

Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society
Notes from Congregation Conversation on Class and Classism
February 21, 2021

Worship

What would 21st century worship services look like as a result of the pandemic remote services?
Can we make them more inclusive via technology?

Be sensitive to the images we project virtually, as backgrounds for zoom etc. Can show off our economic status

Are there people who don't attend virtually because of lack of technology?

More testimonials especially that demonstrate our economic diversity

Poppy does a good job at being inclusive with the kids- can we learn from what she does?

Worship must address multiple audiences

Leadership and Decision Making

Address the class privilege of time: higher incomes have more free time for volunteering

Pay stipend for people's time

Job sharing – share the responsibility with someone else so less time consuming

More remote meetings

Typical governance is based on New England town meetings, white privilege, dominated and classist.

System called sociocracy: social self-governance; create circles of governance; give circles certain amount of authority; CVUUS Board and Council of Ministries are two circles.

<https://www.sociocracyforall.org> and <https://www.uua.org/leadership/library/sociocracy-resources>

Finances

Instead of talking about how much we need money (which makes some feel uncomfortable) talk about how the church works and what things cost

Emphasis on reimbursement for expenses, but reimbursement forms only in the office. They could be put on the website for easier access.

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More explanation needed about pledge vs share the plate contributions

Building Community

Personal statement by a participant: “I feel intimidated by the degrees and knowledge of existing members, although I am treated wonderfully.”

Need to reach out to new people, avoid insider/outsider paradigm

Paragraph about each new member, bio. But written by member of membership committee after interview with new member

More workshops and other events to raise awareness of the issues of class and classism; more discussion and education

Have a” buddy” for each new member

Form Jordan: Our friend Doug Muder published this piece in UU World almost 14 years ago, but I think it still applies: <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/liberal-religion-the-working-class>

From Ellen: Just getting into reading a memoir called “Negroland” (<https://www.amazon.com/Negroland-Memoir-Margo-Jefferson/dp/0307473430>) about the upper class and wealthier black communities in the US.

Social Action

www.uuclassconversations.org and www.classism.org

Chuck Collins weekly newsletter, www.inequality.org

For more on childcare, www.faireconomy.org

What can we do to reach out to working class people? Should we reach out (evangelize) or just work with them on different issues?

We could work on issues here in VT – childcare, web access, living wages, etc.

We have inherited an old structure (worship and in general in society) we need to make it “softer”, easier to access for all, so anyone can feel at home.