

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website



**Wednesday Evening Small Group (via ZOOM!)**

**What is A "Greater Good"?**

**Hayward, CA, 28 October 2020, 7:15 PM**

**CHALICE LIGHTING**

**0.5 min**

A compassionate way of life rooted in oneness and connectivity not only impacts your greater good, but it resonates out into the world, positively impacting the greater good for all.

*Amy Miller*

**OPENING SONG: ONE DAY (MATISYAHU)**

**3.5 min**

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

**OPENING WORDS**

**1 min**

You have tremendous flexibility in defining both the greater good and the greater community. If you don't succeed in this, then you will continue to pull that heavy wagon up the mountain, and despite the fact that you are pulling it, it will somehow run over your own foot.

*Srikumar Rao*

**MEDITATION / CENTERING**

**3 min**

Seen from Earth, a comet is a prodigy, coming out of the void for no reason, returning to the void for no reason. They call it unpredictable because they cannot predict it. From the comet's own point of view, nothing could be simpler. It starts in the outer darkness, aims directly at the sun, and never stops till it gets there. Everything else spins in its same orbit forever. The comet heads for the source. They call it crooked because it is too straight. They call it unpredictable because it is too fixed. They call it chaotic because it is too linear.

*Scott Alexander*

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.

**CHECK-IN (2 ROUNDS)**

**40 min**

Please share some thing(s) about your life since last we met. How are you managing in the face of COVID-19 and the upcoming holidays? Has anything occurred that has caused you to pause and take stock of where you are in relation to where you planned to be?

**SONG: GOOD VIBES (YOUNGBLOODS)****3.5 MIN**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vyq0VCK4hg>**INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS****15 min**

Show the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvPKTVK10IE>

First, individual rights cannot be sacrificed for the sake of the general good, and second, the principles of justice that specify these rights cannot be premised on any particular vision of the good life. What justifies the rights is not that they maximize the general welfare or otherwise promote the good, but rather that they comprise a fair framework within which individuals and groups can choose their own values and ends, consistent with a similar liberty for others.

*Michael J. Sandel*

**SONG: OPERATION RESCUE (BAD RELIGION)****2 min**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HICbZKABrWk>**QUOTES REFERRING TO A "GREATER GOOD"**

"For the greater good": --the phrase that always precedes--the greatest evil.

*Jakub Bożydar Wiśniewski*

Before you act for the greater good, you should know what is great and what is good.

*Jeffrey Fry*

To believe in 'the greater good' is to operate, necessarily, in a certain ethical suspension.

*Joan Didion*

If you want to experience joy in your life, you have to be able to step outside yourself and become part of a cause that is much larger than you; one that brings a greater good to a greater community.

*Srikumar Rao*

You see, without hard work and responsibility, there is no American Dream. Hard work lays the foundation. Our solidarity makes work pay - for all of us. For the greater good. That's what our vision of shared prosperity is all about.

*Richard Trumka*

The greater good is achieved by not only telling people what they need to know, but also filling them with a sense of empathy and love.

*Abigail Disney*

If we want to preserve the foundation of our democracy, it's vital that we find common ground that allows us to work for the greater good of this nation. This does not mean giving up our values. This does not mean swallowing a bitter compromise.

*Tulsi Gabbard*

The problem with the old ideology was that it suppressed the individual by starting with society. But it is from a sense of individual duty that we connect the greater good and the interests of the community

*Tony Blair*

Hurry, conscious younger people! Get to power quickly so political decisions can be based on the greater good for all rather than the greater gain for few. Hurry, before it is too late!

*Jane Siberry*

A state of shock is what results when a gap opens up between events and our initial ability to explain them. When we find ourselves in that position, without a story, without our moorings, a great many people become vulnerable to authority figures telling us to fear one another and relinquish our rights for the greater good.

*Naomi Klein*

I've learned powerful lessons about the nature of forgiveness from human rights defenders. For example, for the greater good of his country, Kofi Woods emerged from a torture chamber in Liberia to later defend the very men who had brutalized him.

*Kerry Kennedy*

Working with Operation Smile is a completely life-altering experience. It is truly inspiring to be a part of something with so many unique individuals who come together for the greater good of helping others.

*Lydia Hearst*

We really can't tell the difference between people who might seek power for some greater good and people who seek power just to aggrandize themselves. For example, all revolutionaries say that they want to uplift the downtrodden.

*Bruce Bueno de Mesquita*

Courage is a decision you make to act in a way that works through your own fear for the greater good as opposed to pure self-interest. Courage means putting at risk your immediate self-interest for what you believe is right.

*Derrick Bell*

Our maturity will be judged by how well we are able to agree to disagree and yet continue to love one another, to care for one another, and cherish one another and seek the greater good of the other.

*Desmond Tutu*

A person may be qualified to do greater good to mankind and become more beneficial to the world, by morality without faith than by faith without morality.

*Joseph Addison*

The only life you have the right to sacrifice for the greater good is your own.

*Brent Weeks*

The local interest of a State ought in every case to give way to the interests of the Union. For when a sacrifice of one or the other is necessary, the former becomes only an apparent, partial interest, and should yield, on the principle that the smaller good ought never to oppose the greater good.

*Alexander Hamilton*

How do you measure the life of one person against the greater good? Can it ever be the right thing to sacrifice an innocent person? And how do you know what the greater good really is?

*Amy Engel*

The sacrifice 'of' self for the greater good is the greatest calling imaginable, and it is the bedrock of the greatest nations. The sacrifice 'for' self is the most pathetic calling imaginable, and it is the quicksand within which nations perish.

*Craig D. Lounsbrough*

The world isn't black and white, good or bad. The battles that make a real difference are fought in the murky area in between, where the greater good requires brutal sacrifice. Where both the means and the ends are just shadows in a featureless gray landscape. And that was the death of my idealism.

*Rachel Vincent*

**SONG: THE ROSES OF EYAM (WRITTEN BY JOHN TREVOR,  
SUNG BY ROY BAILEY)** **6 min**

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6f734MDffs>>

**MORE "GREATER GOOD" QUOTES** **1 min**

It is my sincere opinion that our precious time on earth should not be spent attempting to justify unbelievable acts of cruelty, death, and disease as a part of 'God's Plan' or the greater good — and clinging to ancient texts that preach ill-concealed bigotry and sexism. Instead, we should find ways to make this life happy and satisfying, without regard to the unknowable nature of an afterlife.

*David G. McAfee*

We are not typically supporters of some cause for the greater good, although those are the words that we brazenly scrawl across the banners that we energetically wave in this self-serving parade of ours. Rather, behind the glorious pomp of such sacrificial notions, we are in fact supporters of our own greater good. And when we confuse the greater good with our own greater good, we have irrefutably sentenced the greater good to the greatest death imaginable. *Craig D. Lounsbrough*

If I had the perspective of the whole, perhaps I'd see it? That which seems evil, is it a cloud to bring rain, to bring a greater good to the whole of the world? Who would ever know the greater graces of comfort and perseverance, mercy and forgiveness, patience and courage, if no shadows fell over a life?

*Ann Voskamp*

**PREPARATION FOR GROUP REFLECTION** **1 min**

Read the questions for reflection, one by one.

**BREAK** **10 min**

**SONG: STRENGTH TO SURVIVE (SOJA)** **3 min**

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXEMXb-kU3c>>

**GROUP REFLECTION** **35 min**

Two rounds. Or, we can respectfully discuss the issues as they come up, with each participant having their "first round" say, followed by discussion of what was said, then proceeding to the next participant. Take a moment of silence and consider your ideas about unity.

- Have you ever had to sacrifice a part of yourself, or let a dream of yours go, for the sake of a "greater good" for your family or other small group to which you belonged? How did it feel if you did, and were the results as intended? How did it feel to go your own way if you didn't, and what were the results?
- As you have experienced history in the course of your life, did you feel or believe that our Constitutions (Federal and State) provided, as Sandel stated, "a fair framework within which

individuals and groups can choose their own values and ends, consistent with a similar liberty for others.”? Why or why not? What factors affect those feelings or beliefs, and how could society provide a better support system to bolster said framework?

- Pick one or two of the quotes, and tell us your opinions of the intent of the author—do they wish to impose their own values on others, or are they allowing others the same freedoms they are claiming for themselves?
- Would you be willing to wall your own community off from the rest of the world, as the villagers of Eyam did, if that would guarantee that COVID would not spread beyond it? What would it take for you to agree to such an event?
- Which of the quotes particularly resonated with you, positively or negatively, and why?

### **SESSION FEEDBACK AND FUTURE PLANS**

**5 min**

- How did the session go for you?
- Do we need to make any format changes to make it more useful to you?
- Any interest in designing or helping with session plans?
- Should we revisit / modify our covenant?

### **SONG FOR LISTENING: PEACE, LOVE AND UNITY (FORTUNATE YOUTH)**

**4 min**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vfM507Ecil4>

### **EXTINGUISH CHALICE / CLOSING WORDS**

**1 min**

Let's be about leaving this world better than we find it each and every day. Our life is a testimony and through us divine loving is becoming more manifest. Greater good is calling upon us here in this world to be done this day. One of my rallying calls is let's go out and do some good. This is who we are. This is what we are about.

*John Morton*

### **SONG FOR SINGING: AS YOU GO ON YOUR WAY – SCORE ATTACHED AT END OF LYRICS SHEETS**

## One Day

**(Ari Levine / Peter Gene Hernandez / Philip Martin II Lawrence / Matthew Miller)**

<p>See everybody that's existing          Got a mind of their own          We're all Kings and Queens          With a throne of our own          Tryin to raise a family          Is an empty home          We got to learn to stick together          Hate to be here alone          'Cause the world is a place          That will eat you alive in one day          Said the world is a place          That you can't survive without faith          Sometimes in my tears I drown          But I never let it get me down          So when negativity surrounds          I know some day it'll all turn around          Because          All my life I've been waiting for          I've been praying for          For the people to say          That we don't wanna fight no more          They'll be no more wars          And our children will play          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day (one day), One day (one day)          It's not about          Win or lose          We all lose          When they feed on the souls of the innocent          Blood drenched pavement          Keep on moving though the waters stay          raging          In this maze you can lose your way (your          way)          It might drive you crazy          But don't let it faze you no way (no way)</p>	<p>Gotta hold on          Livin life day by day          Gotta hold on          Put your focus on that one day          All my life I've been waiting for          I've been praying for          For the people to say          That we don't wanna fight no more          They'll be no more wars          And our children will play          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day this all will change          Treat people the same          Stop with the violence          Down with the hate          One day we'll all be free          And proud to be          Under the same sun          Singing songs of freedom like          Gotta hold on          Livin life day by day          Gotta hold on          Put your focus on that one day          All my life I've been waiting for          I've been praying for          For the people to say          That we don't wanna fight no more          They'll be no more wars          And our children will play          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day (one day), One day (one day)          One day (one day), One day (one day)</p>
--	---

**GOOD VIBES**

**(Eric Rachmany / Rory Carey / Marley D. Williams /  
Wesley Finley / David Sprecher / Anthony Litchman  
Martin)**

Bringing only good vibes  
 People walking around talking down on  
 others  
 You can't know yourself without knowing  
 about the other  
 And I know  
 That ain't the right way to go  
 I've got a hunch that we don't want to diss  
 Let's move away from hate and prejudice  
 The racist man yeah he's full of it  
 Let's learn about the culture opposite now  
 Don't judge a book by the cover  
 People take a look at the world and discover  
 That beauty is the word that I think of  
 When I see the different colors of skin  
 And I'll rejoice and sing for them  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The hatred keeps building up  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The tension keeps on building up yeah  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The hatred keeps building up, yeah  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The racism is killing us  
 When we come around, yeah  
 Try to keep compassion on the ground, yeah  
 Feel a sense of freedom with crowd, yeah  
 Connecting people with the sound, oh yeah  
 yeah

Rebelution

Well it's a choice to be grateful  
 People focus on the enemy that's hateful  
 The daily news has got a picture of a man  
 They say I'm supposed to hate  
 So great, just another stereotype to make  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The hatred keeps building up  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The tension keeps on building up yeah  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The hatred keeps building up, yeah  
 Oh, no, no, no  
 The racism is killing us  
 Too many times that I've seen the wrong signs  
 Back up with your hatred in life  
 'Cause we're bringing only good vibes  
 Bringing only good vibes  
 Too many times that I've seen the wrong signs  
 Empty out the hatred in life  
 We're bringing only good vibes  
 Good vibes  
 We're bringing only good vibes  
 Good vibes  
 We're bringing only good vibes  
 Good vibes  
 We're bringing only good vibes

## OPERATION RESCUE

### (Bad Religion)

It is an S.O.S. sent out telepathically,  
 Signs of our distress don't allow complacency,  
 We need restoration now of our integrity  
 And a drastic bold reminder of our morality,  
 The rectifying troop is here, the ones we've needed all these years  
 To stop the heinous wrongdoings and verify our moral benevolence as a people

Operation, Operation Rescue,  
 They're here to right our fall, they've heard a troubled call,  
 Operation, Operation Rescue,  
 You wonder where they come from, but I just wonder why they're here at all,

Ya-ya-ya-ya-ya  
 Ya-ya-ya-ya-ya  
 Ya-ya-ya-ya-ya  
 Ya-ya-ya-ya

Life ever-after is what they're in business for,  
 See them brandish the key to their kingdom's door,  
 It's persuasive, it's a part of you and me  
 But it's not overwhelming as they wish it to be,  
 If no one believed in fairy tales, there's nothing they could do but fail  
 Yet everywhere we look someone is trying to reassure our  
 moral benevolence as a people,

Operation, Operation Rescue,  
 They're here to right our fall, they've heard someone's troubled call,  
 Operation, Operation Rescue,  
 You wonder where they come from, but I just wonder what compels them all,

Operation, Operation Rescue,  
 Operation, Operation Rescue,  
 You may wonder where they come from,  
 But I just wonder what compels them all,

Ya-ya-ya-ya-ya  
 Ya-ya-ya-ya-ya  
 Ya-ya-ya-ya-ya



## THE ROSES OF EYAM (John Trevor)

The earth beneath the surface dust  
Is cold and damp and raw  
And, holding but the memories  
Of what has gone before,  
Can almost be forgiven  
For remembering the dream  
Of the wall of stones around the homes  
Of the villagers of Eyam,  
Of the villagers of Eyam.

In August sixteen-sixty-five  
Along the cobbled roads,  
Between the houses dark and high,  
The carriers with their loads  
Were leaving for the northern towns  
The capital and crown,  
And also leaving far behind  
The plague of London town,  
The plague of London town.

George Vicars was the tailor  
To the village life of Eyam,  
And to his house a case of clothes  
From London town was seen  
To be delivered one fine day  
In September 'sixty-five,  
And never more was tailor Vicars  
Ever seen alive,  
Ever seen alive.

The scars upon his face and chest  
Were many to behold  
And, lying by the fevered body  
Now so very cold,  
The case from London opened wide,  
The clothes all neatly hung,  
And from the bell upon the church  
The knell of death was rung,  
The knell of death was rung.

There followed sixty, scarred and bleeding,  
Buried in their graves  
As Thomas Stanley stood above  
And told them "Jesus Saves".  
But Stanley was a puritan,  
An enemy to heed  
To Mompesson (the Anglican

Who held the rectors creed,  
Who held the rectors creed).

The differences between the men  
That were so very wide  
Were shattered by the desperate need  
And rudely cast aside.  
The forces of the two were joined.  
Their words were not in vain.  
They told the villagers of Eyam,  
"The plague must be contained,  
The plague must be contained".

The simple people took their word,  
Agreed to stay and die.  
They built a wall around the hamlet,  
Not so very high,  
But high enough that they should know  
That though it mean their lives,  
The plague must stay behind the wall  
With children, friends and wives,  
With children, friends and wives.

For six long months the wall did stand  
And honest to their word,  
The families died. The Friths and Sydalls  
Never more were heard.  
The Thornleys, Hancocks, and the Torres,  
All buried in the ground.  
The Coopers and the Vicars  
Never made another sound,  
Never made another sound.

The dawn that rang the final bell  
Left thirty-three alive  
From three-hundred-and-fifty  
In September 'sixty-five.  
The villagers rebuilt their lives  
With those who still remained.  
The name of Eyam can still be seen;  
The plague had been contained,  
The plague had been contained,  
The plague had been contained,  
The plague had been contained...

**STRENGTH TO SURVIVE (SOJA)**

I'm amazed in the way that we've got this far  
 At the pace we're going and the things we've done  
 Amazed in the way that we're all still here  
 Just looking at our last few years

And I'll task, in the west in the years to come  
 Does the dollar really matter when our whole  
 Stuck in a revolving door  
 Caught in our race for sure  
 Just look into your eyes  
 Now do we have the strength to survive if I live  
 here

It's not like cigarettes, not like your tv's,  
 Bigger and brighter than any other thing,  
 Just consume less, and giving back more  
 And live our old ways at the door  
 And I'll wait, if we don't  
 We can kiss it goodbye  
 Our sun, our moon, our earth and our sky  
 Our world we will recover in a billion years  
 But if we're not living here

When we are stuck in a revolving door  
 Caught in our race for sure  
 Just look into your eyes

world is gone?

Worry about yourself, while the world stills turns  
 Waiting until we watch it burn

Stuck in a revolving door  
 Caught in our race for sure  
 Just look into your eyes  
 Now do we have the strength to survive

Now do we have the strength to survive  
 When we are.  
 Stuck in a revolving door  
 Caught in our race for sure  
 Just look into your eyes  
 Now do we have the strength to survive

C'mon do we have strength to survive  
 C'mon do we have strength to survive  
 C'mon do we have strength to the  
 C'mon do we have strength to the  
 Do we have strength to survive  
 When we are.  
 Stuck in a revolving door  
 Caught in our pace for sure  
 Just look into your eyes  
 Do we have the strength to survive

## PEACE LOVE AND UNITY

### (Fortunate Youth)

Don't fight with each other, we are all brothers, and sisters (x4)

Chorus

We bringing peace, and love and unity, yes we bring it across the sea,

We saying peace and love and unity, you know its in my ganja tree,

Wo come smoke with me,

We roll it up everyday, we feeling alright, we feeling irie,

We jamming, we jamming in the sunshine light,

We jamming till lets all unite. this irie music, this irie music,

Yes we jamming it all night, we jamming music, sweet reggae music,

And we feeling alright, hope you're feeling alright yes.

You feeling alright yes, we feeling so right yes, i'm feeling so right yes!

It's the vibe it's the vibe, and i know that you feel it tonight

Take some time, make some time,

Sit down relax and tell me just what's on your mind,

I know you need all my strength, together we can ease the pain

Children, oh my children, please don't cry.

We saying peace, and love and unity, yes we bring it across the sea, we saying peace and love and  
unity, you know its in my ganja tree, so come smoke with me,

we roll it up everyday, we feeling alright, we feeling irie, we jamming, we jamming in the  
sunshine light, we jamming till lets all unite. this irie music, this irie music, yes we jamming it all  
night, we jamming music, sweet reggae music, and we feeling alright, hope you're feeling alright  
yes. you feeling alright yes, we feeling so right yes, i'm feeling so right yes!

## Why is Eyam Significant?

by Victoria Masson

[Edited from an article on the Historic UK website.

Eyam is a small village in Derbyshire, between Buxton and Chesterfield. Typically rural, most of its population were farmers. In the early 1660s it did not stand apart from any of the other numerous villages that lined the trade routes from London to the rest of England. And yet in 1665 Eyam became one of the most significant villages in England.

The years 1665-6 marked the last major epidemic of the plague in England. The plague concentrated in London. As the rich (including King Charles II) fled the capital to their country estates, the authorities did little. When the House of Lords met to discuss the crisis the following year they decided, instead of relief measures and aid, that the policy of 'shutting up' infected individuals with their household would not apply to persons of note and that plague hospitals would not be built near the homes of the nobility.

The movement of the rich alongside the normal trade patterns of England meant that the great plague spread quickly across the country. The plague arrived in Eyam in late August 1665, in a parcel of cloth sent from London to the village tailor Alexander Hadfield. Hadfield's assistant George Viccars spread the cloth out by the fire to air, and found it infested with rat fleas. He died a few days later with his burial recorded in the parish registers on 7 September 1665.

The Church's dominance in the 17th Century was still supreme, even after the religious roller-coaster of the Tudor period. The local Reverends were pillars of the community, often the most educated people in the village. Eyam had two Reverends: Thomas Stanley had been dismissed from his official post for refusing to take the Oath of Conformity and use the Common Book of Prayer. His replacement, Reverend William Mompesson, had worked in the village for a year. Aged 28, Mompesson lived in the rectory with his wife Catherine and their two small children. Both Reverends were highly educated; their actions resulted in the outbreak of plague in Eyam being contained within the village and not spreading to the nearby city of Sheffield.

A three-point plan was established and agreed with the villagers. The most important part of this was the setting up of a Cordon Sanitaire or quarantine. This line went around the outskirts of the village and no Eyam resident was allowed to pass it. Signs were erected along the line to warn travellers not to enter. During the quarantine there were almost no

attempts to cross the line, even at the peak of the disease in the summer of 1666. Eyam was not a self supporting village and needed supplies. To this end the village was supplied with food and essentials from surrounding villages. The Earl of Devonshire provided supplies that were left at the southern boundary of the village, the villagers left money in water troughs filled with vinegar to pay for them.

Other measures included burying all plague victims as quickly as possible and as near to the place they died rather than in the village cemetery. In addition, the church was locked up to avoid parishioners being crammed into church pews; instead open air services were used to avoid the spread of the disease.

After 1666, although there were many isolated outbreaks, there were no further epidemics of the plague in England.

The village of Eyam, while undoubtedly saving the lives of thousands in the surrounding area, paid a high price. Percentage-wise, they suffered a higher death toll than London. Over the 14 months of the plague, 260 Eyam villagers died out of a total population of 800.; in all, 76 families were affected by the plague; many being wiped out completely. However, the impact on medical understanding was significant.

Doctors realised that the use of an enforced quarantine zone could limit or prevent the spread of disease. Quarantine zones are used in England to this day to contain the spread of diseases such as foot and mouth. It took longer for the ideas of quarantine to filter through to become common practice in hospitals. Florence Nightingale pioneered the use of isolation wards to limit the spread of infectious diseases in hospitals during the Crimean war. This is still used today, with hospitals learning quickly that to contain the spread of diseases such as the Norovirus, isolation wards were necessary.

Other lessons were learnt from the methods used at Eyam. Doctors began to use other practices to limit the risk of contamination. At Eyam this was done by paying for food supplies by dropping coins into pots of vinegar or water, not handing them over directly. This continues today with the use of sterilisation of equipment and medical clothing. Most recently, lessons learnt from Eyam have been seen in the handling of the Ebola epidemic in Africa, where the quick disposal of bodies close to the immediate area of death limited the risk of spreading the disease.

So, why is the small village of Eyam significant? In the words of a Victorian local Historian William Wood...

Let all who tread the green fields of Eyam remember, with feelings of awe and veneration, that beneath their feet repose the ashes of those moral heroes, who with a sublime, heroic and unparalleled resolution gave up their lives, yea doomed themselves to pestilential death to save the surrounding country. Their self sacrifice is unequalled in the annals of the world.