



## SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH  
OF SAN JOSE

### Before and After

We all have big changes in our life that are more or less a second chance. ~ *Harrison Ford*

Any transition serious enough to alter your definition of self will require not just small adjustments in your way of living and thinking but a full-on metamorphosis.  
~ *Martha Beck*

Change is the constant, the signal for rebirth, the egg of the phoenix. ~ *Christina Baldwin*

We did not change as we grew older; we just became more clearly ourselves. ~ *King Whitney Jr.*

Never too old, never too bad, never too late, never too sick to start from scratch once again.  
~ *Bikram Choudhury*

**Preliminaries** *Announce upcoming church events; get a volunteer to light the chalice and one to do the opening reading.*

**Centering** *See Leader Notes.*

**Opening / Chalice Lighting**  
*~ George Kimmich Beach, 1997 UUMA Worship Materials Collection*

Everything begins on the verge of awareness. The dawn is not and then is. Sleep is and then is not. In between is the awakening.

The passage of thin light, between, breaks open the day. The passage of thin sound, between, flows into the day. ...

Wait upon the narrow moment, the first awareness of being in between! Live days and seasons on the thin edge of dawn, in praise that every single thing begins now!

**Check-in** *Take a minute or two to share briefly the high and low points in your life since we last met.*

**Reading Round the Circle** *Read "Map of the Journey in Progress" (on a separate sheet) aloud, each person taking one stanza.*

**Sitting in Silence**

**Sharing/ Deep Listening** *Deeply listening, without response or thought of response at this time, is the gift we give and receive as we share our thoughts on the preparation for this session. Sharing should be about five minute per person.*

**Discussion** *This is a time to supportively respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.*

**Singing**  
*~ Words adapted from the book of Ecclesiastes; music by Pete Seeger*

To everything - turn, turn, turn  
There is a season - turn, turn, turn  
And a time for every purpose under heaven

A time to be born, a time to die  
A time to plant, a time to reap  
A time to kill, a time to heal  
A time to laugh, a time to weep  
*(Repeat first verse.)*

A time to build up, a time to break down  
A time to dance, a time to mourn  
A time to cast away stones  
A time to gather stones together  
*(Repeat first verse.)*

A time of war, a time of peace  
A time of love, a time of hate  
A time you may embrace  
A time to refrain from embracing  
*(Repeat first verse.)*

A time to gain, a time to lose  
A time to rend, a time to sew  
A time to love, a time to hate  
A time of peace, I swear it's not too late!

**Extinguishing the Chalice**  
*~ David O. Rankin,*

*Dancing in the Empty Spaces*

*Join hands or link arms and read together:*

Limited in our perceptions, and born into an infinitely evolving universe, we are creatures of sheer ambiguity, who grow only through enduring the tension and exploring the boundaries of the unknown. So let us dance in the empty spaces, be nimble and be quick, for we are on an odyssey that lasts forever.