**PLUS: Professional Learning Units for Staff**

Nurturing new staff into well-equipped, spirit-filled professionals who serve and lead in right relationship with colleagues and congregation



**PLUS 3: Unitarian Universalism**

Our faith has a rich history, and historical themes shape your congregation today! This unit connects you with a few over-arching themes and key figures from our heritage. ([History of Unitarian Universalism](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/history), on the UUA website, contains lots of links to further info.)

**Read**

* Read [Themes in North American Unitarian Universalist History](http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/newuu/workshop2/160263.shtml) (from the Tapestry of Faith adult curriculum “The New UU,” workshop 2. This reading will help you answer questions 1 through 6.
* Read the text of the pamphlet, [The Flaming Chalice](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/chalice/flaming-chalice). (For question 7.)

**For Your Journal**

*Your journal is just for you. You can type it. You can scribble it. You can use complete sentences or quick phrases. Responses need not be lengthy. You can type or write directly onto this document or in a spiral notebook. Writing something down for each question forces you to clarify your thoughts, helps you remember your ideas, and gives you something to return to later.*

1. In what year did the Unitarians and Universalists consolidate?
2. The terms “Unitarian” and “Universalist” both derive from tenets of Christianity that were being rejected. Explain the origin of each term, based on how they deviated from Christian doctrine.
3. In your congregation today, what can you point to that is an outgrowth of our history of **Noncreedalism?**
4. In your congregation today, what can you point to that is a direct extension of our historical philosophy of **Ongoing Revelation?**
5. In your congregation today, what do you see that stems from our historical interest in the **Power of Nature?**
6. How does your congregation seek to build the **Beloved Community** in this world?
7. Does your congregation light a chalice at the beginning of worship? Are there standard words spoken when the chalice is lit? What values to these words stand for? Do these values relate to the story of the origins of the flaming chalice as the symbol for Unitarian Universalism?

*For the final question (see next page), you should be able to find the answers online easily.*

1. Match the descriptors on the left with the people on the right.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Founder of Universalism in the United States | William Ellery Channing |
| First woman ordained by the Universalists | Sophia Lyon Fahs |
| Religious educator who influenced 20th century curricula | Carolyn McDade |
| Folk musician and environmental activist | James Reeb |
| Minister and civil rights activist murdered in Selma | John Murray |
| First African-American UUA President | William Sinkford |
| Preacher of the sermon “Unitarian Christianity” | Olympia Brown |
| Composer of the hymn “Spirit of Life” | Pete Seeger |