

Mediation and Resolution

Affirmation:

When we are in an unresolved conflict, we will seek mediation through a process that we will uphold.

Process:

When we are unable to resolve a conflict with another, we can ask for the assistance of the Committee on Ministry (COM), which may be asked to mediate a resolution or to recommend seeking assistance from other sources. With input from all involved the COM will recommend the best methods to bring those involved to constructive interaction.

The COM may wish to employ some of the following steps toward resolution:

- Facilitate face-to-face meeting(s)
- Identify the conflict
- Help to identify common ground
- Help the parties to understand their part in the conflict
- Establish a consensus-based solution that all parties will support.

Outcome:

Through the mediation, we will offer compromise to our own positions, and accept a reconciliation of our once disparate goals.

Resources include:

- Our Selves
- Church members and friends
- The Unitarian Universalist Principles
- The Congregational Covenant
- Ministerial Team
- Books and publications on conflict
- On-going training and workshops
- Outside resources for mediation and reconciliation.

Unitarian Universalist Association 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.

Picture of UUCA inserted here

Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington Congregational Covenant

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington encourages every Member and Friend to embrace this Congregational Covenant as an essential part of our faith journey. The covenant is grounded in the Unitarian Universalist Principles. This agreement is intended to provide guidance in implementing our principles into our everyday lives. It is in loving relationship with those in our community that we have the opportunity to grow spiritually as individuals and as a fellowship. It is here, in this community, that we come together to express our common purpose and to be strengthened through understanding, compassion, and acceptance.

Address and Staff information here

Our Collective Vision of Community

A community of Common Purpose

UUCA is a safe haven that nurtures and enhances personal and spiritual growth. It is a place of trust where personal enrichment arises from participating in the community.

Awareness of Self and Others

UUCA is a welcoming place where those in the community respect themselves and others. We are a shelter of many beliefs where minority and opposing views are accepted and respected.

Personal Responsibility

We maintain our dignity and integrity by taking responsibility for our actions. UUCA is a place where we invite constructive critique when it is offered in a spirit of openness and thoughtfulness. We strive to recognize when our concerns have become counterproductive.

Listening, Speaking and Acting with Unity of Purpose

UUCA is a place where we listen openly to the ideas of others. We actively listen for the meaning and feelings within others' words so that we may better understand their message. We affirm the inherent worth and dignity of others and bring the intentions of kindness and respect to our spoken words. We are mindful of what we say and how our words may be interpreted by others, whether or not they are present. We are accepting of others' views and, while we may disagree, we also actively acknowledge the worth of the person behind those views. We fulfill our commitments to the community and to each other. We give generously of ourselves within our means and are grateful that others do, as well. We come here to learn the skills of loving kindness and to practice what we have learned in our community. We acknowledge and respect our personal differences. When disagreements arise, we help each other resolve them before they escalate to destructive levels of conflict. We offer the gift of forgiveness and are aware that reconciling conflict allows us to remain in fellowship.

COVENANT

We choose to become part of a community with a common purpose to foster an atmosphere where the Unitarian Universalist Principles may be learned and practiced.

With this common purpose as our source, we covenant to:

- ❑ Welcome all who come to us with acceptance and respect for the differences among us.
- ❑ Practice patience and speak the truth directly and with compassion.
- ❑ Reflect carefully about the potential results of our words and actions before we speak or act.
- ❑ Keep our discussions to topics and issues rather than personalities.
- ❑ Acknowledge that we may not always agree with group decisions but will support and participate in decision-making processes that are collaborative and democratic.
- ❑ Seek to resolve disagreements to our mutual satisfaction and to ask for assistance when needed.
- ❑ Speak directly to those with whom we have disagreements rather than to a third party; and where appropriate, facilitate direct communication between parties in conflict.
- ❑ Contribute to the community at a level that is healthy for us as individuals – intellectually, financially and with gifts of time and energy.
- ❑ Act with loving kindness, seeking to promote justice, equity and compassion. This means we will also speak out with loving kindness when we witness disrespectful interactions.
- ❑ Understand that being a member of this community requires learning and practice.

Reconciliation, Healing and Resolution

We know that there may be times in the life of relationships within the church that we do not model our vision. The following two processes to reconcile or mediate our inevitable differences are offered so that we may enhance our fellowship.

Interpersonal Reconciliations and Healing

Affirmation:

When we find ourselves involved in or experiencing conflict, we will acknowledge its presence and deal directly and positively with it, by talking to the person(s) involved with the intention of solving the problem.

Process:

Individuals and leaders bear the responsibility to recognize and name problems as they arise and address them under the terms of this covenant. When we find ourselves involved in a conflict, we accept this and become responsible for seeking solutions. As individuals, we will go directly to the other party and carefully listen to the other's point of view until we understand it; we will ask the other party to do the same. We will avoid "triangulation" – telling others outside the conflict, about the problem; instead, we will engage in open communication with the person(s) directly involved. While we may sometimes need to agree to disagree, if it is the best interest in the community to resolve our conflict, we will attempt to find a compromise that leads to a mutually satisfactory solution.

Outcome:

Our goal is the resolution of problems by negotiating a win-win collaborative or negotiated acceptable solution.