Small Group Ministry

Group Session Plan

**Summer Spirituality**

**Opening Words** “When the Summer Sun Is Shining”, Sydney Henry Knight, *Singing the Living Tradition* #66, verses 1 and 3

When the summer sun is shining over golden land and sea,

And the flowers in the hedgerow welcome butterfly and bee;

Then my open heart is glowing, full of warmth for everyone,

And I feel an inner beauty which reflects the summer sun.

In the cool of summer evening, when the dancing insects play,

And in garden, street, and meadow linger echoes of the day;

Then my heart is full of yearning; hopes and mem’ries flood the whole

Of my being, reaching inwards to the corners of my soul.

**Check in/Sharing**: How are you today?

**Topic/Activity**:

When I joined the All Souls UU Church in 1980, there was the common perception that UUs took the summer off. We talked loudly in Augusta (Maine) about how we worship in nature! Actually, we did meet during the summer – in an evening every week or two for potluck dinner and a lay-led program. Over the years, we have moved to being a congregation with year-round programs. This has been occurring with other UU congregations around us as well.

But summer *is* different. We have a single service, which provides different interactions within the congregation. The services are largely lay-led, which increases the involvement of congregational members in worship at a different level. People who come to this area for the summer may join us.

We engage with spirituality differently in the summer. We may “worship in nature,” we may “take time off” from church, we may be in other places, near or far. Let us be aware and intentional about our spirituality this summer.

1. Describe your summer spiritual practices. How do they differ -- or not – from what you do the rest of the year?
2. Share reflections on participating in our summer services, or worshipping in different settings, such as camp or visiting other churches.
3. How can you be intentional about spirituality this summer?

**Check-out/Likes and Wishes**: How was the session for you?

**Closing words**

At the end of the summer may we say,

“All in all, it was a never-to-be-forgotten summer — one of those summers which come seldom into any life, but leave a rich heritage of beautiful memories in their going — one of those summers which, in a fortunate combination of delightful weather, delightful friends and delightful doing, come as near to perfection as anything can come in this world.” ― [L.M. Montgomery](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/5350.L_M_Montgomery), [*Anne's House of Dreams*](http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1133797)

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