



The Second Source: Words and Deeds of Prophetic People

Covenant Group Session Plan

Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Greenville, SC

Written by Denise Frick - December 2019, inspired by a sermon by Rev Lisa Bovee-Kemper

Welcome and Chalice Lighting: Here we are together in this space. By our love and by our covenant, we make this a holy place. We light the chalice of Unitarian Universalism in honor of the light that lives in each of us, the light that shines among us, and the light we bring into the world.

Personal Check In: Share something from your life since we last met and how you are feeling now.

Opening Readings

The living tradition we share draws from many Sources: The second of these sources is:

Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.

~From Singing the Living Tradition, Second Source in List of Sources in Preface, UUA

Questions for Sharing and Discussion:

1. What real life person or persons come to mind for you that give you a “challenge to confront powers and structures of evil”?
2. Describe a time when you have been inspired to confront the structures of evil, how did you do that? What happened?
3. What is your passion? Where does your voice need to be heard, where does your strength need to be applied?
4. Whose voice can you amplify, whose work can you support?

Readings – see below

Sitting in Silence

Sharing - This is a time to speak without interruption and for deep listening. Deep listening means no interrupting, no fixing, no saving, no advising, and no setting each other straight. Please share one or more responses to the session questions.

(This is a good time to take a brief break – breathing, bathroom, snack, etc.)

Open Discussion -This is a time to respond to something another person said about the topic or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared their thoughts on this topic. Continue to practice deep listening.

Closing Words:

My heart is moved by all I cannot save: So much has been destroyed. I have to cast my lot with those who, age after age, perversely, with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world.

~Adrienne Rich, Reading # 463, Singing the Living Tradition

Announcements/Plans

Personal Check Out:

As we close our meeting today, how are you feeling now?

Extinguish the Chalice

Readings

For all the saints whose perfections and imperfections have shaped my life, I give thanks. Some have traveled with me a long time and witnessed the best and the worst I have offered the world. Others have been with me only briefly. Among these traveling companions are those who have died, but have not vanished. Sometimes they arrive unexpectedly in the middle of my busy day and ask what I'm doing and why. In quiet moments they come to rest in the inner-most part of my soul, telling me I am not alone. Sometimes they arrive as ghosts of my unfinished business. Floating freely through closed doors, they unlock my certainties to remind me of what I did or failed to do for others. My saints don't perform miracles with bags of magic tricks. Rather, they are transformers who changed my life. ~ Stephen Shick, UU Minister

The people we call prophets – whether prophets from history or those we see in the present day – we can guess that they didn't wake up one day and say, "I think I'd like to be a prophet." In fact, most prophets are reluctant. "Who me?" they say. "No, no, I'm not the one you seek." Or they were simply people living their lives. They were people who witnessed or experienced injustice, harm, or oppression and said, "That's not right," and then decided there was something they could do about it.

Being prophetic involves being uncomfortable, speaking truth to power, making other people uncomfortable. Sometimes a prophet stands in the tough spots and points to the person whose voice isn't being heard. What is your passion? Where does your voice need to be heard, where does your strength need to be applied? Or, whose voice can you amplify, whose work can you support?

~ Rev Lisa Bovee-Kemper, UU minister, from sermon titled *Challenging Prophets*

People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction. And all you can talk about is money and fairytales of eternal economic growth. How dare you! If world leaders choose to fail us, my generation will never forgive them.

~ Greta Thunberg, (23 September 2019), from speech delivered at the UN Climate Action Summit.

When the forces of extremism become so overwhelming that they depress the hope of the people, the prophetic voice and mission is to connect words and actions in ways that build restorative hope, so a Movement for restorative justice can arise.

~Rev. William J. Barber II, *Forward Together: A Moral Message for the Nation*

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

~Margaret Mead, American cultural anthropologist