

Small Group Ministry Session Plan  
**Reproductive Justice: Raising Children**

Jessica Halperin, Women's Issues Program Associate/UUWF Clara Barton Intern  
Unitarian Universalist Association

June, 2012

**Opening Words:**

That Passeth All Understanding

An awe so quiet  
I don't know when it began.

A gratitude  
had begun  
to sing in me.

Was there  
some moment  
dividing  
song from no song?

When does dewfall begin?

When does night  
fold its arms over our hearts  
to cherish them?

When is daybreak?

- Denise Levertov, *Oblique Prayers*

**Check-in**

**Focus/Topic:**            *Reproductive Justice: Raising Children*

As members of a religious tradition with a long and substantive history working for reproductive rights and a firm commitment to anti-racism, multiculturalism, and social justice, Unitarian Universalists are called to widen the current socio-political debate on "reproductive rights" to one on "reproductive justice."

Within the framework of reproductive justice, the Unitarian Universalist Association works against the cultural, political, economic, and structural constraints that limit women's access to health care and full reproductive choice. Reproductive justice, a concept put forth by coalitions of women of color, promotes the right of all women to have children, not to have children, and to raise their children in safe and healthy environments. It does not isolate or pit important social issues against each other, rather it works to promote these rights across many areas, including comprehensive sex education, economic justice, environmental justice, violence against women, and racial justice.

1. From your experience, describe the social, political, economic, and spiritual conditions in which you raised/would like to raise/believe are important to raising healthy children.
2. How does/can the religious community and government create and sustain those healthy conditions?
3. How can we support a woman when the desired conditions are not in place? How can we support her sense of worth and dignity when things are less than ideal?

### **Likes & Wishes**

### **Closing Words:**

Seek for the spirit of life that is within you;  
that you might know more fully its power and strength.  
Seek for the spirit of life that surrounds you;  
that you might know more fully its connection to you.  
Seek for the spirit of life that is within others;  
that you might enter more fully into the community  
that embraces us, this day and every day.

- Elizabeth M. Strong

This session was prepared by Jessica Halperin, the UUWF Clara Barton Intern at the Unitarian Universalist Association. A member of the UUA's Multicultural Growth and Witness staff group, Jessica advocates on issues of reproductive justice and women in poverty, and provides resources and opportunities for Unitarian Universalist congregations and leaders to do the same.