



STARR KING
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH



Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

SKUUC SGM SESSION

Building a Fair and Just Future

Hayward, CA, 19 August 2021, 3:00 PM, Kathryn LaMar

OPENING SONG: Better Times Will Come (written by Janis Ian, performed by Neil Finn & Janis Ian) **2.5 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRAyZEkceU>

CHALICE LIGHTING

0.5 min

All of the great social justice advances that we ever had in this country have come not from people with big titles and not from people at the top, but just from everyday people getting together saying ‘Enough is enough. I’m going to change this, and I’m going to get involved, and I am going to be engaged.’

Nina Turner

SILENT MEDITATION / CENTERING

1 min

The first sound of the gong brings us to silence. Please take time to center yourself, and temporarily push aside whatever might be preventing you from participating fully in tonight's session. The second sound of the gong returns us to each other's presence.

OPENING WORDS:

0.5 min

Changing the structure and rules of the global economy will require a mass movement based on messages of compassion, justice, and equality, as well as collaborative and democratic processes ... If we stay positive, inclusive, and democratic, we have a truly historic opportunity to build a global movement for social justice.

Medea Benjamin

CHECK-IN (2 ROUNDS)

40 min

Please share some thing(s) about your life since last we met. If you like, say something about what you're looking forward to.

INTRODUCTION:

2 min

For the July 2021 issue of *In These Times*, the editors turned the entire issue over to members of the Black Lives Matter Movement. Unless otherwise attributed, much of the following material comes from that issue.

According to the Black Radical Congress's manifesto, *A Black Freedom Agenda for the Twenty-First Century*. The realization of genuine democracy in the United States requires radical solutions ... Radicalism, means to get at the root of real problems, seeking effective

solutions. What we want is an end to the exploitation of capitalism, white racism and every manifestation of human oppression, a revolutionary transformation of the state and society, and the realization of humanistic values.

For much of the past decade, the path out of this morass has been guided by those urging a back-to-the-future return to separate-but-equal, patriarchal family arrangements and moral salvation. The Black Radical Congress is an opportunity to chart a more engaging and empowering course toward truly emancipatory politics.

Barbara Ransby

FILM: Let's Grow

16 min

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H56Ncq9niE8>

QUOTES TO PONDER

10 min

What Do We Need or Want

We need love, and to ensure love, we need to have full employment, and we need social justice. We need gender equity. We need freedom from hunger. These are our most fundamental needs as social creatures.

David Suzuki

The equal right of all citizens to health, education, work, food, security, culture, science, and wellbeing--that is, the same rights we proclaimed when we began our struggle, in addition to those which emerge from our dreams of justice and equality for all inhabitants of our world--is what I wish for all.

Fidel Castro

There can never be peace on the Pacific or Atlantic until justice is given to *all* mankind.

Pearl Sherrod

We all need to work together, because there are no jobs on a dead planet; there is no equity without rights to decent work and social protection, no social justice without a shift in governance and ambition, and, ultimately, no peace for the peoples of the world without the guarantees of sustainability.

Sharan Burrow

The right to a quality education is, I believe, the perfect path to bridge the gap between different cultures and to reconcile various civilizations. Without such a right, the values of liberty, justice and equality will have no meaning. Ignorance is by far the biggest danger and threat to humankind.

Moza bint Nasser

There really can be no peace without justice. There can be no justice without truth. And there can be no truth, unless someone rises up to tell you the truth.

Louis Farrakhan

True freedom requires the rule of law and justice, and a judicial system in which the rights of some are not secured by the denial of rights to others.

Jonathan Sacks

How Will We Get It

You never change anything by fighting the existing. To change something, build a new model and make the existing obsolete!

Buckminster Fuller

Revolutions are not events, but processes. Barbara Ransby

Revolution is about the need to re-evolve political, economic, and social justice and power back into the hands of the people, preferably through legislation and policies that make human sense. That's what revolution is about. Revolution is not about shootouts.

Bobby Seale

Justice is never given; it is exacted and the struggle must be continuous for freedom is never a final fact, but a continuing evolving process to higher and higher levels of human, social, economic, political, and religious relationships.

A. Philip Randolph

Sustainable development is the pathway to the future we want for all. It offers a framework to generate economic growth, achieve social justice, exercise environmental stewardship and strengthen governance.

Ban Ki-moon

I see that the path of progress has never taken a straight line, but has always been a zigzag course amid the conflicting forces of right and wrong, truth and error, justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy.

Kelly Miller

The ability to weather political storms and commit to the long duress might be the most important lesson. Black liberation does not hinge on individuals, dramatic moments or turning points. The ability to pivot and adapt, transcend human failings and work through internal dissent—because of love of the people and commitment to the goals is one of the key lessons of the past.

Tobyn C. Spencer

Song: I Have Seen Freedom Being Born (written by Si Kahn, performed by Joe Jencks)
3 min

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LlhEsTLiOOo>

Living In Our [Desired] Future

Following are excerpts from the closing article in the July issue of *In These Times*, by Barbara Ransby, entitled *To Us, From the Future*

Dear Ancestors,

Your presence permeates the new history books we have written, but more importantly, we pay tribute to you in the many ways in which we are repairing and acting as stewards of the land, the rivers, the birds and the wildlife. Your beauty flows through the clear skies and waterways—luxuries you were denied in your time.

For our new society, education goes beyond the “schoolhouse” and the “campus.” ... there are no barriers that exclude anyone from learning. Teaching and learning go on everywhere, with billboards, songs and television commercials that teach, rather than sell.

Rather than excluding anyone from education, or labeling some of our precious children “smart” and others “not smart,” we recognize all are geniuses. It is the job of learning coaches and co-learners to help them find that genius—and to apply it to the need of the community and society.

The technology that was previously deployed in service of profit, creating obscene amounts of individual wealth, now saves us time that we invest in ourselves and one another and the planet. Plumbers are dancers. Transport workers are poets. Doctors are potter.

We have also begun to rethink work in other ways. Arduous but necessary work is made more enjoyable with extra time off, community appreciation and the knowledge that the burden is shared.

Our queer and trans family have taught us to let go of rigid gender roles, narrow-minded and patriarchal notions of family and beauty and pleasure. We are happier as a people.

Freedom is not simply freedom to do as we please, but freedom to serve, help, contribute, build and dance together.

Human beings still hurt each other and succumb too their less beautiful selves. But we don't have wannabe tough guys running around in uniforms waving guns and shooting people. As sites of conflict resolution, we have built freedom squares in every city and town. Where problems do arise, we go to the freedom squares; people can be safe there. They can get comfort and support. Trouble-busting teams are ready to strategize to de-escalate or resolve a grievance. Decisions are collectively made—but according to a set of principles, values and priorities we have all set together.

And we have settled on the notion that freedom is not primarily individual freedom. Some times we have to sacrifice some of our wants as individuals so that others can have what they need. This was a big hurdle, but we argued, debated, sang, shout, meditated, and negotiated our way to consensus.

PREPARATION FOR GROUP REFLECTION

1 min

BREAK CONCURRENT WITH SONG: Where You Go (written and performed by Shoshana Jedwab)

10 min

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esELRijyk4>

GROUP REFLECTION / FEEDBACK

40 min

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION ON BUILDING A FAIR AND JUST FUTURE

- ◆ What are some of the principles and values you would like to see society agree on to achieve the future we dream about
- ◆ What limitations and conditions are necessary to achieve this future?
- ◆ What skills and attitudes will be necessary to “re-evolve” humanity? How can we ensure that these can be learned by everybody?
- ◆ What other systems can you envision for our new educational and justice systems? For performing the necessary but mundane or arduous work of a highly functional society?
- ◆ Which quotes do you especially agree or disagree with, and why?

SESSION FEEDBACK

2 min

What worked for you, didn't work for you, what might require revisiting our covenant?

FUTURE SESSIONS

1 min

- ◆ September meeting: Facilitator, date, time
- ◆ From October on: Ideas, suggestions, deferrals?

CLOSING SONGS: We Will Not Stop Singing (written by the Chapin Sisters, performed by the First U Brooklyn Choir)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-_jf_z01A8

EXTINGUISH CHALICE / CLOSING WORDS

1 min

To build a new future is as much about memory as imagination. Day by day, we are making the impossible possible. Then daring to dream even bigger.

Barbara Ransby