

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
SMALL GROUP SESSION  
**EXPERIENCING YOUR VOCATION**  
By the Rev. Glenn H. Turner

**OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:**

We don't set out to save the world; we set out to wonder how other people are doing and to reflect on how our actions affect other people's hearts. Pema Chodron

**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:** A Vocation to be Fully Human?

The notion of vocation describes a "call," work that is given to us, that we are meant to do. We don't decide what our vocation is, we receive it. It always originates from outside us. Therefore, we can't talk about vocation or a calling without acknowledging that there is something going on beyond our narrow sense of self. It helps remind us that there's more than just me, that we're part of a larger and purpose-filled place.

Even if we don't use the word vocation, most of us want to experience a sense of purpose in our lives, (want to believe) there's a reason for (our) existence. If (we) can hold onto that sense of purpose, (we'll) be able to deal with whatever life experiences await (us). If we don't feel there's a meaning to our lives, life's difficulties can easily overwhelm and discourage us.

I believe we become more fully human with any gesture of generosity, any time we reach out to another rather than withdraw into our individual suffering. To become fully human, we need to keep opening our hearts, no matter what. At this time when suffering and anxiety continue to increase, when there is always reason to weep for some unbearable tragedy inflicted by one human on another, I try to remember to keep my heart open.

In my own experience, I notice that I like myself better when I am generous and open-hearted. I don't like who I become when I'm afraid of others, or angry at them. There are many people whose actions anger me and make me afraid - but I don't like how I feel when I respond to them from fear. At those times, I don't feel more human, but less. I become more fully human only when I extend myself. This is how I define for myself what it means to have a vocation to be fully human."

adapted from Margaret Wheatley

**Discussion:**

How are you "called" to be in the world?

What is your experience of vocation?

How is that (or not) related to your job/work?

**LIKES AND WISHES**

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

**CLOSING WORDS:** Again, these words of Pema Chodron:

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