

Having Another Look at the Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes



A Note to Congregations

Article XV of the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association mandates a periodic review of Article II, our Principles and Purposes. In 2006, at the request of the Board of Trustees, the UUA's Commission on Appraisal agreed to launch this review. The Commission invites Unitarian Universalist congregations to participate in the process, and this packet offers materials for several ways to do this:

- a three-hour workshop (pages 2-6)
- a three-session review (page 7-14)
- a program for youth (pages 15-19)
- a program for children (pages 20-22)
- a form for follow-up messages to the Commission (pages 27-28)

However your congregation chooses to participate, we hope you will find the process thought-provoking. We hope you will make interesting discoveries about the Principles and Purposes, about Unitarian Universalism, and about yourselves as a local congregation and as individual Unitarian Universalists. For those congregations or individuals who may wish to learn more about the Principles and Purposes, their history, and their place in our tradition, we have provided a reading list for further study (see Appendix 3, page 26). We look forward to receiving your follow-up messages.

Best wishes to you all,

The UUA Commission on Appraisal

Rev. Orlanda Brugnola
Dr. James Casebolt, Chair
Rev. Barbara Child
Dr. Mark Hamilton
Rev. Manish Mishra

Mr. Michael Ohlrogge
Rev. Tom Owen-Towle
Rev. Linda Weaver Horton
Ms. Jacqui Williams

January 2007

Program Guide for a Three-Hour Workshop

Ingathering

Chalice lighting – words from Charles A. Howe

We light this chalice to affirm—

That new light is ever waiting to break through to enlighten our ways;
That new truth is ever waiting to break through to illumine our minds;
And that new love is ever waiting to break through to warm our hearts.

Questions for becoming present to each other and this gathering here and now (If the group is small enough, have people seated in a circle, and invite them to go around the circle to give very brief answers. If the group is too large for this, have them answer in pairs.)

- What is one thing that drew you to attend this workshop?
- How long have you been coming here? Are you a member? What keeps you involved in this congregation?
- The chalice-lighting words spoke of possibilities here for enlightening our ways, illuminating our minds, and warming our hearts. Just for this moment, which particularly appeals to you?

Introduction to the Commission on Appraisal and its Review of the Principles & Purposes

(You might want to read the following words to the group, or you might prefer to summarize in your own words.)

The UUA Commission on Appraisal has its roots in the Great Depression, a time when Unitarians as well as many others were struggling with how to make a better life than they were then living. The Unitarian study group that formed to grapple with the hard questions of the time produced a transformative report entitled *Unitarians Face a New Age*.

From that time to this, Unitarians, Universalists, and Unitarian Universalists have been people who are not satisfied to accept a prescribed dogma regarding either beliefs or practices. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Commission on Appraisal, based on that early study group or “think tank,” is provided for in the UUA Bylaws, Article V, Section 5.8, which reads as follows:

The Commission on Appraisal shall consist of nine elected members. A member shall not during the term of office serve as a trustee or officer or hold a salaried position in the Association. The Commission on Appraisal shall:

- (a) review any function or activity of the Association which in its judgment will benefit from an independent review and report its conclusions to a regular General Assembly;

(b) study and suggest approaches to issues which may be of concern to the Association; and

(c) report to a regular General Assembly at least once every four years on the program and accomplishments of the Association.

Thus the Commission is constantly engaged in the search for deeper meanings and better practices in Unitarian Universalist life. Having been elected by the congregational delegates at General Assembly, the members of the Commission are accountable to the Assembly, not to the Board of Trustees or any other individual or body.

Based on the Commission's findings during its most recent study, *Engaging Our Theological Diversity*, it was already considering undertaking a deeper study of Article II, which contains the Principles and Purposes, when the Board of Trustees requested it undertake the review of Article II in its entirety that is mandated by Article XV, Section C-15.1(c)(4) of the UUA Bylaws.

In accord with that section, any proposals to amend Article II that would result from the present review will go to a General Assembly for preliminary approval by a majority vote; if approved, the proposed amendments will then go before the following year's General Assembly where they will require a two-thirds vote for final adoption.

During the present review, the Commission seeks not to invite Unitarian Universalists across the land to participate in an opinion poll but instead to engage thoughtfully in a process intended to bring forth people's best discernment. In this effort, the Commission seeks the participation of both promoters and critics of the current text of Article II. By inviting you to participate, the Commission hopes not just to get data from you but also to have the process itself enable something valuable to happen for you.

An Opportunity for Appreciative Inquiry

- This activity makes use of the following questions:
 - 1 Tell about a time in your Unitarian Universalist experience when you felt fully alive.
 - 2 What are your aspirations for yourself as a Unitarian Universalist, your congregation, and Unitarian Universalism?
 - 3 What do you value about the UU Principles?
- Before the workshop, arrange to have the questions above available in writing for participants.
 - You might have the questions printed at the top of 5 x 8 index cards, one question per card, with each participant to receive a set of the three cards. If you are interested to have the responses transcribed later for further use in your

congregation, it is helpful to color-code the cards, with a different color for each question.

- You might have the questions printed on sheets of 8 ½ x 11 paper. This method will be convenient for note takers only if participants are seated at a table or otherwise have available a hard writing surface. If both sides of the paper are used, this method will not accommodate having three different transcribers later transcribe responses, each one taking a separate question.
 - If you are not interested to collect written responses for later use, you might have the questions posted on sheets of newsprint, one question per sheet. In any event, it is important not to expect the participants to carry out this activity without the questions before them in writing.
- Invite participants to find a partner for this activity. There will be additional benefit for them if they choose someone they do not already know, or at least do not know well. They should move their chairs so that they are a comfortable distance from each other and facing each other.
 - Explain that this activity is intended to invite them to engage in some soul-stretching and brain-stretching, and to have the experience of listening attentively to the thoughts and experiences of another. It is *not* a conversation. In other words, the process asks that one person interview another for twenty minutes. The interviewer asks the first written question out loud and then writes down notes on the interviewee's answers. The interviewer should refrain entirely from commenting on the answers or asking any questions about them (other than to ask for repeating an answer not heard or understood). The interviewer's written notes need not be verbatim but should capture the gist of the answers. Then the interviewer goes on to the second and third questions. At the end of twenty minutes, the facilitator invites the interview partners to exchange roles for another twenty minutes, using the same process.
 - Give everyone a copy of Article II of the UUA Bylaws (see Appendix 1).
 - Make sure everyone has the written questions in hand or in sight as well as a pen or pencil. Then invite the first interviewer to begin.
 - Give participants a signal after fifteen minutes that only five minutes remain in the first interview.
 - After twenty minutes, invite them to exchange roles.
 - Again, give a warning signal after fifteen minutes of the second interview.
 - After twenty minutes, invite them to conclude.

- Give the participants an opportunity to express out loud to the entire group what this experience was like for them. (Avoid questions that set people up for a “right” answer, such as “Did you like doing this?”)

An Opportunity for Conversation about the Rest of Article II

- Invite participants to take a moment to read over Article II.
- Invite discussion of as many of the following questions as time and the interests of the participants dictate.)

On Section C-2.1.Principles

- What does it mean to you that the Principles are expressed as a covenant among congregations to affirm and promote rather than statements of belief by individual members?
- What suggestions, if any, do you have regarding the Principles?
- Do you find the listed Sources to be drawn upon equally in the life of your congregation? If not, which get the most attention?
- What suggestions, if any, do you have regarding the Sources?
- The paragraph following the Sources says that we are grateful for religious pluralism. What does “religious pluralism” mean to you? What does it have to do with the Principles?
- What do you think Section C-2.1 on the Principles really asks of congregations? In general, do you think they live up to it? Does it matter?

On Section C-2.2.Purposes

- If you had not read this section, what might you have said are the purposes of the UUA?
- How completely does this section reflect your understanding? Your wishes?

On Section C-2.3.Non-discrimination

- How well do you think your congregation lives up to the special responsibility described in this section?

On Section C-2.4.Freedom of Belief

- This section together with the previous one explicitly presents Unitarian Universalism as non-creedal. How well do you think your congregation does in practice to make clear that congregants are not required to adhere to any particular religious interpretation or belief?

- Does your congregation have a written covenant or bond of union? If so, is it expressed in writing in your Sunday order of service or orally during the service? Does it appear regularly in your newsletter, on your website, or in other congregational publications? How would you distinguish it from a creed?
- What suggestions, if any, do you have regarding Sections C-2.2, 2.3, and 2.4?

Messages for the Commission on Appraisal

- Read to the group the Reporting Form for Messages to the Commission (Appendix 4).
- Determine who will complete the form and send it in.
- Go over the questions as a group to make sure the reporter knows what messages the group want conveyed to the Commission.

Closing

Questions for Rounds (One or more may suit your group.)

- What is one new thought or surprise that has come to you during this workshop?
- What is one question this workshop has caused you to want to think about some more?
- What is something from this workshop that you will carry away as a new treasure to go in your UU treasure chest?

Extinguishing the Chalice – words from Steve J. Crump

That which is worthy of doing, create with your hands.
 That which is worthy of repeating, speak with a clear voice.
 That which is worthy of remembering, hold in your heart.
 And that which is worthy of living, go and live it now.

Program Guide for a Three-Session Review

Session 1

Ingathering

Chalice lighting – words from Charles A. Howe

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Questions for becoming present to each other and this gathering here and now (If the group is small enough, have people seated in a circle, and invite them to go around the circle to give very brief answers. If the group is too large for this, have them answer in pairs.)

- What is one thing that drew you to attend this gathering?
- How long have you been coming here? Are you a member? What keeps you involved in this congregation?
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 - 2 What are your aspirations for yourself as a Unitarian Universalist, your congregation, and Unitarian Universalism?
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- You might have the questions printed at the top of 5 x 8 index cards, one question per card, with each participant to receive a set of the three cards. If you are interested to have the responses transcribed later for further use in your congregation, it is helpful to color-code the cards, with a different color for each question.
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- Invite participants to find a partner for this activity. There will be additional benefit for them if they choose someone they do not already know, or at least do not know well. They should move their chairs so that they are a comfortable distance from each other and facing each other.
 - Explain that this activity is intended to invite them to engage in some brain-stretching, and to have the experience of listening attentively to the thoughts and experiences of another. It is *not* a conversation. In other words, the process asks that one person interview another for twenty minutes. The interviewer asks the first written question out loud and then writes down notes on the interviewee's answers. The interviewer should refrain entirely from commenting on the answers or asking any questions about them (other than to ask for repeating an answer not heard or understood). The interviewer's written notes need not be verbatim but should capture the gist of the answers. Then the interviewer goes on to the second and third questions. At the end of twenty minutes, the facilitator invites the interview partners to exchange roles for another twenty minutes, using the same process.
 - Give everyone a copy of Article II of the UUA Bylaws (see Appendix 1).
 - Make sure everyone has the written questions in hand or in sight as well as a pen or pencil. Then invite the first interviewer to begin.
 - Give participants a signal after fifteen minutes that only five minutes remain in the first interview.
 - After twenty minutes, invite them to exchange roles.
 - Again, give a warning signal after fifteen minutes of the second interview.

- After twenty minutes, invite them to conclude.
- Give the participants an opportunity to express out loud to the entire group what this experience was like for them. (Avoid questions that set people up for a “right” answer, such as “Did you like doing this?”)

Putting the Principles in Context

Article II, Section C-2.1 of the UUA Bylaws expresses the Principles as a covenant among congregations to affirm and promote rather than statements of belief by individual members. Questions for discussion:

- What does it mean to you that the Principles are expressed as a covenant among congregations to affirm and promote rather than statements of belief by individual members?
- Do the Principles figure significantly in the life of your congregation? How are they used – in writing, orally – in practice
- What suggestions, if any, do you have regarding the Principles?
- What do you think Section C-2.1 on the Principles really asks of congregations? In general, do you think they live up to it? Does it matter?

Closing

Questions for Rounds (One or more may suit your group.)

- What is one new thought or surprise that has come to you during this workshop?
- What is one question this workshop has caused you to want to think about some more?
- What is something from this workshop that you will carry away as a new treasure to go in your UU treasure chest?

Extinguishing the Chalice – words from Steve J. Crump

That which is worthy of doing, create with your hands.
 That which is worthy of repeating, speak with a clear voice.
 That which is worthy of remembering, hold in your heart.
 And that which is worthy of living, go and live it now.

Session 2

Ingathering

Chalice lighting – words from Christine Robinson

We gather this hour as people of faith
 With joys and sorrows, gifts and needs.
 We light this beacon of hope,
 sign of our quest for truth and meaning,
 in celebration of the life we share together.

Questions for becoming present to each other and this gathering here and now

- What are you doing here at this gathering? Why did you come?
- What did you give up to be here?
- Christine Robinson calls the chalice a beacon of hope. Is the chalice of particular importance to you? If so, what does it represent for you? What is it like for you to have a chalice lit at the beginning of other gatherings in addition to Sunday services?

Setting the Stage

- Offer a brief summary of this gathering occurring in the context of the congregation's participation in the Commission on Appraisal's process of reviewing Article II of the UUA Bylaws, and in particular the Principles and Purposes.
- Remind everyone that this is the second of three sessions. The first session focused on the Principles. This session will focus on the Sources. The third will focus on Article II generally and what messages the group wishes to send to the Commission.
- Offer the opportunity to tie up any loose ends from Session 1 and say more about any lingering issues or concerns.
- Make sure everyone has in hand a copy of Article II (see Appendix 1).

An Opportunity for Reflection on the Sources of Our Living Tradition

- Invite participants to take a moment to read over the Sources and reflect silently on which ones are most significant or meaningful to them.
- Invite them to divide up into groups of three or four and to share with their small group which Sources are especially important to them and why.

- When the large group reconvenes, invite conversation on the following questions:
 - To the extent that this group is representative of the congregation, is this a congregation where the Sources appear to be drawn upon equally? If so, what contributes to that? If not, why not? Which Sources get the most attention?
 - How does attention get paid here to the Sources — in sermons, otherwise in Sunday services, in religious education classes, in other congregational programs, etc.?
 - Do you think of any other Sources that are not now mentioned in Article II but ought to be mentioned because they inform how we currently practice our living tradition?
 - Are there any Sources mentioned in Article II that might just as well be deleted because current practice of Unitarian Universalism does not draw on them?
 - Would you rearrange the listing of Sources in any way? If so, how and why?
 - The paragraph following the Sources says that we are grateful for religious pluralism. What does “religious pluralism” mean to you? What does it have to do with the Principles and the Sources?
 - What do you think Section C-2.1 really asks of congregations? In general, do you think they live up to it? Does it matter?

Closing

Questions for Rounds or “Popcorn” Responses

- Think about what you said you came for at the beginning of this session. Did you get what you came for? Something else? What?
- Has this session caused you to change your mind about anything? What? How?

Extinguishing the Chalice – words from Elizabeth Selle Jones

We extinguish this flame
 but not the light of truth,
 the warmth of community,
 or the fire of commitment.
 These we carry in our hearts
 until we are together again.

Session 3

Ingathering

Chalice lighting – words from Max Landau Moss

Let there be light to drive away the darkness.
 Let there be wisdom to shine on the unknown.
 Let there be love to heal our aloneness.
 Let each of us be a light for one another.

Questions for becoming present to each other and this gathering here and now

- What do you bring to this gathering today?
- Max Landau Moss hopes that each of us might be a light for one another. What kind of light do you need today – a clear light, a steady light, a bright light, a soft light, sparkling light, etc.? What kind would serve you well?

Setting the Stage

- Offer a brief summary of this gathering occurring in the context of the congregation's participation in the Commission on Appraisal's process of reviewing Article II of the UUA Bylaws, and in particular the Principles and Purposes.
- Remind everyone that this is the third of three sessions. The first session focused on the Principles. This session focused on the Sources. This session will focus on Article II generally and what messages the group wishes to send to the Commission.
- Offer the opportunity to tie up any loose ends from Session 2 and say more about any lingering issues or concerns.
- Make sure everyone has in hand a copy of Article II (See Appendix 1).

An Opportunity for Reflection on Article II as a Whole

- Invite participants to take a moment to re-read Article II.
- Invite participants to pair off with someone they know less well rather than more well, at least someone they have not partnered with for conversation during Sessions 1 or 2.
- Invite conversation in pairs on these questions:
 - If you had not read Section C-2.2 of Article II, what might you have said are the purposes of the UUA?
 - How completely does this Section reflect your understanding? Your wishes?

- Reconvene the large group for reports of sharing about the Purposes.
- Invite regrouping in groups of four for conversation on these questions:
 - How well do you think this congregation lives up to the special responsibility described in Section C-2.3 on Non-Discrimination?
 - Section C-2.4 on Freedom of Belief, together with Section C-2.3, explicitly represents Unitarian Universalism as non-creedal. How well do you think your congregation does in practice to make clear that congregants are not required to adhere to any particular religious interpretation or belief?
 - If your congregation has a written or regularly spoken covenant or bond of union, how do you distinguish it from a creed?

Messages for the Commission on Appraisal

- Read to the group the Reporting Form for Messages to the Commission (Appendix 4).
- Determine who will complete the form and send it in.
- Go over the questions as a group to make sure the reporter knows what messages the group want conveyed to the Commission.

Closing

Questions for Rounds or “Popcorn” Responses

- If the Commission members were here with you now, what is one thing you would especially like them to know?
- How, if at all, do you think your experience of the Principles and Purposes, including the Sources, will differ after this review?

Extinguishing the Chalice – words from Jerry Wright and Bets Wienecke

May the flame, which has brightened our time together,
light our paths as we go our separate ways. (JW)
May we leave this place
seeking an uncharted and freely chosen way to wholeness
knowing we have companions along the way. (BW)

Program Guide for Two-Hour Youth Program*

For the Facilitators:

The Purpose of this workshop is to provoke reflection on some core documents of our UU faith and to gather input from those reflections to help the Commission on Appraisal in its review of these documents. Included with this workshop is a Reporting Form (see Appendix 4) for the Commission on Appraisal. Each segment of this workshop references a particular question on that feedback form. This form can be filled out during the workshop or the facilitators can take notes and fill it out afterwards.

(Please note: Because the same reporting form is used for this workshop as well as for other workshops, question 1 on the form is not covered in this workshop. If your youth group would like to take extra time to give feedback on question 1, however, the Commission would be very happy to review that information.)

The Commission on Appraisal recommends that this workshop be co-facilitated by a youth-adult team. The team may wish to meet briefly ahead of time to go over roles in the facilitation and develop a plan for how to conduct the workshop. Throughout the workshop the facilitation team should work to make sure that all group members have an equal opportunity to participate and are able to comfortably share their thoughts. Be particularly mindful if it appears that one or more people are dominating the discussion or if others are feeling uncomfortable and stepping back.

Gathering and Introduction (10 minutes)

Chalice lighting – words from Charles A. Howe

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That new light is ever waiting to break through to enlighten our ways;
That new truth is ever waiting to break through to illumine our minds;
And that new love is ever waiting to break through to warm our hearts.

Questions for becoming present to each other and this gathering here and now (If the group is small enough, have people seated in a circle, and invite them to go around the circle to give very brief answers. If the group is too large for this, have them pair up and answer to each other.) One or more of these questions may suit your group.

- What is one thing that drew you to attend this workshop?
- How long have you been coming here? What keeps you involved in this congregation/youth group?

* The Commission thanks the members of the UUA Youth Office staff for their advice regarding the format of this program

Introduction to the Commission on Appraisal and its Review of the Principles & Purposes

(You might want to read the following words to the group, or you might prefer to summarize in your own words.)

As Unitarian Universalists, each of us is on a search for truth and meaning. Our religion as a whole is as well. The Commission on Appraisal is a democratically elected, continental UU group whose job it is to look at the big picture of Unitarian Universalism and make suggestions to help our religion grow and change. Over the years the Commission has studied many different things. The Unitarian Universalist Association's bylaws call for a periodic review of the seven principles, six sources, and several other important documents. The Commission, therefore, has taken on a review of these documents as its current study topic. If the Commission decides to make any recommendations for changes, these will be voted on by the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly.

This workshop is designed to spark deep and meaningful reflection about our faith and to capture the results from that reflection in order to help the Commission in its review process. This is an exciting opportunity for each of you to have an impact on the future of Unitarian Universalism!

An Opportunity for Reflection on the 7 Principles (60 Minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 5 x 8 Index cards
- Pens for each participants
- Large paper and marker
- Copies of Article II of the UUA Bylaws for each participant (See Appendix 1)
- Blank paper for each participant (for second part of workshop)
- Pens, pencils, markers/crayons for participants (for second part of workshop)

ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Before the workshop, write each of these three questions on big paper for the group to see:
 - 1 Tell about a time when you felt really connected to a UU activity in your youth group, in your congregation, or at another UU event. This should be a time when you felt totally comfortable and in the “right place”.
 - 2 What hopes do you have for yourself as a Unitarian Universalist, for your youth group/congregation, and for Unitarian Universalism?
 - 3 What do you value about the UU Principles?
- Prepare three 5x8 index cards for each participant, one for each of the above questions
- Make copies of Article II of the UUA Bylaws for everyone (See Appendix 1)

Partner Activity (40 minutes)

- If your group is in a circle, have each group member form a pair with the person directly opposite them in the circle. If you are arranged in some other fashion, find another way to mix people up into groups of two. Each pair should position themselves in the room so that they are a comfortable distance from each other and facing each other.
- Explain that this activity is intended to engage them in some soul-stretching and brain-stretching, and to have the experience of listening to another. It is not a conversation. One person should interview the other for 15 minutes, and then reverse roles. The interviewer asks the first written question out loud and then writes down notes on the interviewee's answers. The interviewer should not comment on the answers or ask questions (other than to ask for repeating an answer not heard or understood). The interviewer's written notes don't need to be exactly what the interviewee says, but should capture the general idea of their answer. Then the interviewer goes on to the next question. After fifteen minutes, the two people trade roles.
- Give everyone a copy of Article II of the UUA Bylaws (see Appendix 1).
- Tape the three questions on big paper in a place where everyone can see them. Read them aloud to the group and invite the first interviewer to begin.
- Give a signal after ten minutes that only five minutes remain in the first interview.
- After fifteen minutes, invite them to exchange roles.
- Again, give a warning signal after ten minutes of the second interview.
- After fifteen minutes, invite them to conclude.

Song Break (5 minutes)

Sing Hymn #95 from *Singing the Living Tradition*, "There is More Love Somewhere." Another good song possibility is "Imagine" by John Lennon, if you have the lyrics (which cannot be included here for copyright reasons).

Reflection and Feedback (10 minutes)

Return to the circle, or whatever seating arrangement you had at the beginning of the workshop.

- Tell participants that the Commission is seeking input from UUs all across the continent into their deliberations as they carry out this review, and that part of the purpose of this workshop is to get input from the participants.

- Ask, “Based on the reflecting you just did, what message would you like to tell the Commission about the Principles?” After asking the question, allow a minute or two for participants to reflect and gather their thoughts.
- Go around the circle, or around the room, and have participants share what they would like to tell the Commission as they go about this review. One of the facilitators or a group participant should jot down these responses on a piece of butcher paper or a blackboard/dry erase board.
- After everyone has spoken, share with the group the main points that have been said by people, and ask if you have done a fair summary or missed anything. When everyone agrees that you have a good overall picture of the group's wishes, record them on the reporting sheet (See Appendix 4, question 2).

Stretch/Energy Break (5 minutes)

Invite the group to participate in a brief break to stretch, move around, and be more energetic. Call and response songs that have accompanying actions work well for this. So do moving and stretching activities. Consider asking the group members if any of them have a short activity they want to lead for this.

An Opportunity for a Conversation about the Rest of Article II (40 Minutes)

Section C-2.1 Sources (20 minutes)

Have participants reflect on the question: What are your sources of religious or spiritual inspiration? They may wish to write, draw a picture, or do whatever else they find useful. Give them about 10 minutes to do this.

Refer participants to the Sources in the Article II handout. Ask participants if these Sources seem a fair reflection of what they feel are the sources of their inspiration. Is there anything missing? Are there any other messages they would like to send the Commission about the sources? One of the facilitators or a group participant should jot down these responses on a piece of butcher paper or a blackboard/dry erase board.

After everyone has spoken, share with the group the main points that have been said by people, and ask if you have done a fair summary or missed anything. When everyone agrees that you have a good overall picture of the group's wishes, record them on the reporting sheet (See Appendix 4, question 3).

Section C.2.3 Non-Discrimination (15 minutes)

Each of us has many different identities. These include things such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, language, citizenship status, economic status, national origin, religious beliefs, and many others. Begin a discussion by going around the circle and having each person respond to the question: “Given your many identities, what would make you feel welcome, safe, and affirmed if you saw it in a

central document for our religion?” One of the facilitators or a group participant should jot down these responses on a piece of butcher paper or a blackboard/dry erase board.

After everyone has spoken, share with the group the main points that have been said by people, and ask if you have done a fair summary or missed anything. When everyone agrees that you have a good overall picture of the group's wishes, record them on the reporting sheet (See Appendix 4, question 4).

Closing (5 Minutes)

Questions for Rounds (One or more may suit your group.)

- What is one new thought or surprise that has come to you during this workshop?
- What is one question this workshop has caused you to want to think about some more?
- What is something from this workshop that you will carry away?

Extinguishing the Chalice – words from Steve J. Crump

That which is worthy of doing, create with your hands.
That which is worthy of repeating, speak with a clear voice.
That which is worthy of remembering, hold in your heart.
And that which is worthy of living, go and live it now.

“Our Principles and How We Live Them”^{*} **(Program Guide for 1½ Hour Children’s Program)**

Notes to Teachers:

- This program is generally suitable for second through fifth grade children and can be modified depending on the size of the group as well as the age of the children participating.
- Have someone available to record the comments the children make during the question times so that this information can be shared with the Commission on Appraisal (see the reporting form in Appendix 4).

Materials:

- “The Community Puzzle,” which consists of large blank puzzle pieces that fit together in any order. Each person decorates a piece and adds it to the community collage. See www.communitypuzzle.com for more details and ordering information (it can also be ordered from Uni-Uniques, Item #WA385.11). Based on the description at this web site, you might also decide to make your own puzzle pieces. A template for a simplified design can be downloaded from the Commission’s web site www.uua.org/coa/.
- Markers, crayons, etc. to decorate puzzle pieces. Include Multi-Cultural markers if possible.
- Large poster boards, enough to attach completed puzzle to, and glue.
- Book: *Across the Alley* by Richard Michelson, illustrated by E.B. Lewis (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2006).
- A copy of the children’s version of the Principles for each participant (see Appendix 2).

Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice to remind ourselves to treat all people kindly,
because they are our brothers and sisters.

We light this chalice to remind ourselves to live lives full of goodness and love,
because that is how we will become the best men and women we can be.

--Source unknown, adapted from version in *Rejoice Together*,
collection by Helen R. Pickett (Boston: Skinner House, 1995), p. 10

^{*} For contributing this program to these materials, the Commission thanks Laura Wilkerson Spencer, Director of Religious Education; Heather Northway, Assistant Director of Religious Education; and Stephanie Surfas, lay leader, all from First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor.

Introduction

Spend a few minutes talking about what makes each of us special. Say something like this: “Each of us is different and special in some way. What things might make you different?”

Puzzle, Part 1 – Decorating puzzle pieces.

Pass out one puzzle piece to each child. Say something like this: “Who are you? What makes you special? This puzzle piece is going to represent you and who you are. Decorate it to show something about who you are.” *Do not put the puzzle together yet.*

Book

Before reading the book, review with the children the Unitarian Universalist Principles in children’s language. Find out what they know about them. Spend a very few minutes clarifying what they mean.

Then say something like this: “I am going to read a book to you. I want you to be thinking about the Principles as you listen. There are some times when some of the characters in the book are not living by our UU Principles and other times when they are. See if you can see all seven Principles in this story.”

Read *Across the Alley*. Follow up with these discussion questions:

- Who are the characters? What makes them different? What makes each one special?
- Where did you see our Principles in this story? Either that they weren’t being followed or that they were? (Examples are listed below.)
- Why didn’t Abe and Willie play together in the daytime?
- What does our Unitarian Universalist faith tell us about that (different kinds of people)?
 - *First Principle – Each and every person is important.*
- Was that fair? Abe wanted to play baseball but couldn’t. Willie loved music. Was it fair that they weren’t allowed to do what they loved?
 - *Second Principle – All people should be treated fairly.*
- How did their playing together help them? What did they learn together?
 - *Third Principle – We are all accepted and we learn together.*
- What did the boys find out that was true and right for them? How about the Grandfather and the Father – Did they learn anything?
 - *Fourth Principle – Each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life.*

- In the end each character did something they thought was right even though other people might not like it. What was it and why did they do it?
 - *Fifth Principle – We should have a vote about what concerns us and we should do what we think is right.*
- Do you think what happened helped to make the world better?
 - *Sixth Principle – We should work for a peaceful, fair, and free world.*
- Do you think what happened in the story can help others? How might their friendship be connected to the other people in their neighborhood or city?
 - *Seventh Principle – We should care for our world and each other because we are all connected.*

Puzzle, Part 2 – Putting it together.

Tell the group that you want to create a beautiful mural to hang on the wall that shows how when we come together here in our Unitarian Universalist congregation, we all fit together even though we are different.

- “Whose piece belongs here in our puzzle? (Everyone’s)”
- “What is special about you and your piece?”
- “What happens if we decide to leave some people out? Who is hurt? What happens to our puzzle?”
- “What Principles have we used in creating this puzzle?”
- “Are there times when you have used the Principles in your real life?”
- “Do you think the Principles are important? Why or why not?”

Spend time connecting all the pieces together. Take time to admire the finished product. Be sure to display the completed puzzle in your congregation for all to admire when you are finished. You may want to glue it to the poster board to hold it together and aid in displaying.

Closing

Stand in a circle around the puzzle holding hands. Sing your favorite closing song. Pass a squeeze around the circle.

Appendix 1

Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association

ARTICLE II Principles and Purposes

SECTION C-2.1. Principles.

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

SECTION C-2.2. Purposes.

The Unitarian Universalist Association shall devote its resources to and exercise its corporate powers for religious, educational and humanitarian purposes. The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen Unitarian Universalist institutions and implement its principles.

SECTION C-2.3. Non-discrimination.

The Association declares and affirms its special responsibility, and that of its member congregations and organizations, to promote the full participation of persons in all of its and their activities and in the full range of human endeavor without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, age, language, citizenship status, economic status, or national origin and without requiring adherence to any particular interpretation of religion or to any particular religious belief or creed.

SECTION C-2.4. Freedom of Belief.

Nothing herein shall be deemed to infringe upon the individual freedom of belief which is inherent in the Universalist and Unitarian heritages or to conflict with any statement of purpose, covenant, or bond of union used by any congregation unless such is used as a creedal test.

Appendix 2**Children's Version of the UU Principles**

Each and every person is important.

All people should be treated fairly.

Our congregations are places where all people are accepted and where we keep on learning together.

Each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life.

Everyone should have a vote about the things that concern them and should do what they think is right.

Everyone should work for a peaceful, fair and free world.

Everyone should care for our world and each other because we are all connected.

Appendix 3 Recommended Readings

Buehrens, John A. and Forrest Church, *A Chosen Faith: An Introduction to Unitarian Universalism*, Boston: Beacon Press, rev. ed. 1998. Discussion guide available at www.beacon.org. Study guide available on line at www.uua.org/re/curriculum.

Church, F. Forrester, Mark Belletini, Sara Moores Campbell, Charlotte E. Cowtan-Holm, Edward A. Frost, Mary-Ella Holst, Elisabeth M. Jones, Stephen Kendrick, John A. Mears, Frederick J. Streng, and Judith A. Walker-Riggs, *What Unitarian Universalists Believe: Living Principles for a Living Faith (Resources for Study and Worship)*, Boston: Unitarian Universalist Denominational Grants Panel, 1987.

Collier, Kenneth W., *Our Seven Principles in Story and Verse: A Collection for Children and Adults*, Boston: Skinner House Books, 1997.

Fields, Ann, and Joan Goodwin, eds. *We Believe: Learning and Living Our Unitarian Universalist Principles*, Boston: UUA, 1998.

Frost, Edward A., ed. *With Purpose and Principles: Essays about the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism*, Boston: Skinner House Books, 1998.

Grohsmeyer, Janeen K. *A Lamp in Every Corner: Our Unitarian Universalist Storybook*. Boston: UUA, 2004.

Owen-Towle, Tom. *Freethinking Mystics with Hands: Exploring the Heart of Unitarian Universalism*, Boston: Skinner House Books, 1998.

Owen-Towle, Tom. *Living the Interdependent Web: An Adult Series on Unitarian Universalist Principles*, Boston: UUA, 1987.

Ross, Warren. *The Premise and the Promise: The Story of the Unitarian Universalist Association*, Boston: Skinner House, 2001.

UUA Commission on Appraisal. *Engaging Our Theological Diversity*, Boston: UUA, 2005. Available on line at www.uua.org/coa/.

Appendix 4
Reporting Form for Congregational Messages to
the UUA Commission on Appraisal

Return completed form to the Commission:

Electronically

Log on to www.uua.org/coa/ and click
 on the link for "Online Reporting Form"

By Mail:

Commission on Appraisal
 Unitarian Universalist Association
 25 Beacon Street
 Boston, MA 02108

Name of Congregation _____

Location _____

Contact Person (Name and Position) _____

Preferred Phone _____ Email _____

The messages below are based on the following type of review process (circle one):

One-session workshop

Three-session review

Youth Program

Children's program

(Note that a congregation should send the Commission more than one Reporting Form if congregants engage in more than one type of review process.)

Number of people participating in review reported on this form _____

- 1 The Principles as stated in Article II of the UUA Bylaws (circle one) DO DO NOT
 figure significantly in the life of our congregation.
 The main ways they are used here:

2 Our messages to the Commission about the Principles, including especially our suggestions:

3 Our messages to the Commission about the Sources, including especially our suggestions:

4 Our messages to the Commission about Article II's statement of the UUA's Purposes, the responsibility of non-discrimination, and individual freedom of belief: