Small Group Ministry

Group Session Plan

**What Do UU Jokes Say About Us?**

**Opening Words** “One of Sigmund Freud’s famous observations was that people joke about whatever is most important to them in order to reduce the tension created by that importance. This is true on the level of speech in communities as well as individuals. In the jokes shared by the members of a community are reflections of the values of that community, and in particular the tensions created as members of that community try to live up to those values. It is no accident that preschoolers joke about control of bodily functions, teenagers about sex, and teachers joke about outrageous excuses offered by students.”

Karen Tracy, University of Colorado at Boulder, from *Unitarian Universalist Identity*, Kate Tweedie Erslev, Youth and Campus Ministry Covenant Group Series, Vol. 1, p.11

**Check-in/Sharing** How are you feeling right now?

**Topic/Activity**

You might be a Unitarian Universalist if

*You are unsure about the gender of God – or even if there is a God.*

You might be a Unitarian Universalist if

*You study the “ten suggestions” instead of the “Ten Commandments.”*

You might be a Unitarian Universalist if

*The only time “Jesus” is mentioned at church is when someone falls down the stairs.*

You might be a Unitarian Universalist if

*You have trouble singing hymns because you’re always reading ahead to see if you agree with the words.*

You might be a Unitarian Universalist if:

*You are not even sure if you are Unitarian Universalist. That removes all doubt.*

1. Are the jokes that we tell ways of holding up some of our characteristics or quirks? In holding up these characteristics, do we ridicule ourselves or celebrate who we are?
2. How do you feel and react when others tell jokes about Unitarian Universalism?
3. What part does humor play in your identity as a Unitarian Universalist?

**Check-out/Likes & Wishes** How was this session for you?

**Closing Words** “Holy Is Our Humor” (Tune of “Holy, Holy, Holy” or Nicea)

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| Holy, holy, holy! Holy is our humor.Early in the morning light, life’s laughter do we hear.Holy, healthy laughter we offer to each other.Cel’brating humanity, the joy behind the tear. | Holy are the hurts that cutting humor brings us,Healing is the love we choose to set our humor right.Holy, healthy laughter always will be with us.Humor was and is, and evermore shall be. |

Rev. Helen Zidowecki, for Small Group Ministry With All Ages, NNED, April 2, 2011

*Small Group Ministry With All Ages,* UU Small Group Ministry Network, June 2011