



## COMMUNITY CONVERSATION FACILITATOR GUIDE

### Preparation

TIME	CONTENT
Several days in advance	<p><b><u>Assemble Materials</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Altar-like materials</li> <li>● Chalice and matches</li> <li>● Materials per participant (plan for a few extra participants):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ *Community Conversation Participant Guides</li> <li>○ Five post-it notes</li> <li>○ One dark Sharpie-style marker</li> <li>○ Nametag</li> <li>○ Pencil or pen</li> <li>○ Three sticky dots in three colors (green, blue, red) for voting</li> <li>○ Hymnals or words for Gathered Here (for example, hymn #389 in <i>Singing the Living Tradition</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Materials for each small group of 6 or 8:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One flip chart easel and pad.                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Top page labeled: <i>“Reflect on all these stories. What were we – this congregation, or another UU community – doing right? What led to our success?”</i></li> <li>▪ Next page labeled: <i>“Strengths from the Past”</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ 3 flip chart markers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>*Download the Participant Guide under the “Materials” section on the Gathered Here website, <a href="http://uua.org/gatheredhere">uua.org/gatheredhere</a>, and make one copy per attendee.</p>
The day of	<p><b><u>Prepare the space</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Check -in table</li> <li>● In central meeting space:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Altar and chalice</li> <li>○ Participant handouts and supplies (listed above)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Prepare small group spaces and arrange supplies (listed above)</li> </ul>

## **Facilitation (2 hours)**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>CONTENT</b>
5 minutes	<p><b><u>Welcome, opening and chalice lighting</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin singing “Gathered Here” until people are seated.</li> <li>• Read statement from UUA President, The Rev. Peter Morales:  <i>“Our dreams, our visions of what we seek to become, are the true foundation of our faith. Our dreams and our commitment to make them come true are what binds us together. Our faith is not about a fixed set of beliefs, our faith is about being faithful. The essence of our faith is faithfulness to one another, faithfulness to what we hold sacred in life and faithfulness to our shared dreams. Our shared dreams, then, are central and essential. We are our dreams. Without them we are nothing.</i></li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>What are our dreams today? What are we Unitarian Universalists willing to dream together? What dream will inspire us, unite us, motivate us, channel all our passion and give our life wings? What must we do to make our dreams come true?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Let us dare to dream ambitious, yet possible dreams. And then let us commit ourselves to making our dreams come true.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go around the circle – everyone says their name.</li> <li>• Review purpose, agenda and timing.</li> </ul>
30 minutes	<p><b><u>Conduct interviews</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass out Community Conversation Participant Guide. Explain the process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Partners conduct two-way interviews, 10 minutes each, two questions each.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
40 minutes	<p><b><u>Share and reflect on stories</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruct partners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Form groups of 6 to 8 participants.</li> <li>○ Share only the highlights of their partner’s story (20 minutes)</li> <li>○ Appoint a scribe for this new group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask the group to discuss the following question on their flip chart pad: <i>“Reflect on all these stories. What were we – this congregation, or another UU community – doing right? What led to our success?”</i></li> <li>▪ Scribe records responses on the flip chart page titled <i>“Strengths from the Past”</i> (20 minutes)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

5 minutes	<p><b><u>Bring stories to larger groups</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combine small groups into one or more large(r) groups.</li> <li>• Each group shares a single highlight from their group discussion.</li> </ul>
30 minutes	<p><b><u>Envision the future</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect individually on this question (3 minutes): <i>“What did the stories we just shared inspire you to imagine for the future of our faith – locally, regionally and nationally?”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ During reflection time:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pass out post-it notes, Sharpie markers and dots.</li> <li>▪ Instruct participants to record their most inspired responses to the above question on post-it notes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One idea per post-it note.</li> <li>▪ WRITE BIG, using Sharpie marker.</li> <li>▪ No more than 5 words per post-it.</li> <li>▪ No more than 5 post-it notes per participant total.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Prepare flip chart page titled “Possibilities for the Future.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explain the process for sharing reflections:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Go round the group</li> <li>○ Each person shares and posts only <i>one new idea/post it note on the “Possibilities for the Future” chart paper</i>. Similar ideas are not posted at this time.</li> <li>○ Repeat until everything is posted; and if any similar ideas remain, cluster them.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• By sticking colored dots to the post it notes, individual participants vote for their top three:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Priorities for their congregation or community (Green dots)</li> <li>○ Priorities for their local UU cluster or district (Blue dots)</li> <li>○ Priorities for the UUA (Red dots)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	<p><b><u>Closing reflections</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remind participants that their input will help inform future decisions about their community. Thank them for their time.</li> <li>• To end this time together, ask participants to call out answers to, <i>“What do you love about being a Unitarian Universalist?”</i></li> </ul>

We hope that your community discovered new passion for Unitarian Universalism!  
Thank you for participating in Gathered Here!