

# **Ethics and Professional Practice for the Church Musician Syllabus**

**1<sup>st</sup> session** – 3 ½ hours

## **Goals for this program:**

1. Introduce candidates to basics of ethics and morality
2. Relate UU Principles to ethics and morality
3. Develop a full understanding of moral decision-making
4. Explore the implications of the UUMN Code of Professional Practice for UU musicians
5. Examine practical situations through case studies of values

## **I. Introduction and Foundation**

- A. Definitions
  - a. Ethics
  - b. Morality
  - c. Values
  - d. Principles
  - e. Norms
- B. Gestalts of ethics
  - a. Teleological
  - b. Ontological
  - c. Situational
  - d. Intuitional
- C. Moral Decision-Making
  - a. Recognition of issues
  - b. Process
  - c. Case studies

## **II. Our Unitarian Universalist Values**

- A. UU Purposes and Principles
  - a. History
  - b. Foundational values
- B. UUMN Code of Professional Practice
  - a. History
  - b. Basic values
  - c. Case studies  
(see below)

## Case Studies for Ethics for UU Musicians

1. A music director has been actively developing a program in a medium sized congregation for over ten years. He prefers to serve as a volunteer, refusing a salary, formal job description, and work agreement, but he manages a large budget and has created an avid following among many of the choir members. He also has often set up certain singers for humiliation in performance settings and sexually harassed women in the choir. The new minister has helped several of the women to confront him on his behavior, but he consistently seems unable to understand the problems with his behavior. What should be done? Who should do it? What could the consequences be? How can this be handled for the best results for the entire congregation?
2. A music director has a volunteer assistant who manages the music library, keeps track of robes and folders, keeps all the financial records of music bought, special musicians hired, and incidental expenses. Over the years it becomes clear that the books are not balancing. Who is responsible? What are the resources for the music director to determine what has happened? How can this be handled?

## Post-Course Assignments

- A. A reflection paper (5 – 10 pages, double spaced) indicating how your thinking about ethics and morality in general has changed as a function of this class.
- B. A reflection paper (same size) indicating how your response to a specific situation in your professional work as a UU church musician would change as a function of this class.

To be sent by **9/15/08** to: Gretchen Woods  
revgwoods@comcast.net  
or  
2245 NW Hazel Ave.  
Corvallis, Oregon  
97330

## Self-Care for UU Musicians

2<sup>rd</sup> session – 1 & 1/4 hours within conference

### I. Self-Care for UU Musicians

- A. Brief review of ethics – see above
- B. Assuring that personal needs are met:
  - 1. relational
  - 2. practical
  - 3. creative
- C. Practical aspects for self-care: dyads and role playing
  - 1. know the system
  - 2. stay connected: “defect in place”
  - 3. be clear about mission/vision/values
- D. Clarification of new process for adjudication

### II. Case Studies:

- 1. UU Musician finds herself overwhelmed by the conflicting demands of the position as expected by the congregation, but has no real job description or work agreement, as everything to date has been done by “hand-shake.” What are her options for clearing up this problem? Where are her resources? How can she assist others in similar situations?
- 2. UU musician who has been serving in the same congregation for twenty years and is well-liked by his congregation, finds that the new minister seems upset by music choices, uncomfortable with his power in the congregation, and unwilling to continue to support the music program as it has been in the past. How can the musician develop a better working relationship with the minister? What are his resources? How can he assist others in similar situations?

## Basic Definitions

**Ethics:** *n.pl.* the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment

**Morality:** *n.* the character of being in accord with the principles or standards of right conduct; right conduct

**Value:** *n.* that quality of a thing according to which it is thought of being more or less desirable, useful, estimable, important

**Principle:** *n.* a fundamental truth, law doctrine, or motivating force, upon which others are based; a rule of conduct.

**Norm:** *n.* a standard, model, or pattern for a group

### **Gestalts of ethics**

**Teleological:** relating to final causes; relating to ultimate purpose

**Ontological:** relating to the branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of reality or being

**Situational:** relating to the manner in which a thing is in relation to its surroundings; of the position or condition with regard to circumstances

**Intuitional:** of or relating to the immediate knowing or learning of something without the conscious use of reasoning; instantaneous apprehension

### **Moral Decision-Making Process**

**1. What is the problem – Really?**

**2. Whose problem is it – Really?**

**3. What are the options – many?**

**4. What are the consequences of the options?**

**5. How do the values I hold most dear relate to the options and the consequences?**

**6. Decide: cut away**

**7. Act**

**8. Evaluate – may take you back to 3,4, & 5  
Readings**

**Hand-outs from above**

**The Code of Professional Practice: at [uumn.org](http://uumn.org)**

***Ethics: An Exploration in Personal Morality*  
by Richard S. Gilbert  
can be found at [UUABookstore@uua.org](mailto:UUABookstore@uua.org)  
1.800.215.9076**

***Things They Never Tell You Before You Say Yes:  
The Non Musical Tasks of the Church Musician*  
By Robin Knowles Wallace  
1994, Abingdon Press  
Available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)**

**Care and Ethics for UU Musicians:  
Evaluation - 2008**

**Instructors: Kenneth Herman and Gretchen Woods**

**I learned these basic foundations of ethics:**

**I have a better grasp of these ethical ways of thinking:**

**The role plays gave me these insights about my own practices/needs:**

**I feel better equipped for the ministry of music in UU setting because:**

**I would have liked more of this:**

**I would have liked less of this:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_