

## Recommended Reading for UU International Engagement

Henry, Richard. Norbert Fabian Capek: A Spiritual Journey. Boston: Skinner House, 1999.

International Partnership Handbook. Bedford, MA: UU Partner Church Council, 2006.

Kedei, Mozes, ed. Confessions about Ourselves. Szekelyudvarhely, RO: Infopress, 1997.

Keyes, David. Most Like an Arch. Chico, CA: Center for Free Religion, 1999.

Lavan, Spencer. Unitarians and India. Boston: Skinner House, 1977.

Morgan, Christine Frederiksen Balazs. Alabaster Village: Our Years in Transylvania. Boston: Skinner House, 1997.

Muir, F. John. Maglipay Universalist: A History of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines. Annapolis, MD, 2001.

Pandit, Vivek. Fearless Minds: Rights based approach to Organising and Advocacy. Pune, India: National Centre for Advocacy Studies, 2000.

Reed, Rev. Clifford and Rev. Jill McAllister, eds. The Home We Share: Globalization, Post-Modernism and Unitarian/Universalist Theology – Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ICUU Theological Symposium, Kolozsvár, Romania, July 3-8, 2006. Caerphilly, Wales: International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, 2007.

Sommer, John. Empowering the Oppressed: Grassroots Advocacy Movements in India. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001.

# The Sixth Principle

**We, the Member Congregations of the Unitarian  
Universalist Association Covenant to  
Affirm and Promote:**

*The Goal of World Community  
With Peace, Liberty,  
and Justice for All.*

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**[www.uua.org/fwb](http://www.uua.org/fwb)**

## I. Introduction:

The *Faith Without Borders* program is designed to assist congregations in creating and sustaining effective international engagement ministries. The International Resources Office hopes that this program will provide a useful framework for all congregations, including those that are already deeply engaged in international programs, those who are only beginning to develop a vision of international ministry, and those anywhere on the spectrum between.

*Faith Without Borders* invites congregations to design their international engagement holistically and faithfully. The program's operating premise is that international engagement is a key mission of every UU congregation, that it can be supported by the entire congregation, and that a commitment to it can take place in every aspect of the congregation's life. And, it asks that congregations consider the multitude of ways it can express its commitment to faithful global citizenship in seven areas:

### 1. Spiritual Support

Congregations provide spiritual support by including people around the world in their spiritual practices. During worship, in meditation, through prayer, singing, preaching, and in many other ways, UU congregations can extend themselves, spiritually, to brothers and sisters around the world.

### 2. Education

Learning about the lives and experiences of people around the world, developing understanding of complex global issues, and studying methods of effective international engagement are a few of the ways that we can provide educational opportunities. Opportunities exist for multi-generational learning.

### UU Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF)

CLF's mission is to provide a ministry to isolated religious liberals, and to offer a spiritual home within the Unitarian Universalist movement. The Church of the Larger Fellowship promotes the understanding and growth of Unitarian Universalism and institutes programs to that end.

The Church of the Larger Fellowship offers "[CLF International](#)" to small and start-up Unitarian and UU groups outside the United States and Canada. These resources can help international U/Us to:

- Plan and present effective and meaningful worship services.
- Offer easy-to-teach religious education programs.
- Provide easy-to-prepare study programs to expand opportunities for adults to interact.

### Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME)

UUJME is an organization of concerned UUs working for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel, including a settlement affirming the equality, dignity and freedom of all people involved.

### Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC)

The UU Partner Church Council fosters and supports partner church relations between almost two hundred North American congregations and congregations in all other countries. These partnerships provide a personal and immediate way for congregations to be involved at the grassroots level with international work.

### Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies.

### Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU-UNO)

The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office promotes the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all, as reflected in the United Nations Charter. Through targeted education, advocacy and outreach, we engage Unitarian Universalists in support of international cooperation and the work of the United Nations.

## International U/U Organizations

### **International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU)**

Organized in 1995, the ICUU seeks to strengthen the worldwide network of Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations. The ICUU has member groups on five continents, and is growing around the world. The ICUU website - [www.icuu.net](http://www.icuu.net) - includes listings of member organizations from around the world.

### **Los Unitarios Universalistas** - [www.uuhispano.net](http://www.uuhispano.net)

A Spanish language online UU resource . Includes contact information for Spanish speaking congregations in Argentina, Spain, and California.

### **Project Harvest Hope (PHH)**

Project Harvest Hope provides assistance for sustainable rural development and supports efforts to strengthen civil society in the Szekelyfold region of Romania. PHH is working to protect the Unitarian homelands by creating regional, interfaith and interethnic alliances.

### **Sponsor-A-Student (SAS)**

Our mission is to assist the Education Committee of the Unitarian Union of North East India in running their program to build schools and provide education in areas that are lacking alternatives. While we are doing this, we build relationships one person at a time. Our children are sent encouraging letters by their sponsors, and the sponsors receive correspondence and photos in response. We aim for dignity and respect and mutual learning.

### **UUA Holdeen India Program (UUHIP)**

UUHIP works with organizations of India's most excluded and oppressed peoples: women; dalits, so-called "untouchables" who fall outside the caste system; and the adivasis or tribals who are India's indigenous peoples, especially migrant, bonded and landless agricultural laborers. UUHIP supports their efforts to participate fully in the social, economic and political life of India. Through the Holdeen India Program the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) works to stop human trafficking by empowering some of the worlds' most vulnerable persons.

### **Unitarian Universalist Global AIDS Coalition (UUGAC)**

UUGAC employs Education, Advocacy and Grassroots efforts to address the global AIDS epidemic and the people who are effected by it. Please visit their website - [www.uuglobalaids.org](http://www.uuglobalaids.org) if you'd like to receive their newsletter and action alerts.

### **3. Justice-making and Advocacy**

When an international injustice has been identified, and a congregation exerts its power to bring it to an end, it is engaging in Justice-making and Advocacy. Often this is done successfully through secular or interfaith coalitions. Sometimes it involves participating with an organization that has already developed an action plan. Examples can range from participating in lobby days and letter writing campaigns to providing labor for home construction ala *Habitat for Humanity International*.

### **4. Partnership**

There are many types of international partnerships, but *Faith Without Borders* uses the term in the specific sense of a church-to-church partnership modeled upon the UU Partner Church Council – or similar – methodology.

### **5. Faithful Stewardship**

This category includes all of the financial support that a congregation provides to international engagement: support for an international organization, for an international partnership, for an international program, or for the entirety of a congregation's international engagement.

### **6. Pilgrimage and Witness**

This includes all varieties of sacred travel by members of a congregation to visit a partner church, organization, or justice project in another part of the world.

### **7. Associational Leadership**

Congregations that have developed and support leaders who share the blessings of commitment to international engagement with U/U institutions and other congregations are engaging in associational leadership.

## II. Underpinnings

If your congregation is like most UU congregations it's probably already involved with projects that fit into each of the *Faith Without Borders* program areas. And, like most UU congregations, yours probably thinks of each of these as very distinct projects.

***But... All of these projects are related. They are all within the realm of "Sixth Principle" ministry.***

And, from that viewpoint:

- They can be designed together strategically.
- They can build upon each other.
- Commitment to them can grow.
- The light they create can SO shine.

While "Faith Without Borders" is a useful resource on its own, there are two other key resources that congregations can benefit from integrating with it.

- The first is "**Faithful Engagement: How UU Congregations Meet the World**". This is an adaptable workshop provided by the International Resources Office that can include as many as four parts:
  - ◇ A comprehensive overview of the history of Unitarian and Universalist International Engagement.
  - ◇ An invitation and methodology for theological reflection about international engagement.
  - ◇ Descriptions of successful examples of UU congregational international engagement.
  - ◇ A strategic planning model for congregational international engagement

## Participation Form:

**Date:**

**Church Name:**

**Church Address:**

**Church Telephone Number:**

**Church Email Address:**

**Minister:**

**Minister's Email Address:**

**Contact Person:**

**Contact Person's Email Address:**

**The Director of International Resources will contact you within a week of receiving this information to discuss the congregation's commitments and goals and to describe the support that the International Office can provide.**

**If you have questions about the program, please contact the International Resources Office at the UUA:  
774-948-6412 or [international@uua.org](mailto:international@uua.org)**

**Thank you for participating in the  
*Faith Without Borders* program.**

**Congregational Goals for International Engagement**

In each of the ministry areas, please describe a goal to grow into over the next three years, and prioritize the order in which your congregation plans to implement these growth areas.

Program Area	Goal	Order of Priority
Spiritual Support		
Education		
Justice and Advocacy		
Partnership		
Faithful Stewardship		
Pilgrimage and Witness		
Associational Leadership		

- The second is a simple statement of five recommendations of best practices for international engagement in the context of a UU congregation:

- 1. Our international engagement must emerge from a place of deep humility and intentionally seek relationships based on equality and mutuality.**
- 2. Our international engagement is most effective when it comprehends the abundance and variety of resources our congregations and international partners already have.**
- 3. Our international engagement is most transformative when it is grounded in faithful reflection, including integration of the history of our international engagement.**
- 4. Our international engagement is truest to our highest values when it responds with wisdom and passion to institutional oppression and injustice.**
- 5. The UU universe of international programs is incredibly diverse and highly decentralized. Our international engagement is most comprehensive when we understand and utilize partner organizations well.**

### **III. Why Faith Without Borders An Illustration of Purpose:**

***The International Resources Office invites congregations to envision their international engagement in an holistic and integrated way.***

**Congregation A: *The UU Church of Sparkling Ideas*** has held an annual UU-UNO Sunday for 20 years, but somehow every year, just a week after the service is over, it feels as though it never happened. Last year the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday School class learned about Unitarians and Universalists in various parts of the world, but most of their parents are still unaware of what they were taught. A member of the youth group heard about a Habitat for Humanity program in Guatemala that they could participate in, but didn't mention it because the travel costs seemed prohibitive. About 10 years ago a partnership with a Unitarian church in Transylvania was pursued, but when the two people with the initial enthusiasm moved away the partnership languished. A new member of the congregation saw an article in the UU World about the UUA's Holdeen India Program which sparked great interest, but there didn't seem to be a way to share that interest with others. Besides, its time for the annual stewardship drive and everyone thinks the church will need to slash its budget.

**Congregation B: *First Church of the Courageous*** also has a history of international engagement. They have an annual UUSC Sunday and the Sunday School participates in the UUSC Guest at Your Table Program. An adult educational opportunity based on Huston Smith's "The Religions of the World" was offered a couple years ago. And, they had a guest speaker from the American Anti-Slavery Society offer a lecture in recent memory. Like the *Church of Sparkling Ideas*, they have a partner church in Transylvania, but there hasn't been much communication – or anything else –happening in that relationship. There have been other notable forays into international engagement, but its all been kind of hit-or-miss, lacking in depth and commitment.

### **6. Pilgrimage and Witness**

- Our congregation plans a pilgrimage to its partner church or other sacred place
  - Biennially
  - Annually
- Our congregation visits a justice project in another country, studies its goals and methods, and shares them widely.
  - Biennially
  - Annually
- Our congregation provides an effective witnessing presence to a justice project in another country.
  - Biennially
  - Annually
- Our congregation provides financial assistance for the costs of these pilgrimages.
- The congregation supports a pilgrimage or witness trip by members of its Youth Group
- Our congregation invites a U/U colleague or a colleague in justice work from another country for a faithful and constructive visit.
  - Biennially
  - Annually

Other:

### **7. Associational Leadership**

- Our congregation is involved in the institutional structure and development of an international U/U organization.
- Our congregation spreads the word about the transformation it has experienced from its international engagement by visiting other congregations or gatherings and telling its story.
- Our congregation is a mentor to other congregations.
  - Will consider becoming a mentor.
- Our congregation serves as a voice for the international responsibility of UU congregations and the UUA.

Other:

#### 4. Partnership

- Members of the congregation have read the UUPCC's partnership manual and subscribe to its newsletter and other communications tools.
- Our congregation understands the transformative nature of church-to-church international partnership.
- Our congregation has established an international partnership through the UUPCC.
- Our congregation's international partnership is guided by a written covenant.
- Our congregation follows the "best practices" in partnership designed by the UUPCC, i.e.
  - Remembers its partnership often during worship
  - Promotes clear and common communication between partners.
  - Employs "Economic Fairness" guidelines
  - Visits between the congregations occur regularly.
  - The partnership envisions a community capacity building or similar project.

Other:

#### 5. Faithful Stewardship

- Our congregation financially supports at least one international UU organization (UUSC, UU-UNO, UUHIP, UUPCC, etc.)
- Our congregation provides ongoing financial support to a second international UU organization.
- Our congregation contributes to the ministry of a global U/U congregation.
- Our congregation provides ongoing financial support to an interfaith international organization.
- Our congregation fully funds its international engagement ministries
- Our congregation visions and implements 10% of its annual budget for international engagement.

Other:

#### ***Then Something Happened!***

During a sermon series on the UUA's principles, a layperson talked about the Sixth Principle which says, "We covenant to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace liberty and justice for all." And during a discussion over coffee after that service a group of people decided they did have an international vision, and a thirst to be effectively internationally engaged. They wanted to help their church identify itself as a part of the global community, they wanted to help their church embrace UUism as a *Faith Without Borders*.

So, they got a task force together to find out all that they could about resources that are available. They looked at different varieties of international engagement. They thought critically about what they had been doing in the past, ie. what was effective, what was less so, and why. Then they began to envision a strategic plan. A strategic plan that involved worship, religious education, social justice, stewardship, social activities, and plenty of other aspects of congregational life. They decided that they didn't want to offer one more event, but, rather, to be initiators of a transformation of their congregation. They quickly brought other congregational leaders and staff into the conversation. They used a variety of tools to build major momentum and commitment, of a sort that the congregation hadn't seen in more than a decade. When the stewardship drive kicked into gear, the international vision received billing as one of the congregation's major priorities, and not surprisingly, generous support followed as more and more people came to understand what it means to embody our Sixth Principle.

***If this kind of transformation is in your congregation's interest, the Faith Without Borders program can help!***

#### IV. Implementing *Faith Without Borders*

In each of the program areas below mark projects that your congregation is already engaging in, and write in others that aren't included in the list.

##### ***Expressions of International Engagement***

###### **1. Spiritual Support**

- We include a global chalice lighting during worship once a month (or more often).
- We employ an international theme in worship 4 times per year.
- We often include specific groups of people from all over the globe in our thoughts and prayers.
- We sing hymns with international themes/lyrics/tunes.
- We celebrate international engagement accomplishments during worship.
- 25% of our congregation understands the theological basis of our international engagement.
  - 50%
  - 100%
- During nearly every worship service the international commitment of our congregation is expressed.

Other:

###### **2. Education**

- At least one Adult RE opportunity each year involves a *Sixth Principle* theme.
- Multi-generational curricula designed by ICUU, UUPCC and other international U/U organizations are regularly used.
- Our newsletter and website regularly include information about our congregation's international engagement and other issues of faithful global citizenship.
- We've offered the "Faithful Engagement: How UU congregations Meet the World" workshop.
- We've included selections from the "Faith without Borders" bibliography in our book/film/covenant group programming.
- We subscribe to and share information from newsletters and

listservs of UU groups like the UU-UNO, the UUSC, the UUPCC, Project Harvest Hope, etc.

- We participate in educational opportunities offered by the UUA's International Resources Office.
- The congregation annually hosts a speaker/workshop from a UU international organization.

Other:

###### **3. Justice-making and Advocacy**

- Our congregation's social justice program includes an international focus.
- Our congregation offers letter writing opportunities on global issues at least twice per year.
- Our Congregation organizes congregational responses to "Action Alerts"/Online petitions on global issues.
- Our congregation has selected a specific international advocacy issue to focus on for 12 months. It tracks its progress carefully and engages in it strategically.
- Our congregation has an active general liaison relationship with the UU-UNO and/or the UUSC.
- Our congregation partners with the UUSC, the UUGAC, UJME, UU-UNO or another international U/U organization on a specific matter of international justice.
- Our congregation has studied and implemented "Best Practices" for international engagement.
- Our congregation has studied the work of the UU Holdeen India Program partners, and seeks to develop a relationship with UUHIP.
- Our congregation's international ministries are designed with "accountability" and "mutuality" as guiding principles.
- Our congregation participates in the UUA's Statement of Conscience process from an intentionally *Sixth Principle* perspective.
- In coalition with area UU's and other religious people our congregation organizes an annual lobby day on a specific international advocacy issue.

Other: