

## **Congregational Covenant**

Last year, one of the topics at the Board's annual retreat was covenant, after which the Board charged a small group of people to use the ideas generated at the retreat to create a draft covenant for the Board of Trustees. That draft was finalized and approved last August. The following is the covenant of the Board of Trustees:

We, the Board of Trustees, covenant with each other to:

Commit our energy and talent to the work of the Board,  
ready to assume our fair share of responsibilities;

Participate fully, respectfully and honestly in Board dialogue,  
striving to understand the viewpoints of others;

Be accountable to one another,  
supporting each other and assuming goodwill;

Deal with conflict responsibly and respectfully;

Respect Board decisions and represent those outcomes with integrity; and

Be faithful to the Albany UU mission.

The Board of Trustees then charged another small group to develop and facilitate a process for the congregation to consider whether we ought to covenant together as a community. The members of the Congregational Covenant Group are Board members Patti Jo Newell and Lee Newberg, Board president Dick Dana, Michael Hornsby, and Rev. Sam Trumbore.

Throughout the month of February, the group will provide the congregation with further information regarding covenant and the covenanting process. This will be followed by congregational conversations. This, then, is a good time to reflect on the question, "What is a covenant?"

Following are examples of covenants from local UU congregations.

### **Covenant of Right Relations, UU congregation of Glens Falls**

Unitarian Universalist congregations are held together by covenants around shared values, expectations, and commitments. We make promises to each other about how we will be in relationship together. We do this recognizing that as human beings we make, keep, break, and must renew covenants.

As we live into our vision of beloved community, we, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Glens Falls, covenant to affirm:

There is **Love** here;  
I will use it as my guide.

There is **Diversity** here;  
I will welcome and celebrate it.

There is **Community** here;  
I will embrace it and grow my connection with others.

There is **Compassion** here;  
I will listen deeply to others and be supportive of their needs.

There is **Responsibility** here;  
I will contribute to the life of the congregation and follow through on my commitments.

There is **Trust** here;  
I will nurture it and work to build a place of safety.

There is **Respect** here;  
I will honor and encourage the journey of others.

As we take this journey together in our search for truth, we will honor and care for each other with generosity, forgiveness, and heart; thus we strengthen this beloved community.

### **UU Fellowship of Bennington Covenant**

We, the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bennington, covenant to:

- Engage each other with our intellect, conscience, and compassion,
- Affirm and promote the Principles of the UUA and honor the Sources of knowledge and wisdom,
- Accept and respect each other and our community, with all our varying beliefs, abilities, shortcomings, and needs, and
- support the Fellowship by offering our time, energy, resources, creativity, and good will.

## **UU Congregation of Saratoga Springs**

At the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs, we aspire to be a community where

- We peacefully and reverently explore our lives together, honoring our diversity and our commonality.
- We value differences of opinion, encourage others to share their views, and listen respectfully to those who disagree with us.
- We honor the right to dissent and commit ourselves to decision-making through the democratic process.
- We assist and support others during sorrowful times and at times of need.
- We work together to support each other and the well-being of our congregation.
- We endeavor to maintain perspective, pursuing with steadfast devotion that which is important to us and our congregation.
- We participate in the life of our Congregation, honor its governance and by-laws, and support its financial well-being.
- We treat our staff, our leaders, and each other with love and respect.
- We know that disagreement can arise between persons of good will and we attempt to resolve conflicts in a positive and constructive spirit, guided by our Conflict Resolution Policy.

### **Barnstable UU Church**

Affirmation spoken by the congregation each Sunday in the worship service:

Love is the doctrine of this church, the quest for truth is its sacrament and service is its prayer, to dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom, to serve humanity in fellowship, to the end that all souls shall grow into harmony with the divine- thus do we covenant together.

### **UU Church of Peoria**

Our Covenant

As a community of love and hope, we covenant together:

- To welcome with open minds and hearts all who gather here—newcomers, members, and friends.
- To nurture one another with caring words, kind actions, and compassionate concern.
- To share ideas freely, listen willingly, disagree respectfully, and forgive easily.
- To inspire one another, youngest to eldest, to thrive in body, mind, and spirit.

- To work cooperatively toward our goals and openly appreciate each other's unique gifts.
- To enrich our congregational life by participating, leading, pledging, and giving.
- To celebrate life, and savor its diversity, beauty, and creativity.

### **Harvard Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Students**

We, the members of HUUMS, covenant to work together to create a more loving and just world around us. Grounded in the living tradition of Unitarian Universalism, we covenant to welcome difference among each other, work patiently through challenges that face us, support each other in heartache, share in each other's joy, and comfort each other in ambiguity. May we strive to extend these hallmarks of our membership to the larger HDS community and the world at large. Let our faith be expressed through our actions as well as our words.

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