

The Corruption of Our Democracy

Video Curriculum

Workshop facilitators: a few words to help you get started Contact for more information, encouragement and/or feedback: call Terry Lowman at 515-441-9844 or email terryleelowman@gmail.com



From the UUA website on Congregational Study/Action Issues, CSAI:

As corporations use “corporate personhood” and “money as speech” for their interests rather than the people’s needs, can a constitutional amendment be passed to protect us? Could this further Unitarian Universalist work for social and environmental justice and help protect the health and safety of the people and the planet?

The video workshop series below mostly speak for themselves. It would be best to allow around an hour for you to preview the videos before your workshop--this will allow you to be conversant and have a level of confidence going into the workshop. Typically, UUs will have a vital conversation after viewing such compelling material. Just allow time for participants to discuss their feelings and experiences.

How to obtain the videos

By clicking <https://uujec.com/EJVideos>, you can go to our page and easily download all the videos onto your computer by clicking on each video and saving them all in a file for viewing later. Please do not stream videos as it's very undependable and could create a hostile group if/when streaming breaks down.

Tips for leading workshops

Two suggestions for creating community in the workshops--you can ask those who'd like to share about their experience. So, people are comfortable, do not structure sharing so people would be forced to share.

Community organizers use a tool called One on Ones to create personal relationships. Because they take time, you might choose to have sign-up sheets and have members sign up to meet at another time. UUs love to talk, so if it's possible, ask people to allow plenty of time. It's amazing what you can learn when you put two people together without an agenda even when they've known each other for a long time. I suspect that spouses would learn things.

Please follow two iron rules for community organizing: 1) punctuality. It is rude to start or finish late—if you truly respect the dignity and worth of every person, then you will respect their time. 2) Never, ever do for someone else what they can do for themselves. This will be more important as we get into solutions.

Workshop 1: Understanding the Problem, 57 minutes of video

Chalice lighting Call to Study and Action, adapted

By Sharon Wylie

It is said that ministers are here to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

I say, we are all afflicted, and we are all comfortable.

May our time together today be a comfort and a confrontation.

May we here find peace in times of tumult;

May we here invite tumult into lives of peace.

May we here find calm in times of restlessness;

May we here allow restlessness to evolve into action.

Let this be the place you consider what you've never considered;

Let this be the place you imagine for yourself something new and unthinkable.

May this hour bring dreams of new ways of being in the world.

Come, let us learn together.

Please share the below paragraph:

UUJEC is Unitarian-Universalists for a Just Economic Community, founded in 1989 to “engage, educate, and activate UU individuals and congregations, social justice groups, and community partners to fulfill our vision of positive systemic change”. UUJEC led the campaign for passage of the Congregational Study Action Issue (CSAI) on “Escalating Inequality” in 2014 and UUJEC endorsed this new CSAI, The Corruption of Democracy in 2016. Every two years one of five proposed CSAIs is voted in for “four years of study, reflection, and action” by UU congregations throughout the United States.

Citizens United explained with dogs, 2 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68wHngd9nYc>

Story of stuff's review of Citizens United, 9 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5kHACjrdEY>

The Citizens United decision, 3 1/2 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nz6LVYD4As>

Roy Zimmerman on Citizens United (humor), 4 1/2 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vajWsEBQ-D8>

Larry Lessig on Citizens United, 18 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/lawrence_lessig_we_the_people_and_the_republic_w_e_must_reclaim?language=en

Capitalism will eat democracy, 20 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/yanis_varoufakis_capitalism_will_eat_democracy_unless_we_speak_up?language=en

An ending, or merely prelude to more Glorious Beginnings.

By Michael A Schuler

We have reached the end of this time

For the gathering of memory

And for letting the imagination play with future possibilities.

We have enjoyed magic moments and edified each other.

Shall it be concluded, then?

Or will this adventure, now commenced, continue? —

Our separate paths converging, meeting, merging

In the unending quest for love more perfect,

The joyous struggle for meaning more sufficient and life more abundant.

Is this ending to be an ending,

Or merely prelude to new, more glorious beginnings?

I pose the question;

In your hearts lies the answer.

Workshop 2: Gears of Democracy, 61 minutes of video

Chalice lighting: Superheroes

By Cynthia Landrum

Mindful that

With great power comes great responsibility,

We light this chalice in the hopes that

In brightest day, in blackest night,

Our faith will Flame on!

-Spiderman. Green Lantern & the Human Torch (compiled by Cynthia Landrum)

Does Democracy stifle economic growth? 19 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/yasheng_huang?language=en#t-266236

Apathy in Democracy, 7 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/dave_meslin_the_antidote_to_apathy?language=en

Can democracy exist without trust? 14 minutes

http://www.ted.com/talks/ivan_krastev_can_democracy_exist_without_trust

The importance of privacy, 21 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/glenn_greenwald_why_privacy_matters?language=en

Because of Those Who Came Before

By Barbara J Pescan

Because of those who came before, we are;
in spite of their failings, we believe;
because of, and in spite of, the horizons of their vision,
we, too, dream.

Let us go remembering to praise,
to live in the moment,
to love mightily,
to bow to the mystery.

Workshop 3: What Goes into the Workings of Democracy?

51 ½ mins. of video

Chalice lighting: The Cup of Life

By Lisa Doege

"Why a flaming chalice?" the question comes.

It's the cup of life, we answer.

A cup of blessings overflowing.

A cup of water to quench our spirits' thirst.

A cup of wine for celebration and dedication.

The flame of truth.

The fire of purification.

Oil for anointing, healing.

Out of chaos, fear, and horror,

thus was the symbol crafted, a generation ago.

So may it be for us,

in these days of uncertainty, sorrow, and rage.

And a light to warm our souls and guide us home.

How to upgrade democracy, 13 1/2 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/pia_mancini_how_to_upgrade_democracy_for_the_internet_era?language=en

Demand more open source government, 17 minutes

http://www.ted.com/talks/beth_noveck_demand_a_more_open_source_government?language=en

Getting control of your lizard brain, 2 1/2 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAoFPIHBu6U>

The moral roots of liberals and conservatives, 18 1/2 minutes

http://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_haidt_on_the_moral_mind

Benediction

By Amy Zucker Morgenstern

As we leave this hallowed place, may our feet remember its feel, So that wherever we walk, we know ourselves to be on hallowed ground.

May we know that we are kin with every soul, every star, every stone and leaf of grass.

And may our words be gentle, and our touch be kind.

Blessed be.

Workshop 4: How Corruption of Democracy Impairs all Justice, 46 1/2 mins. of video

Chalice lighting: Chalice Lighting on Inherent Worth and Dignity

By Steve Stock

We light this chalice to celebrate the inherent worth and dignity of every person;

To reaffirm the historic pledge of liberal religion to seek that justice which transcends mere legality and moves toward the resolution of true equality; And to share that love which is ultimately beyond even our cherished reason, that love which unites us.

Melissa Harris Perry & Kenji Yoshino on voting rights, 9 1/2 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CSwJCoYsXw>

Using racism to divide and conquer! Tim Wise, 3 minutes

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zh_yhgbgRkc

Private, for profit prisons: where humans are inventory. 1 minute

<https://www.good.is/articles/how-companies-make-money-off-prisoners>

Why gun violence can't be the new normal, 14 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gross_why_gun_violence_cant_be_our_new_normal?language=en

This country isn't just carbon neutral -- it's carbon negative, 19 minutes
https://www.ted.com/talks/tshering_tobgay_this_country_isn_t_just_carbon_neutral_it_s_carbon_negative

The Prosecution Gap: Corporate Polluters Rarely Criminally Charged for Violating Environmental Law, 3 minutes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tvgc3vXGuRM>

A Power at Work in the Universe

By Tom Schade

My friends,

There is a power at work in the universe.

It works through human hands,
but it was not made by human hands.

It is a creative, sustaining, and transforming power
and we can trust that power with our lives
[and with our ministries].

It will sustain us whenever we take a stand on the side of love;
whenever we take a stand for peace and justice;
whenever we take a risk.

Trust in that power.

We are, together, held by that power.

Workshop 5: Some Solutions to Corruption of Democracy, 41 minutes of video

Chalice Lighting

We have Come into this Room of Hope

By Libbie D Stoddard

We have come into this room of hope
where our hearts and minds are opened to the future.

We have come into this room of justice
where we set aside our fear to name freely every oppression.

We have come into this room of love
where we know that no lives are insignificant.

We have come into this room of song
where we unite our voices in the somber and the beautiful melodies of life.

My battle to expose government corruption, 18 minutes

https://www.ted.com/talks/heather_brooke_my_battle_to_expose_government_corruption#t-68943

Potential constitutional amendment, 6 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywCfBaUvhyw>

Elizabeth Warren speaks against Citizens United, 11 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xd-Ae9AxdUs>

Fixing Congress with Fair Representation Voting, 6 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vS62N5b5L7Y>

Discussion: Can you think of more solutions?

A World Attained

By Barrow Dunham

[And now], since the struggle deepens, since evil abides, and good does not yet prosper,

Let us gather what strength we have, what confidence and valor that our small victories may end in triumph, and the world awaited be a world attained.