

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry Program
The Work of Justice
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, OR, February 2015

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING OR SOUND A CHIME (2 to 3 minutes for this and silence and opening words)

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

We have gathered here in search of answers to hard questions.

We have come in search of understanding, in search of community.

We have come in search of hope and healing.

Let this be a place not only of searching, but of discovery.

Let this be a place not only of learning, but of wisdom.

Let this be a place not only of meeting, but of connection.

And let this be a place where healing fosters giving, and hope fosters service.

(Adapted from Rev. Sue Ayer)

CHECK-IN (up to 20 to 30 minutes total with up to 2 to 3 minutes per person)

TOPIC AND SHARING (up to 70 minutes for readings, questions, a few minutes for reflection and making notes if desired, individual sharing, optional open discussion at the end if the group agrees, with an optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

READINGS

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable...Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted; the indifference of those who should have known better; the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most; that has made it possible for evil to triumph.

-Haile Selassie, former Emperor of Ethiopia

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, Secretary General of the United Nations

The need for justice grows out of the conflict of human interests. That is to say, if there were no conflict of interests among mankind we should never have invented the word justice, nor conceived the idea for which it stands.

-Thomas Nixon Carver

Justice is conscience, not a personal conscience but the conscience of the whole of humanity.

-Alexander Solzhenitsyn

I am only one but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.

-Edward Everett Hale

QUESTIONS and REQUESTS (Please respond to any of the questions, requests, and readings you feel moved by. It is not necessary to respond to all of them.)

1. What justice issues do you care about most, and how did you develop that concern?
2. Tell about satisfying and rewarding experience(s) you have had working for justice, social change, or service to help others.
3. What challenges or difficulties have you found when attempting to promote justice, social change, or help others, and what did you learn?
4. How do you cope with the limits of your compassion and ability to impact change?

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available, with optional open discussion at the end after all have shared)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (up to 5-10 minutes). Alternatively, this agenda item can be done after the check-in, if the group decides to do that.

-Confirm next meeting date, time, location, and topic.

-Consider discussing the service project.

-Review the SGM Covenant of Right Relationship, and ask for feedback about the SGM program and facilitation.

-Other

LIKES (celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met) and WISHES (mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)/CHECK-OUT (a few words or phrases from each who wants to share, up to 5 minutes total)

CLOSING WORDS (2 minutes for words, and closing)

As we leave this community of the spirit, may we remember the difficult lesson that each day offers more things than we can do. May we do what needs to be done, postpone what does not, and be at peace with what we can be and do. Therefore, may we learn to separate that which matters most, and that which matters least of all.

-Adapted from Richard S. Gilbert

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE OR SOUND A CHIME (and additional optional closing ritual if agreed to)

(Preparation for the facilitator. Please bring the SGM Facilitator Training Manual, paper and writing implements, the lesson plan, and your calendar/date book.)

Session plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry steering committee (Lyn Fischrup; Bonnie Koenig; Al Landy; Dick Loescher, chair).

February 6, 2015