

## **2. Proposed Revision of Article II**

### **ARTICLE II: Covenant**

#### **Section C-2.1 Purposes.**

This association of free yet interdependent congregations devotes its resources to and exercises its corporate powers for religious, educational, and humanitarian purposes. It supports the creation, vitality, and growth of congregations that aspire to live out the Unitarian Universalist Principles. Through public witness and advocacy, it advances the Principles in the world.

#### **Section C 2.2. Sources.**

Unitarian Universalism is rooted in two religious heritages. Both are grounded on thousands of years of Jewish and Christian teachings, traditions, and experiences. The Unitarian heritage has affirmed that we need not think alike to love alike and that God is one. The Universalist heritage has preached not hell but hope and courage, and the kindness and love of God. Contemporary Unitarian Universalists have reaped the benefits of a legacy of prophetic words and deeds.

Unitarian Universalism is not contained in any single book or creed. Its religious authority lies in the individual, nurtured and tested in the congregation and the wider world. As an evolving religion, it draws from the teachings, practices, and wisdom of the world's religions. Humanism, earth-centered spiritual traditions, and Eastern religions have served as vital sources. Unitarian Universalism has been influenced by mysticism, theism, skepticism, naturalism, and process thought as well as feminist and liberation theologies. It is informed by direct experiences of mystery and wonder, beauty and joy. It is enriched by the creative power of the arts, the guidance of reason, and the lessons of the sciences.

Grateful for the traditions that have strengthened our own, we seek to engage cultural and religious practices in ways that call us into right relationship with all.

#### **Section C-2.3 Principles.**

Grateful for the gift of life, we commit ourselves as member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association to embody together the transforming power of love as we covenant to honor and uphold:

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

As free yet interdependent congregations, we enter into this covenant, pledging to one another our mutual trust and support. Capable of both good and evil, at times we are in need of forgiveness and reconciliation. When we fall short of living up to this covenant, we will begin again in love, repair the relationship, and recommit to the promises we have made.

#### **Section C-2.4 Inclusion.**

Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories. We pledge to do all we can to replace such barriers with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. We strive to be an association of congregations that truly welcome all persons and commit to structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation.

#### **Section C-2.5 Freedom of Belief.**

Congregational freedom is central to the Unitarian Universalist heritage.

Congregations may establish statements of purpose, covenants, and bonds of union so long as they do not require a statement of belief as a creedal test for membership; nor may the Association employ such a test for congregational affiliation.