



SMALL GROUP MINISTRY  
FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF  
SAN JOSE

## Forgiveness / Mercy

There are 4 stages of forgiveness:

1. to forego -to leave it alone;
2. To forebear-to abstain from punishing
3. to forget-to aver from memory, to refuse to dwell;
4. to forgive-to abandon the debt.

*~Clarissa Pinkola Estes*

The difference between mercy and grace? Mercy gave the prodigal son a second chance. Grace gave him a feast.

*~Max Lucado*

**Centering**      *See Leader Notes.*

**Preliminaries**      *Get volunteer to light the chalice and 2 readers for the long readings. Be sure everyone has a copy of the readings..Choose two readings*

**Opening / Chalice Lighting**  
*~ Passover Haggadah*  
*(Read aloud together)*  
 May the light we now kindle  
 inspire us to use our powers to heal and not to harm,  
 to help and not to hinder,  
 to bless and not to curse,  
 to serve you, Spirit of Freedom.

**Check-in**      *How goes thy spirit? What do you need to leave behind in order to be fully present here and now? 2-3 sentences*

**Reading**  
*~ C. S. Lewis*  
*Read **What Forgiveness Means** by Harold Kushner on from the back of the preparation sheet.*

**Sitting in Silence**

**Reading**  
*Read **The Strain of Mercy** by Fred Chappell from the back of the preparation sheet.*

**Sharing/Deep Listening**  
*Speak the thoughts and feelings that arose as you did the preparation for this session. Sharing should be about five minute per person.*

*Deeply listening, without response or thought of response at this time, is the gift we give and receive as we share our thoughts.*

**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**  
*Love Will Guide Us, Hymnal #131*  
 Love will guide us, peace has tried us, hope inside us will lead the way on the road from greed to giving. Love will guide us through the hard night.

If you cannot sing like angels, if you cannot speak before thousands, you can give from deep within you. You can change the world with your love.

Love will guide us, peace has tried us, hope inside us will lead the way on the road from greed to giving. Love will guide us through the hard night

**Closing/ Extinguishing Chalice**  
*~ Hannah Moore*  
*Join hands or link arms as you read the closing words together.*  
 Forgiveness is the economy of the heart...  
 Forgiveness saves expense of anger,  
 the cost of hatred,  
 and the waste of spirits.

