

# Guide for Congregational Comments on an SOC/CSAI



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

A d v o c a c y   a n d   W i t n e s s   P r o g r a m s

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1. Comments must be congregationally authorized—The most common way to prepare comments authorized by the congregation is to request that the congregation's Board of Trustees authorize a committee or group to gather and prepare comments on behalf of the congregation. If a UUA District submits comments, the District Board may authorize a group to prepare comments.
2. Comments will ideally reflect a group's consensus and not be those of one person—A congregation or District may submit only one set of comments. Those comments should reflect the group opinion of those in the congregation or district interested in the topic and process. Comments may also be obtained from a congregational meeting, or from a post-sermon discussion, authorized by the Board.
3. Ways to collect information for comments—There are different ways to collect comments and different tactics in doing so. Read through the following scenarios and pick one that may be right for you and your community. Feel free to pick and choose techniques as you see fit. All comments should be submitted through the Congregational Login.

## *Scenario 1 – The Lone Activist*

In the small UU fellowship of Smallville, not much has been done to work on the CSAI on Peacemaking. Some attempts to get a study group together did not create much concrete action. But conversations surrounding current events in the Middle East, Africa and a nearby shooting have kept peace and violence in the forefront of people's minds. One dedicated activist has decided to work with the chair of the Denominational Affairs Committee to give feedback on the Revised Draft SOC. The Committee obtains approval from its Board of Trustees to prepare the comments. The member has decided to put a table up during coffee hour and has a series of conversations with people about the issue of peace. She then compares her discussions to what is written in the rough draft and works with the Committee and the fellowship's minister to discern what the congregational feedback should look like.

## *Scenario 2- The Empowered Committee*

In the large community of All Souls Church of Metropolis, the Board empowered a group of concerned members to create a Peacemaking Study Group. This study group has worked closely with the Social Action Council to host a book club, a very popular monthly movie night, and several very good conversations on the topic of peace. After a year of working on the subject of peace, the Board of Trustees authorizes the Study Group to draft comments on the Draft SOC. They hold meetings, write a response to the document, and submit their comments.

## *Scenario 3- The Congregational Meeting*

The minister of the mid-sized congregation of First Church of Suburbia has given several sermons over the past year on peacemaking. Her sermons have inspired several congregants to hold sparsely attended but lively conversations on peacemaking. The congregation has also participated in many anti-war vigils and protests and is active with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity. After a service about peace, a congregational meeting is held where the minister and Board President host a conversation about the rough draft. The rough draft is handed out and people discuss the different parts of the document. Breakout groups on selected themes are made for the afternoon and a spokesperson for each group gives their responses. Feedback is collected and submitted to the UUA.