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| Final_SGM_logo | **Holidays & Family issues** By Bob BrittonMary Pipher, a Unitarian Universalist from Lincoln Nebraska, and a clinical psychologist writes: *Families, whether biological or chosen, are what give most people’s lives their shape. They produce enormous pain and joy and all the emotions in between for their members. Most of our happiest and most tragic experiences are somehow connected with family.* |
| Opening and Chalice Lighting (1 minute) | Light fires that can be seen for miles,That dance and spark and warm the frozen marrow.Set lamps in the windows.Declare your presence, your loyalties,The truth for which you do not expect to have to die.It would take a miracle you say,To carve such a solid life Out of the shell of fear.I say you are the stuff from which such miracles are made. –Rev Lynn Ungar |
| Check-in (25 min, timed) | Take this time to share how you are spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, and physically.  |
| Sharing (5) | Take time to respond to what you have just heard while being non-judgmental and refraining from giving advice. |
| Quiet Reflection (1) | This session is about families and the holidays we are about to observe. The happy or the sad memories. The difficulties and joys that family relationships bring.  |
| Topic Readings (5) | * Just as a puppy can be more of a challenge than a gift, so too can the holidays. [John Clayton](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/j/john_clayton.html)
* [I celebrate everyone's religious holidays. If it's good enough for the righteous, it's good enough for the self-righteous, I always say.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/b/bettemidle451924.html?src=t_holidays) [Bette Midler](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/b/bette_midler.html)
* [The holidays stress people out so much. I suggest you keep it simple and try to have as much fun as you can.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/g/giadadelau442557.html?src=t_holidays) [Giada De Laurentiis](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/g/giada_de_laurentiis.html)
* [That's what the holidays are for - for one person to tell the stories and another to dispute them. Isn't that the Irish way?](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/l/laraflynnb333179.html?src=t_holidays) [Lara Flynn Boyle](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/l/lara_flynn_boyle.html)
* Once again, we come to the Holiday Season, a deeply religious time that each of us observes, in his own way, by going to the mall of his choice. Dave Barry
* Christmas it seems to me is a necessary festival; we require a season when we can regret all the flaws in our human relationships: it is the feast of failure, sad but consoling. Graham Greene
* There's nothing sadder in this world than to awake Christmas morning and not be a child.Erma Bombeck
* [You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/r/robertloui160474.html?src=t_giving) [Robert Louis Stevenson](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/r/robert_louis_stevenson.html)

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| Break (5) | Quiet Contemplation |
| Sharing/Deep Listening (50 min, timed) | **Speak about this topic in any way that is comfortable to you. You may use these questions if they are helpful.*** What are happy memories you carry from past holidays?
* What are some of your saddest memories of holidays?
* What do you anticipate/dread most about the holidays?
* Do you have rules you follow to avoid family strife?
* What do the holidays mean to you?
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| Open Discussion (15 min) | This is a time to supportively respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared. |
| Service Project? (10) | Further discussion on a possible service project. |
| Announcements (2) | Next session – January 5, 2015 – New Year Resolutions |
| **Closing Reading/ Extinguish Chalice**(1 min.) | Reminded that we are part and participants of the Universe, let us go forth from the quiet of this hour encouraged to strive toward faithfulness to the best in ourselves, in others, and in the whole creation. - Norman Naylor |

**Service Project Ideas:**

Host Coffee Hour – serve, cook or bring food

Organize a day at Starr King to complete healthcare Organize a blood bank

directives

Adopt a FESCO family for Christmas Volunteer to help with Canvass

Garden work at church Write articles for the newsletter

Bake sale to raise money for community cause Sponsor a student project for someone at Starr King

South Hayward Parish fundraiser Help with Starr King Seder – cook and/or serve Publicize Small Group Ministry