



Connection

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice

A welcoming, caring congregation encouraging spiritual growth, seeking meaning and pursuing justice.

Issue No. 2042

Venice, FL

June 2020

Sundays at UUCOV

Sunday Services

June 7, 2020: Video Online Service: The Myth of Original Sin

Rev. Dennis McCarty will explain “The Myth of Original Sin.” Like hell-fire, Original Sin is a core Christian doctrine, particularly among fundamentalist expressions. But—surprise!—it was not part of Jesus of Nazareth’s message at all, nor was it important among Christians until hundreds of years after Jesus died. Rev. Dennis will sort out this fascinating piece of religious history.

June 14, 2020: Video Online Service: A Religious Look at Dracula

Rev. Dennis McCarty will take “A Religious Look at Dracula.” Prince Vladislas Dracula was a real person. Less than a hundred years after his death, Transylvania—his supposed home—anoined history’s first and only Unitarian King, John Sigismund. Bram Stoker’s vampire Dracula and the historic Dracula were two very different characters, though. We can learn a lot about Unitarianism—and ourselves—by comparing the surprising differences.

June 21, 2020: Video Online Service: A Brief Biography of Satan

Rev. Dennis McCarty will outline “A Brief History of Satan.” As with other supposedly Scriptural ideas, Satan—a.k.a. the Devil—evolved and changed over the centuries. Culture and psychology influenced this evolution, so that the “Devil” that Jerry Falwell, Jr. warns us about has a lot more to do with subconscious European longings than anything the earliest Hebrew scribes wrote down. Knowledge about what’s actually in the Bible—and what’s not—can help us reclaim this fascinating and wonderful book from fundamentalists who try to use it as a cudgel.

June 28, 2020: Video Online Service: TBA

Rabbi Benjamin Shull - Venice Jewish Congregation (Rev. Dennis will be attending virtual General Assembly, and will be unavailable for meetings or the June 28 service).

Minister's Corner

Notes From Your Sabbatical Minister



In mid-May, Unitarian Universalist Association President Susan Frederick-Gray posted “Updated Guidance” to UU Congregations about re-opening in-person religious

How to Contact Us

Mailing Address: UUCOV
1971 Pinebrook Road
Venice, FL 34292-1563

Website: www.uucov.org

Sabbatical Minister: Rev. Dennis McCarty

Email:

Phone: 812-606-3594

services. She wrote, “Based on advice from experts. . . [we] recommend that congregations begin planning for virtual operations for the next year (through May 2021.)”

She then added, “Take a moment to breathe. I know this is significant,” and detailed how the UUA is expanding resources for congregations to increase virtual (online) relationships even in the event of a protracted shut-down.

Reactions were predictable. Some people, (including some ministers I know) sputtered “How dare the UUA tell us we can’t re-open as soon as we think it’s safe?”

Well—that’s not what the “Updated Guidance” said. For one thing, the UUA can’t “tell” a Congregation to do much of anything. Congregational polity doesn’t work that way, as I explained in my first sermon here. We run our own show and make our own decisions.

But in advising us to “begin planning,” Susan was warning that this pandemic is likely to be a long, hard slog. Be ready. After all, it’s much easier to pivot back to “traditional” church, if circumstances change sooner than planned, than it is to go forward with a full-service “virtual” church without careful planning, ramping up our online resources.

I’ve been following this pandemic closely, and also your response as a congregation. I think your Board of Trustees, Staff, and Lay Leaders are responding beautifully. (In fact, some folks are so forward-thinking, I’m having a hard time keeping up!)

Salli, our Office Manager, has recommended weekly “virtual office hours,” beginning in June, so people can talk to her via Zoom if they need to. I will almost certainly do the same—though I’m still figuring out what would be the best afternoon. Keep your eye on our “Happenings” e-mail for more on that.

Back in the middle ages, particularly in times of war, castles laid in supplies so that they could withstand a long siege. This COVID-19 pandemic is the moral equivalent of a war. If the siege doesn’t last as long as planned, we can always eat the laid-away beans and rice in a big feast when it’s over. (Or to put things more plainly—as even the loudest critics proclaim—“Our online services have been very successful. We’ll continue to provide them after the pandemic passes.”)

I’ll be leaving in a few weeks. I have two aspirations: first that none of our beloved members comes down with COVID-19 on my watch. (So far, so good on that one.) Second, that I hand off to Rev. Van Zandt a congregation ready to withstand even a long pandemic siege. Thanks to level-headed lay leaders and dedicated staff, I look forward to being ready on that one, as well.

Yours in non-theistic Faith,
Rev. Dennis

Office hours: By
appointment.

Office Administration: Salli
L. Clarke
Phone: 941-485-2105
Email:
Office hours: Monday -
Friday 10:00am -Noon

President's Message

In this new month of Social Distancing and Self Quarantine I am missing our times together. The Sunday morning UUCOVfee Hour on Zoom has allowed some of us to at least see some lovely and familiar faces. Many of us are keeping in contact via telephone and other are having neighborhood events while distancing i.e. wine in the park eight feet apart.



I know that it feels as if the Congregation is in a dormant state, much like the Monarch caterpillars many of you are raising, but things are working within the confines of our much-changed environment. The Coordinating Council and Board of Trustees have continued to meet online. Any member of the congregation may attend those meetings. We are discussing how we will reopen and what changes will happen when we do.

In this age of technology many of us who have resisted are starting to embrace some unfamiliar things. Lively discussions have been led by Barbara Smith on Zoom Book Club meetings. Linda Underwood and Bill Dowling hosted a Plato's Café and several Fellowship groups have been meeting remotely.

A Virtual General Assembly will be meeting online later this month. Please consider attending see and hear what is happening within Unitarian Universalism. See the article about The Virtual General Assembly and how to attend.

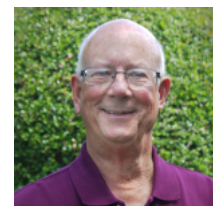
We all need to think about what our beloved community will be when we return. We wish to be socially, financially and actually healthy. so that we can be of service to our members and the greater community.

Be well, stay in contact and let us know what you might need and what you could share with others.

Pam MacFarlane, *President*

Treasurer's Report

First, a thank you to Dave Williams who each week records donations and pledge payments and makes deposits at our bank. We appreciate your faithful time and effort.



Our Social Justice monthly contribution went to All Faiths Food Bank - BackPack Kids. This month the amount was \$435.00 due to three congregant's generosity.

Your Finance Committee and Board of Trustees are working very hard on UUCOV finances. As it appears our fund-raising through church rentals, the travel group and fund raisers such as the Auction will not happen due to the COVID-19 shutdown, our income will be severely impacted. Therefore, we are working on reducing expenses wherever possible. We have renegotiated our lawn service to an every-other week mowing. All employees are continuing to receive their usual pay. Other expenses such as guest ministers and guest musician's costs are being studied. I will keep you advised of changes as they happen.

Dave Lyon, *Treasurer*

Board Minutes

Wondering what your Board of Trustees has been up? You can check out the minutes of our monthly meeting on our UUCOV website, (for minutes going back to 2015!), or go to <https://uucov.org/images/phocadownload/Minutes%20of%20April%2016%202020%20Meeting.pdf>. There you will find the approved, most current month's Board of Trustees minutes.

Claire Harrison, *Secretary*
UUCOV - Board of Trustees

UUCOV COVID-19 Task Force

Our group continues to meet on a monthly basis with a focus on reviewing current information received from UUA, Florida Department of Health, the CDC and various other sources. Our guiding principle continues to be how can we best stay informed and ensure that our UUCOV congregation remain connected while remaining cautious and diligent in maintaining the safety of our staff, our congregation, and our community. Our recommendation to the Board has been to continue with video Sunday services, ZOOM meetings, and the closure of our campus buildings until further notice. We believe following the guidance of science along with our UU values is the responsible way to operate.

Which is the picture of UUCOV?



The buildings may be closed -We love you too much to put you in harm's way.

But the Congregation is OPEN!!

An Opportunity to Support our Mission

Our mission includes the words “a caring community ---- pursuing justice”. Easy words but they call us to action. Now is the time to actually do something.

For over a year, UUCOV has been meeting with the Laurel Civic Association (LCA) for the purpose of developing a program by which UUCOV could support our neighbors. Our neighbors in the Laurel area of town are economically challenged and have been systematically denied access to resources that we take for granted. Many UUCOV members have volunteered at the Association with their after-school program or helped sort food at their food drive. So, we know LCA.

We have a proposal that our friends at LCA are asking our help with.

LCA along with the Manatee Credit Union want to bring banking services to our neighbors who are “unbanked, underbanked and underserved”. They want to provide access to banking services that you and I take for granted – bank loans, credit cards, checking accounts and even check cashing services. Michael Fluker, Executive Director of LCA, and his board calls this EMPOWERMENT. And our help is being asked for.

The Federal Treasury Department has identified this issue, lack of banking services in areas across this country and have certified banking entities as Community Development Financial



Institutions (CDFIs). CDFI's have in their charter the mandate to serve underserved areas. The Manatee Credit Union is one such entity. And CDFI's and their work are supported by UUA. The City of Sarasota has entered into an agreement with Manatee Credit Union to serve an underserved part of Sarasota.

LCA is hoping to raise \$20,000 in the several months or so to initiate a banking program with the Manatee Credit Union that will include the services mentioned, but also an education program to assist families to learn banking skills. This \$20,000 will underwrite the beginning of this program and will serve as seed money to allow LCA to pilot this program and, hopefully, grow it.

Your Board of Trustees has followed this program development over the past year and supports it. We have currently an initial \$5,000 matching donation. So, the first \$5,000 of donations from the congregation will be matched dollar for dollar. It is our goal to raise \$20,000. This \$20,000 will underwrite \$200,000 borrowing power.

We have educated ourselves on our privilege, we have read about the plight of our citizens of color, we have attended lectures, we have heard personal stories. We have learned not to make decisions for others. We have learned of the systemic injustices in our society. This is an opportunity to actually do something.

No donation will be too small. Checks should be made out to UUCOV with 'LCA' in the memo line.

We expect to be able to say our congregation started a program that made a significant difference in people's lives and we responded with a yes, when asked to help.

Additional references:

Community Development Financial Institutions <https://www.cdfifund.gov/Pages/default.aspx> and <https://ofn.org/what-cdfi>

Congregational Life

Ways to Stay Connected

This is a challenging time, and no one needs a reminder that it is making people anxious. Anything we can do to stay in community is important.



Weekly, we have changed the format and purpose of Happenings. It now has more information and will provide you an opportunity to share your "Joys and Concerns" as you would have done on Sunday Mornings. We want to keep current in our collective lives, so please send to by Thursday at 9:00am things you would like to share.

Also know that our website is current and has videos of our Sunday services and that can be found at www.uucov.org. You can also see our Sunday services on You Tube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJ_vWUKGbaQ&t=73s.

In addition, our Facebook Pages, *In Touch-UUCOV* and *In Touch- Justice Action*, are providing a quick easy way to stay in touch and are being used more this period than normal. That is a good thing.

This will be our new norm for the foreseeable future, and we will need some new ways of staying together.

Host a ZOOM Meeting or Activity!



During this time of social distancing, UUCOV is making available to all the congregation the use of ZOOM. If you have a group you would like to host a ZOOM chat with please check the online calendar for availability and then contact Salli, our Office Manager, to have your meeting put on the calendar.

You might like to chat with other crafters, perhaps discuss with others a social justice issue you are involved with, perhaps you would like to share a cooking recipe with others. Or you may share a skill with others. You can invite a specific group, such as the “Mat Makers”, or open it to all. Anything that might interest you and other UU’s!! Let’s not lose our connections. In fact, you may discover some more connections you didn’t even know about.

NEW! Virtual Office Hours

Beginning Monday, June 1st, the office will hold ZOOM virtual office hours, twice weekly. ‘Office Hours’ will be every Monday and Wednesday from 10:00am – 11:00am.

You may enter the ZOOM meeting at any time during the hour to speak with Salli regarding questions, requests, assistance, UUCOV publications, etc. Feel free to sign-in and say Hi!



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84688135320>

Meeting ID: 846 8813 5320

No password is required

Members and Friends Directory

The UUCOV Directory is in process of being updated. If you are a new member or a new pledging friend please make sure you have submitted to the office a picture, preferably a “head shot”. Pictures in the directory are a big help in people getting to know each other. Pictures can be cropped so send what you have.

*****If anyone has changed their email, phone or home address please make sure the office is aware.*****

How to Attend the Virtual General Assembly



Those of you who have attended a previous General Assembly know what a wonderful learning experience it can be. Due to the worldwide pandemic the 2020 GA will be done virtually. Anyone can attend. It may be great being able to attend without having to leave your comfy chair at home.

If you have never attended a GA or have been to many, this can be a great opportunity to think about what UUism to yourself and others. Live your values aloud not alone.

To register go to www.uua.org/ga/registration The fee is \$150.00 to take part in all the planned events and workshops. An application for a scholarship is available on the www.uua.org web site.

Please let us know if you will be attending. UUCOV is entitled to **5** delegates, so please let us know if you would be willing to represent UUCOV.

News from the Caring Team

The Caring Team would like to thank the many Team members who recently helped our UUCOV friends in need. You are very much appreciated!

The Caring Team is always on the lookout for UUCOV members and friends who would like to be added to our list to be called when a meal, or a phone call, or a ride to a doctor appointment is needed. You may not be called often, but when the need arises, it’s comforting to know we have a group of caring, concerned people to call on. Please contact Eileen Leapley at to be included on the list.



Please remember that all UUCOV members and friends can keep their personal data stored in a confidential ministerial file, to be used only in case of emergency. The file includes who should be called in case of emergency, your health and professional services providers, your personal wishes, and final arrangements. Contact Caring Team leader Eileen Leapley at for a copy of the form, which will be kept in a sealed envelope in the minister’s confidential file.

From the Legacy Friends



In these difficult times, UUCOV is providing critical support to those in need. After these times have passed, we will still be providing critical support to those in need, including those in need of a congregation with liberal values.

How can you support UUCOV in its mission, both now and into the future? It's easy – join the Legacy Friends by including a donation to the Endowment Fund or the Futures Fund in your estate plans. What's the difference between these two funds? The Endowment Fund supports UUCOV's operations in perpetuity with its earnings. The Futures Fund provides its earnings to UUCOV as well, but the principal is also available for Legacy Projects, such as buildings.

More information is available in the new "Planned Giving" brochure that we recently distributed, and copies of the brochure will be available in the lanai when Sunday services resume. You are also welcome to contact John Spitzer, chair of Legacy Friends. John's phone number is 319-331-5914 and his email is

With Our Thanks

I have much gratitude for the commitment and creativity that Salli Clarke, Office Manager, has shown this congregation through the past several very unusual months. Her willingness to discover new ways of working to keep us fully operational is something we all should be grateful for. Thank you, Salli.

Lifespan Education

Message from the Director

"Everyone is trying to accomplish something big, not realizing that life is made up of little things." - Frank A. Clark

Greetings -

As many of you know this past month was very difficult for me. My sister was diagnosed with cancer again. She had breast cancer last year. My mom passed away May 5th and we have been working on healing and learning how to live without her daily presence.



Kathy Avery, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

YRE

Currently there is a short service for the kids on Sundays at 10:00 am through ZOOM. If you are interested in attending, have a topic you'd like to share or know a kid who would like to join, please contact me at or 941-270-6187.

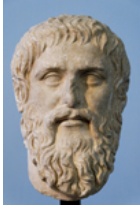
ARE

Sunday ARE is still postponed.

Virtual Plato's Circle

Wednesday, June 03, 2020 01:30pm - 03:00pm

Plato's Circle provides an opportunity for individuals to discuss interesting ideas and issues. There is a monthly topic around which individuals share their thoughts and impressions. The gathering provides an opportunity for people to have an intelligent and stimulating conversation within a welcoming and supportive setting.



All are invited to the June Plato's Circle where we will be discussing our individual privacy vs the government's right to know. A 10 minute TED talk will help focus our thinking and a discussion will follow. This topic is timely as our government is gathering information on our health during this time. We saw an erosion of privacy following the terrorist attacks. It seems a common enemy provides a reason to give up our privacy. Or should it????

Video will start at 1:40. There will be no password or waiting room. Contact Linda Underwood - & Bill Dowling -

Topic: Plato's Circle

Time: Jun 3, 2020 1:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86551017426>

Meeting ID: 865 5101 7426

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,86551017426# US (Germantown)

+13126266799,,86551017426# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

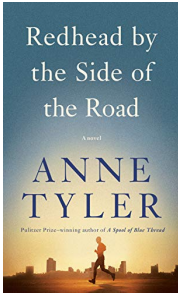
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 865 5101 7426

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86551017426>

ZOOM Online UUCOV Book Club

Thursday, June 11, 1:00 pm



The UUCOV Book Club will meet by Zoom. The book selected is Redhead by the Side of the Road, by Anne Tyler.

"From the beloved Anne Tyler, a sparkling new novel about misperception, second chances, and the sometimes elusive power of human connection." An intimate look into the heart and mind of a man who finds those around him just out of reach, and a funny, joyful, deeply compassionate story about seeing the world through new eyes, Redhead by the Side of the Road is a triumph, filled with Anne Tyler's signature wit and gimlet-eyed observation.

Be sure to email Barbara Smith at to obtain connection information.

ZOOM Event: Wills and Trusts - Florida Law and YOU!

Tuesday, June 16 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

UU Empowerment Series: Elder Care Attorney John Griffin will give a zoom talk for UUCOV He will address residency issues as well as Wills and Trusts, DNRs, most likely the things you have on your mind. What is fact? What is fiction? What might you need to do?

John Griffin is a graduate of Wake Forest University School of Law and is a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, the Association of Florida Elder Law Attorneys, the Florida Bar Elder Law Section, the Florida State Guardianship Association, the Sarasota County

bar Association and the Sarasota County Bar Guardianship Subcommittee. He has served two terms as Chairman of the Nursing Home Resident's Rights Special Committee for the Elder Law Section of the Florida Bar.



While his professional credentials are impressive and exemplary, members of UUCOV who have consulted with him have been impressed by his ability to relate as a helpful individual who expresses concern for each and every client he serves. This is an opportunity to ask questions of an outstanding attorney who is capable of explaining even the most difficult of issues in terms that can be understood.

John T. Griffin, Esq. is board certified by The Florida Bar as an expert in Elder Law. Mr. Griffin is a partner in the law firm of GRIFFIN & GRIFFIN. Mr. Griffin practices in the area of Elder Law, Estate Planning, Guardianship, VA Benefits, Medicaid Planning, Asset Protection, Probate, Elder Law Litigation and Special Needs Planning. For more about Attorney John Griffin, check out his website: www.griffinelderlaw.com

Topic: Unitarian Universalist's Wills and Trusts Program
Time: Jun 16, 2020 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8169010920>

Meeting ID: 816 901 0920

No password is required

ZOOM Online Event: Lunch & Learn

June 18th at 1:00pm

Lunch and Learn is scheduled for June 18th, the time is changing to 1pm. We will be learning about Tapping.

Tapping is a combination of Ancient Chinese Acupressure and Modern Psychology that works to physically alter your brain, energy system and body all at once. The practice consists of tapping with your fingertips on specific meridian points while talking through traumatic memories and a wide range of emotions. [The Tapping Solution Book](#) by Nick Ortner.



Lunch and Learn will be the third Thursday of each month through September.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/5152088219?pwd=c2FiQ0Z6eHJLSEJ6VkZZZ3VUYkV5QT09>

Meeting ID: 515 208 8219

Password: 074539

Religious Educator Position Vacancy

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice located in Venice, Florida is looking to fill the position for a halftime (20 hours/week) Religious Educator.

We are a congregation of 230 members with a small youth religious education program along with a medium sized adult program. We currently have 10-15 youth and about 50 adults participating in our various programs depending on the seasonal membership and attendance. The goal is to envision, evaluate, and implement a diverse, robust, and fun lifespan religious program for all ages. This program will provide an understanding of Unitarian Universalism and inspire congregants to develop their own religious

identity or spirituality.

The primary duties are:

1. To provide overall vision and work collaboratively with RE committees in developing, programming and using curricula.
2. To develop a yearly calendar in collaboration with the Minister and the RE committees.
3. To lead recruitment, annual training and development of capable volunteers to teach and/or facilitate RE programs.
4. To oversee the administration of the lifespan religious education program, including registration, safe congregation policies, procedures, and maintenance of database and finances.
5. To evaluate and implement age appropriate curricula across the lifespan, reflecting a wide variety of spiritual and social justice interests.
6. To administer and participate in a comprehensive and forward-thinking lifespan religious program that promotes the principles of Unitarian Universalism and draws upon curricula and materials provided by the UUA and others.
7. To plan occasional "intergenerational" Sunday services with feature involvement by the children in collaboration with the Minister.

The Religious Educator will report to the Minister and work closely with the RE committees (Youth RE Committee and Adult RE Committee). The Religious Educator will collaborate with other committees and the Coordinating Council to maximize service to the community.

The Religious Educator should be familiar with UUA curricula, should have experience with multi age youth and adults, should have good communication and organizational skills. S/he should have experience with Microsoft Office and social media connectivity. College experience is preferred. The candidate must be able to pass a background check. Please submit three references. Compensation will be determined based on experience and qualifications.

Please send your letter of intent and resume to:

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice
1971 Pinebrook Road
Venice, Florida 34292
ATTN: Religious Educator Search Committee

Social Justice

Justice Action

If you want to make a difference for better government at the county level, here are some quick updates:

Plan ahead! Be sure to VOTE in the August Primary, in addition to the November 3rd General Election. Look at all the candidates for County Commission, and the candidates for School Board, and find out what they stand for. These are two very important offices for the future of Sarasota County development and for public education. Support the candidates you believe in. See all the candidates here: <https://www.sarasotavotes.com/ElectionCandidates.aspx?eid=140> Google them to see their campaign websites, and how to contact them.

July 20: Deadline for voter registration for the August 18 Primary: Call 941-861-8618 to register and sign up for a Vote by Mail ballot. See www.sarasotavotes.com for all information.

August 18: School Board Elections, in addition to Primary elections! Important! Everyone can vote in the non-partisan School Board elections, including Independents and NPAs. Challenger Tom Edwards in School District 3 (Venice) is running against Eric Robinson. Challenger David Graham in School District 2 is running against Karen Rose. The challengers are committed to supporting public education. Call Kindra at 941-266-8278 for details on all candidates.

Letter-writers: Help get your UU values before the public! Call Kindra at 941-266-8278 or Brad at 941-223-6849 to sign up to be on the list to write your own Letters-to-the-Editor or to submit letters that you approve that are “ghost-written” for you.

Subscribe to newspapers: All who want to keep up with fast-moving developments in this election year are encouraged to subscribe to the Herald-Tribune and the Venice Gondolier Sun to catch up on news with your morning coffee, in addition to checking the TV and internet. Articles, editorials and other Letters to the Editor may inspire you to write your own!

Kindra Muntz, *Chair, Justice Action, UU Congregation of Venice*
<https://uucof.org/home/social-justice/justice-action>

shOUT



Steve Doublestein is stepping down as shOUT committee chair. We are grateful for all his hard work over the past 3 years. Thank you, Steve! The committee is in need of a chairperson to guide it in the future. If you are willing to step up, please contact Social Justice team leader Barbara Buehring at or 941-445-4115.

Community Outreach

Backpack Kids continues to be on hiatus during social isolation.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

Comments, questions, concerns, musings - all welcome. 325 word maximum. Send yours to .

Publication Deadlines

Connection: Articles and announcements for the *Connection* are due on the 20th of each month for the next month's edition. Please email your submissions to .

UUCOV Happenings: Events submissions are due at Thursday 9:00am for inclusion in *UUCOV Happenings*. Please email your submissions to .

UUCOV Mission and Covenant

A welcoming, caring congregation encouraging spiritual growth, seeking meaning and pursuing justice.

In a climate of joy, goodwill and trust this congregation covenants

UU Principles

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

- to treat one another with kindness and respect,
 - to listen with openness and acceptance,
 - to support and protect the environment of which we are all a part,
 - to solve problems responsibly as we grow and change,
 - to encourage learning and nurture the growth of diverse human spirits, and
 - to dedicate time, talent and resources in an effort to make a difference in local and world communities.
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
 - A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
 - The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
 - The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
 - Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

In the spirit of our free religious heritage, we promise these to one another.

UU Sources

The Living Tradition we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

If you do not wish to receive the *Connection*, please [click here](#) to unsubscribe.