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| Final_SGM_logo | **The Role of Pets in Our Lives**  **By Bob Britton**  May I aspire to be the person my dog thinks I am. ~ **Anonymous,** **bumper sticker** |
| **Opening and Chalice Lighting** (1 minute) | Blessed are the faithful, for they shall be called dogs (or cats).  Blessed are the playful, for they shall be surrounded with love and laughter.  Blessed are those without worry, for through them, we shall know peace.  Blessed are those with no possessions, for they shall be rich in spiritual things.  Blessed are the innocent, for theirs is the realm of heaven.  Blessed are the animals, and blessed are we.  **Rev. Gary Kowalski** |
| **Check-in**  (24 min, 3 min each) | Take this time to share how you are spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. |
| **Sharing** (5 min) | Take time to respond to what you have just heard by asking clarifying questions or to deepen their remarks. |
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| **Topic Readings**  (5 min) | Some people talk to animals. Not many listen though. That's the problem. ~ **A.A. Milne**  The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans any more than black people were made for white, or women created for men. ~ **Alice Walker**  I can't abide people who go soft over animals and then cheat every human they come across! ~ **Diana Wynne Jones**  How it is that animals understand things I do not know, but it is certain that they do understand. Perhaps there is a language which is not made of words and everything in the world understands it. Perhaps there is a soul hidden in everything and it can always speak, without even making a sound, to another soul. ~ **Frances Hodgson Burnett**  I believe that the best way to create good living conditions for any animal, whether it's a captive animal living in a zoo, a farm animal or a pet, is to base animal welfare programs on the core emotion systems in the brain. My theory is that the environment animals live in should activate their positive emotions as much as possible, and not activate their negative emotions any more than necessary. ~ **Temple Grandin**  And the fox said to the little prince: (humans) have forgotten this truth, but you must not forget it. You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed. **~ Antoine de Saint-Exupery** |
| ***Brea*k** (5 min) |  |
| **Sharing/Deep Listening –**  **After individual sharing we will move into –**  **Open Discussion**  (60 min combined) | **Speak about this topic in any way that is comfortable to you. You may use these suggestions or questions if they are helpful.**  Share some stories of experiences you have had with pets: positive, negative, funny or sad.  In what ways have animals added to and enhanced your life and relationships?  If you could be an animal, what would you be? Why?  Are there things you do or do not do regarding animals for ethical reasons? Tell us about them, and also share your ethical understandings.  Have you ever had what you would call a spiritual experience with an animal? What was it? What was spiritual about it for you?  Do you have any regrets about the way you have treated animals, or an animal? |
| **Open 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. |
| **Likes – dislikes about this session** (10 min) | What went well in this session?  What changes would you like to see in future sessions? |
| **Announcements**  (10 min) | Next session – Monday May 4, 2015, 7:00pm **– Pastimes** Service Project – **Advance Care Directive Workshop** - Liz |
| **Closing Reading/ Extinguish Chalice**  (1 min.) | Hear our humble prayer, oh God, for our friends the animals. Especially for animals who are suffering;  for many that are hunted or lost or deserted or frightened or hungry;  for all that must be put to death.  We entreat for them all the mercy and pity;  and for those who deal with them we ask a heart of compassion and gentle hands and kindly words.  Make us, ourselves, to be true friends to the animals and to share the blessings of the merciful. ~ **Dr. Albert Schweitzer** |