

Gathering for Weathering the Storm

This Gathering has suggestions for introducing sections. Some sections use a timer / clock.

Words of the Day

As people arrive, ask them to write the Words of the Day and put them in the basket.

I feel comforted and empowered when I ...

Opening

Chalice Lighting *“We’ll begin with the chalice lighting.” Ask for a volunteer.*

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without words
And never stops at all.
Emily Dickinson

The Basket *“Now we’ll read the Words of the Day. I’ll start, and pass it along to the right (left).”*

Being Together

Sharing of Joys and Concerns *“We’ll share joys and concerns. I’ll begin. Will you go next?”*

Silence, holding each other in support *“Now a few minutes of silence.” (2 or 3 minutes)*

Shared Readings *“I’ll start the first Shared Reading. Will you go next?”*

The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word “crisis.” One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger – but recognize the opportunity.

John F. Kennedy

You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one. I hope someday you’ll join us. And the world will live as one. *John Lennon*

I have learned that people in the center are not going to be the big change makers. You’ve got to put yourself at the margins and be willing to risk in order to make change. More importantly, you have got to approach differences with this notion that there is good in the other. *Frances Kissling*

There is something powerful in the whispering of obscenities, about those in power. There's something delightful about it, something naughty, secretive, forbidden, thrilling. It’s like a spell, of sorts. It deflates them, reduces them to the common denominator where they can be dealt with. *Margaret Atwood*

The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any. *Alice Walker*

You should be angry ... So use that anger. You write it. You paint it. You dance it. You march it. You vote it ... You talk it. Never stop talking it. *Maya Angelou*

All of creation is one body. I'm only just a little piece of it. But the freedom of knowing that means I just have to do my part. I don't know how to communicate how freeing that is. *Sister Simone Campbell*

When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it – always. *Mahatma Gandhi*

If we can be fearless, and be with our pain, it turns ... When we look at it, when we take it in our hands, when we can just be with it and keep breathing, then it turns ... And the other face of our pain for the world is our love for the world, our absolutely inseparable connectedness with all life. *Joanna Macy*

Deep Listening and Sharing

Round 1. Deep Sharing. *“Now we share reflections on Weathering the Storm and the preparation.” Begin, or if you're not ready, ask who can go first.*

Round 2. Responses and Comments. *After all have shared or passed, check the time. Say “We have about __ minutes for a 2nd round.” Begin your response or ask who would like to start.*

Closing

Closing Circle *“We'll go around the circle and say a word or sentence about what we are taking away from the session. I'll go first, and would you be willing to go next?”*

Chalice *“Now we extinguish the chalice.” Read in unison or ask for a volunteer.*

We extinguish this flame and we remember the warmth of our community, the light of our wisdom, the generosity of our sharing. We keep these in our heart until we meet again.

Song/Chime *Ask for a volunteer.*

Announcements

The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the facilitator know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share responsibility for good process by watching how much time I take to speak, noticing what is going on for others, and considering problems if they occur
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, giving advice, or advocating a specific view
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn and to stay on the “I-message.”