Coffee Hour Caution
…advice for greeting young adults at church

- Avoid saying:
  “How old are you?”
Why: Is age so important? There’s no good answer. Avoid this one altogether.

✓ - Say instead:
  “What did you think of the service today?”

- Avoid saying:
  “Are you new here?”
Why: A young adult may have been attending for years, you just haven’t met them. This implies you think they don’t belong in the church.

✓ - Say instead:
  “I don’t think we’ve met, my name is…”

- Avoid saying:
  “When are you planning to have kids?”
Why: Having or not having kids is a private matter and not one people may want to discuss. This implies you only value young adults for their future children, not as a peer adult, here and now.

✓ - Say instead:
  “What brought you here today?”

- Avoid saying:
  “What do you do?” or “What year are you in school?”
Why: For those who are un- or under-employed, work is a tricky question; assuming someone is a student implies you think they are of a certain age or life stage. Give them the chance to talk about whatever is meaningful, which might not be school or a job.

✓ - Say instead:
  “So tell me about yourself…”

- Avoid saying:
  “We need more young people!”
Why: Like everyone else, young adults want to be seen for who they are, not as a token for their age.

✓ - Say instead:
  “Great to meet you!”

- Avoid saying:
  “Have you met our other young adult?”
Why: Young adults enjoy friends of all ages. Welcome them into faith and fellowship.

✓ - Say instead:
  “Can I introduce you to my friend?”

DO: Introduce yourself • Make friends • Be interested • Reach out • Respect boundaries

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, Unitarian Universalist Association • uua.org/youngadults