

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
SMALL GROUP SESSION  
**BRINGING TREASURES INTO OUR HOMES**  
By the Rev. Glenn H. Turner

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

What sort of day was this?  
Did you return home empty handed:  
arms full of groceries, the newspaper,  
empty gossip, work-weariness,  
worries about the economy, the weather,  
the high cost of gasoline?

What sort of day was this?  
Was your heart's basket filled:  
seeds for spring, flowers for the table,  
lunch with a good friend, a book of poems,  
a candle with a jasmine scent,  
something like a prayer for a child?

You rise, you eat, you go out each day.  
Is each trip a pilgrimage:  
a hunger for connection, for service,  
for eye-food - a tree against the sky,  
deer in the woods, the sliver of a new moon -  
bringing a hope, an idea, a resolution?

Treasures: as tangible as art, as soft as love - What do you bring into your home?  
And, what might you leave at the door?

This is about intention.  
And choice.

This is about your soul, your body, your home.  
What do you bring into it?

Glenn H. Turner

CHECK IN: (40 - 50 minutes)

What you share may be about your physical or spiritual health, cares or concerns for loved ones, issues you are facing.

Each person in the group speaks uninterrupted, if time remaining, general response and conversation is welcome. Confidentiality.

FOCUS: "Bringing Treasures into our Homes"

Howard Thurman wrote a story about a man who "walked into an antique store and asked for permission to look around. It was a rather exclusive shop frequented only by those who could afford to purchase articles made rare by their scarcity and age. The visitor seemed strangely out of place because he was poorly dressed though clean; indeed it was clear from his appearance that he was a laborer whose face had been etched by sun and rain and whose hands were rough and worn. After more than a half hour, he left. In about ten days he returned. This time he

found a beautiful piece of old glass and asked if he could make a deposit on it. Each week he made a payment, until at last the article was his. With much curiosity, the owner of the shop engaged him in conversation to determine, if he could, the use to which such a man would put his new purchase. 'I bought it for my little room. It isn't much, but I bring to it, from time to time, through the years, only the very best and most beautiful things. You see, that is where I live.'

To bring to the place where you live only the best and most beautiful things -- what a plan for one's life! This is well within the reach of everyone.

Think of using one's memory in that way. As one lives from day to day, there are all sorts of experiences, good, bad, beautiful, ugly, that become a part of one's past. To develop the ability to screen one's memory so that only the excellent is retained for one's own room! All kinds of ideas pass through one's mind, about oneself, about the world, about people. Which do you keep for your own room? Think it over now; which ideas do you keep for the place where you live? It is well within the mark to say that the oft-quoted words of Jesus, about laying up for yourself treasures in heaven deal with this same basic idea. The place where you live is where your treasures are. Where your treasures are is where your heart is. Where your heart is, is where your God is."

from "Deep is the Hunger" - Howard Thurman

Discussion:

We know a little of Thurman's treasures - stories and ideas such as these that he shares - but, we also have an opportunity to explore something in ourselves:

What are our treasures?

What are the precious things we bring into our homes?

What are the sustaining thoughts that we display prominently in our minds?

LIKES AND WISHES

How did this session go for you? Is there anything you'd like to call particular attention to?

CLOSING WORDS:

It is our great...fortune that our lives are never left to themselves alone. We are visited in ways that we can understand and in ways that are beyond our understanding...by moments of inspiration, quiet assurances of grace, simple manifestations of the goodness of life and give to our ordinary experiences a strength that steadies and inspires.

May we offer to one another, and to ourselves, the fruits of our lives, that others, in return, may be a source of inspiration to those whose lives they touch.

adapted from Howard Thurman