes.'

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone and do what needs to be done to feed the children.

It doesn't interest me who you know or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the centre of the fire with me and not shrink back. It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away.

I want to know if you can be alone with yourself and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.

- Oriah Mountain Dreamer, The Invitation

Centering (1 Minute)

One minute of silence for participants to center themselves for listening and sharing.

Focus Questions (15 — 45 Minutes)

This is a time for listening deeply, without comment or discussion. Each participant is given around 3 minutes to respond to a question, and all participants share before moving on to the next question. Please decide on time as a group, based on the number of people present, and find a timekeeper.

1. What are the big questions that are currently shaping your life? How do you know when a question is inviting a chance for deeper learning and connection?
2. What have you learned from your UU community to help you live with mystery and openness? What helps you feel curious about new things?
3. Mystery can be both exciting and anxiety-provoking. How do you make space for the “empty moments” of reflection, as described in the reading?
4. Woven Faith encourages faithful conversations across generations and experiences. What have you learned from someone whose perspective was very different from your own?

Closing Words (1 Minute)

We seek elusive answers to the questions of this life.

We seek to put an end to all the waste of human strife.

We search for truth, equality, and blessed peace of mind.

And then, we come together here, to make sense of what we find.

And we believe in life, and in the strength of love,

and we have found a joy being together.

And in our search for peace, maybe we'll finally see:

even to question, truly is an answer.

- *Shelley Denham, Singing the Living Tradition Hymnal #354, We Laugh, We Cry*

PREVIOUS: SGM Adults Global (https://www.uua.org/lifespan/curricula/woven-faith/living-values/curriculum/questions/small-group-ministry/adults-global)

UP: SGM (https://www.uua.org/lifespan/curricula/woven-faith/living-values/curriculum/questions/small-group-ministry)

NEXT: SGM Older Adults (https://www.uua.org/lifespan/curricula/woven-faith/living-values/curriculum/questions/small-group-ministry/older-adults)

Get a print-friendly version of Living Our UU Values Curriculum (https://www.uua.org/book/export/html/175680) (or just the SGM Adults U.S. section (https://www.uua.org/book/export/html/4/178418)) including all sub-pages.

About the Author



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