

Small Group Ministry Session 45:

"Hotel Earth and the Threat of Global Warming"

Prepared by Peter Bowden in collaboration with the Unitarian Universalist Association Washington Office

Opening Words: "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius -- and a lot of courage -- to move in the opposite direction." - Albert Einstein

Check-In

Introduction: In 2004 delegates from our congregations chose "Global Warming" as an issue to be studied by our association over the next two years. After this study / action issue is examined our association will consider drafting a "statement of conscience" offering an official position on the issue. Each of our congregations has been invited to discuss this issue in more depth, reviewing material provided by our Commission on Social Witness and the UUA Washington Office. More information on this issue and our association's social action process is available through the website of our Commission on Social Witness, online at <http://uua.org/csw>.

Focus/Topic: If Earth was run like a hotel we would each have to provide a valid credit card at the beginning of our stay. Then, if we caused any harm during our visit, we would be charged damages at check out. If this were so, chances are we would each be more careful knowing that even the smallest of actions harming "Hotel Earth" would appear as an item on our bill. In this scenario the owner fixes the hotel using the damage fees charged to the guest accounts. This is clearly not how it works. Still, how we view our relationship with the Earth greatly impacts the choices we make and whether or not we take action in the face of local and global

environmental challenges.

1. How do you conceptually think of the planet Earth and your relationship to it?
2. In what way is this view related to your personal spirituality, beliefs, the Unitarian Universalist Principles and the way you live your life?
3. What aspects of your lifestyle, habits and consumption positively or negatively impact the Earth?
4. Who do you feel is ultimately responsible for caring for the Earth and the ecosystem on which we depend on?

Likes and Wishes:

Before we close I'd like to invite each of you to briefly share what you liked about this session, and how, if at all, you would like to be involved in our association's larger social justice process.

Closing Words:

"If we don't change direction, we're likely to end up where we're going." - A Chinese proverb