

Building Bridges for Social Justice—A Workshop/Retreat

Hosted by the BUUF Social Justice Council

Saturday, August 24, 2019—9 to 12 noon

AGENDA

Welcome & Chalice Lighting (Rev. Sara & Jim)
SJ Council Slide Show running

Introductions Game - Who Is Here Today? (20 minutes)

- Why is your team awesome? Flip chart paper for each ministry team will be round the room. Folks invited to stand with their team (or pick one). Then, team will intro its members and say in one sentence why their team is awesome! (15 minutes)
 - We'll capture Ministry Teams and members on flip chart paper as a way of knowing who is here

CONNECTING OUR SJ SELVES (Small Group Sharing) (20 minutes)

Get in a triad of people NOT in your ministry team.

- What made you a justice-minded person? Get in groups of 3 and each take 3 minutes to share a story that shaped your social justice self and/or deepened your understanding.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO TAKE HOME:

What skills do you bring to social justice work?

What aspects of the work do you like the most? What motivates you to do your social justice work? How do you stay engaged?

Ministry Team Time & Updates (60 minutes - 30 for team time, 30 to share out) SARA will intro & frame

- Gathering in your Ministry Team Groups, take an inventory of your work in the past year (or more) and what you have planned for the future. Try a S.W.O.T analysis. Consider these areas:
 - Accomplishments - what has helped you to be effective?
 - Upcoming projects - calendaring, post-it note on calendar sheets
 - Community & UU Partners - who are they and how do you stay connected? Who else would make a good community partner?
 - Special events or church services you're planning/hope for
 - Challenges and help needed
 - Possibilities you've thought of today that are new to you or the group

****BREAK DURING TEAM TIME****

- **Share out with larger group - Sue will begin this debrief**
SJ Resolutions & Process for Congregational Vote (Sara) (30 minutes)

- Review process & criteria
- invite brainstorm of topics
- sticky dot voting
- create working groups and review timeline

Spiritually Sustained Social Justice - Small Group Sharing

Share in groups about your practices for feeding your spiritual life which is integral to sustaining the work.

Message from Rev. Sara about UUA, SJ, and congregational connection

- UUA Justice Work & Connection, Grant Info **Slide**
- Competition, Permission, & Intersectionality (white culture)
- Thinking about Justice in Worship Life
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Our Social Justice Council

- Social Justice Council members*
- Social Justice Mission/Vision/Role*
 - Relationship with Cong. Mission, Vision, & Ends
- Meetings/Activities/Support to Ministry Teams
 - Plate Partners
 - Resolutions
 - Other?? Legislative Advocacy?

Wrap - Up and Gratitude (circle) (10 minutes)

- Share takeaways
- Needs, Concerns, Unanswered Questions
- Gratitude (Jim, Sue & Council)
- Evaluations

Resource Info:

SJ Projects & Ministry Teams

This list is for including at the end of our game in case we've missed something. We can briefly discuss the whole SJ Ministry Team concept.

- Climate Action Team
- Pride
- Refugee and Immigrants
- Asylum Seeker Hosting Project
- Racial Justice
- EBT
- Homeless Shelters
- Food programs
- Minimum Wage Initiative (do we have anything on this issue?)

Others?

From UUA: Why Small Group Ministry for Social Change?

As Unitarian Universalists, our faith calls us to be agents for social change. However, sometimes this work can feel draining, daunting, or disconnected from our spirituality. Engaging social change efforts through the format of small group ministry addresses both the yearning to grow spiritually in community and the call to transform ourselves and the world. The Small Group Ministry becomes our home base, from which we engage with the world, walk beside our partners in the community, and return to reflect, recharge, and renew our commitments. Using this format encourages us to focus more on spiritual and social transformation and less on tasks, campaigns, and the roller coaster of political wins and losses. Our Small Group Ministries are places we can take risks, make mistakes, learn together, and deepen our engagement of social change, spiritual growth, and the connections between the two. Small Group Social Change Ministry asks us to take the time to reflect on how we are connected to that which is larger than ourselves and how that connection transforms us and calls us to walk beside our partners as we endeavor to create the Beloved Community.

What is Small Group Ministry for Social Change?

- Focused on one social justice issue alive in the congregation and community
- Group is not closed, but members are committed to the issue and the group itself
- Group develops partnerships with faith-based or other non-profits doing the work of your

- chosen focus. Partner with them to establish active engagement in the community and
- build relationships with the people affected by the issue.
- Justice work is done as “accompanying.”

Tenets of Accompanying for Social Change

1. Being in communion with traditionally marginalized people (showing up), and
2. staying in the relationships for the long haul.
3. Remembering that the liberation of everyone and everything is inherently connected, and together, we are on a learning journey toward it
4. Walking together as equals with marginalized people while navigating differences in a loving, respectful, trusting relationship.
5. Struggling together; encouraging one another’s spiritual growth
6. Contemplating the gifts you are going to receive when accompanying, instead of how you will give, help, teach, tell, or fix
7. Unlearning patterns of dominance, like taking charge, leading, making decisions, etc.
8. Asking for and lending emphatic support
9. Moving beyond asking to acting
10. Getting out of your comfort zone (materially, emotionally, and physically)
11. Disrupting the systems and structures of oppression – with integrity and in authentic community with those directly impacted, following their leadership