



Faithfully Finding Balance Reaching In, Reaching Out

General Assembly 2023
Congregational Life Smaller Congregations Team

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Why This Topic Matters

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Out-Reach can reduce conflict!



- A focus on helping others can take the focus away from historic internal squabbles and infuse good feelings into the group.

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UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION

In-Reach and Out-Reach

Rev. Sarah Schurr & Rev Phil Lund

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In-Reach and Out-Reach



- In-reach = coming together to enhance our lives.
 - Making friends, feeling cared for, healing after Covid times, nurture each other, building community

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In-Reach and Out-Reach



- Out-reach = Coming together to transform our lives.
 - Doing things together the give our lives meaning
 - We serve the changed and changing world

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Be Intentional

“Connection doesn’t happen on its own.
You have to design your gatherings for the
kinds of connections you want to create.”

PRIYA PARKER, *The Art of Gathering*

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Potlucks Are Back!



Make sure to have a
variety of dishes

- vegan
- vegetarian
- gluten-free

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Soup's On



- Have a couple of different soups
- Make sure one is vegan and gluten free
- Stone Soup!

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Picnics

- Reserve a spot at a local park
- Late summer "Homecoming"
- Include folks virtually



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Visits

- Meet at the church & divide into groups of two or three
- Carpool to care facilities
- Make it intergenerational
Get families involved



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Talent Shows & Coffee Houses



- Music
- Spoken word
- Comedy
- Intergenerational

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Community Garden



- On church property if you have space
- Shared garden space
- Give produce to food pantry
- Great for families

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Workshops

- Make chalices
- UU prayer beads
- Special invitation to families



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Auctions, Bazaars, Bake Sales

- Have virtual element for those who can't attend
- Make it intergenerational
- Have entertainment
- Pair with soup supper



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Forms of Out-Reach

- Ways to help a hurting world and live into our deeper mission.
- Letting people know what we believe.
 - Take part in a local beach or road clean-up
 - Offer programs about White Supremacy Culture

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and

- Open OWL classes to the community
- Invite guests to your Family Friendly Holiday events
- Wear your congregation T-shirt when doing service projects
- Sponsoring a booth at the local pride event

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Food bank examples – Going Big

- First Unitarian of LA in partnership with Urban Partners LA
- Provides food to thousands of people each year



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Food bank - small but mighty

- Olympic UU in Port Angeles Washington
- Dry goods and fresh produce
- All maintained by church members



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The People's Supper



- Program used by Eboo Patel where people from different identities and communities have structured dinners together to build connection.

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The good this does!

- Yes, it helps make the world better
- Yes, it helps get the word out about UU values
- Yes, It helps members feel like they are living lives of meaning
- Yes, it is a great teaching tool for raising children who value being of service

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Worry about conflict

- Fears about choosing outreach work that everyone supports
- Concerns about “taking sides” on civic issues
- Pet projects of individual members



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Our Mission as a Congregation

- Why do we exist?
- What do we want to be known for?
- What are we proud of?



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Visitors are Looking For:

- Ways for them (and their kids!) to re-connect with others in real time
- Meaning making in a confusing and dangerous world
- The sacred and holy, moments of awe
- Community
- A way to serve the greater good and make a difference.

Help them find these things!

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You Can Do This! (But not perfectly)

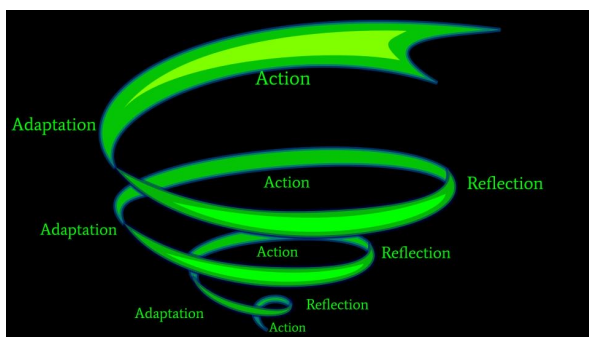
Rev. Erica Baron

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Action – Reflection – Adaptation



- Try a thing
- Reflect on how it went
- Tweak it (or overhaul it, or decide to let it go)
- Try again
- Reflect on that...

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Outreach Using UU Networks and Resources

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State Advocacy Networks



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Our Whole Lives Programming

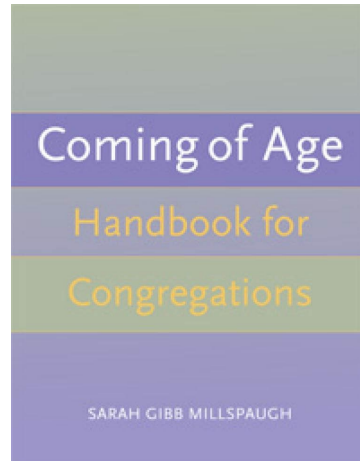


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Joint Programming



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Gatherings



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The Virtually Savvy Church: Inside and Out

The Rev. Byron Tyler Coles

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Websites & Social Media: A Front Door



- Inviting
- Informative
- Inspirational

– Brady Shearer, Creator of Pro Church Tools

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Multi-Platform Worship



- Each congregation has unique wants, needs, and desires for worship.
- *Ask:* What is the most pertinent for our communities' worship experience?

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Multi-Platform, Multi-Generational Communities



- The use of technology creates opportunities to connect in faith and grow in community
- Ex: Religious Education and Community Building

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Be Creative and Open to Transformation In the Process

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