

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

Small Group Facilitators' Session:

Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person

Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, CA, Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern, March 2015

Chalice lighting

Elizabeth Strong

Reverently I offer this symbol of our hope and high intent.
Reverently I bequeath this flame to you.
This is the light that is lit for everyone who comes into the world.
Bear this light to others, one by one.
Let the flame go from life to life till all is lit with its warmth.

Tell that the light means wisdom
Tell that the light means kindness
Tell that the light means understanding
Tell that the light means tolerance
Tell that the light means sacrifice
Tell that the light is a vision of a fairer world.

Tell that this is the light that is lit for everyone who comes into the world.

Personal check-in

How is it with your spirit? What do you need to share in order to be fully present? One possibility is to share one high point and one low point of your recent days.

Readings

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

The first principle is our foundation. It speaks of respecting others enough to never objectify and control them in the service of ideology, however precious. It encourages people to unfold according to their true and authentic nature, to live with integrity according to their own hearts' leaning. . . . Furthermore, our first principle strongly implies that we are called to create justice, for justice now does not exist. If all people do have worth and dignity, can we allow some of them to live with no hope? To allow people to go hungry and without shelter? To turn our eyes away from discrimination? Imperfect as we are, this principle calls us into right relationship with others. It calls for profound respect, even when we differ with the views and behavior of another. It calls for gentleness and forgiveness and the understanding that redemption is just a decision away. —Marilyn Sewell, "The Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person," *With Purpose and Principle*, ed. Edward Frost

Sitting in Silence / Reflection Time

We will begin and end with the sound of the bell. You may wish to reflect on these questions, or any other questions that come to mind regarding the topic of our inherent worth and dignity.

♥ What helps you to know your own worth and dignity?

- ♥ How do you see this principle of Unitarian Universalism playing out in your relationships with others? Friends, family, opponents, strangers?

Sharing / Deep Listening

During this sharing, we will listen deeply without response or thought of response, as a gift to each other and ourselves.

Please use whichever question or questions help you to shape your thoughts about our topic. It is not necessary to respond to all, or any, of the questions.

Sharing Together

Now that all have shared, we have a short time to engage with others' responses.

Tending the Groups—For use at Facilitators' sessions

How is your group? What are its joys and challenges? How can we help you help your group function well?

Your brainstorm invited about effective ways to invite new people into groups--either existing groups or, especially, new groups along the same lines as present ones. For example, current men's groups' being close to capacity, what are some ways we could help start a new men's group?

Likes and wishes

Just a phrase, one sentence at most, about tonight's session

Closing words as we take hands around the circle

Jean Rickard

We have a calling in this world:
We are called to honor diversity,
To respect differences with dignity,
And to challenge those who would forbid it.
We are people of a wide path.
Let us be wide in affection
And go our way in peace.

Amen.

Extinguish the Chalice