

1 **ARTICLE II: Covenant**

2 **Section C-2.1 Purposes.**

3 As a voluntary association of free yet interdependent congregations, the Unitarian Universalist  
4 Association will support the health and growth of existing congregations and the formation of new  
5 congregations. The Association will devote its resources to and exercise its corporate powers for  
6 religious, educational, and humanitarian purposes. It will empower the creation of just and diverse  
7 congregations that enact Unitarian Universalist Principles in the world.

8 **Section C-2.2 Identity.**

9 The Unitarian Universalist Association is composed of congregations rooted in the heritage of two  
10 religious faiths: the Unitarian heritage ever questioning and ever seeking the unity in all things, and  
11 the Universalist heritage ever affirming the power of hope and God’s infinite love. Both traditions  
12 have been shaped by heretics, choice-makers who in every age have summoned individuals and  
13 communities to maintain their beliefs in spite of persecution and to struggle for religious freedom.

14 **Section C-2.3 Sources.**

15 The living tradition we share draws from many sources.

16 Unitarianism and Universalism are grounded on more than two thousand years of Jewish and  
17 Christian teachings, traditions, and experiences. Unitarian Universalism is not contained in any  
18 single book or creed. It draws from the teachings of the Abrahamic religions, Earth-centered  
19 spirituality, and other world religious traditions. It engages perspectives from humanism,  
20 mysticism, theism, skepticism, naturalism, and feminist and liberation theologies. It is informed by  
21 the arts and the sciences. It trusts the value of direct experiences of mystery and wonder, and it  
22 recognizes the sacred may be found within the ordinary.

23 Wisdom and beauty may be expressed in many forms: in poetry and prose, in story and song, in  
24 metaphor and myth, in drama and dance, in fabric and painting, in scripture and music, in drawing  
25 and sculpture, in public ritual and solitary practice, in prophetic speech and courageous deed.

26 Grateful for the traditions that have strengthened our own, we strive to avoid misappropriation of  
27 cultural and religious practices and to seek ways of appreciation that are respectful and welcomed.

28 **Section C-2.4 Principles.**

29 In order that we might work together in harmony to make our communities and our world more  
30 likely to protect and nurture all that is positive and hopeful; and in order that members of our  
31 congregations might find spiritual challenge to become their best selves as they worship and work  
32 together to create the Beloved Community, we, the member congregations of the Unitarian  
33 Universalist Association, covenant to honor and uphold:

34 *The inherent worth and dignity of every person*

35 At the core of Unitarian Universalism is recognition of the sanctity of every human being  
36 across the lifespan. We are relational creatures, capable of both good and evil. We have  
37 experienced enough brokenness, including in ourselves, to seek the power of forgiveness and  
38 reconciliation. We are called to make choices that help to heal and transform ourselves and  
39 the world, and to move toward solidarity with all beings.

40 *Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations*

41 Grateful for the gift of life and mindful of our own mortality, we seek to respond with  
42 generosity and loving action. We are called to live in right relationship with others.

43 *Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth*

44 We seek to enter dialogue with one another in mutual love and respect, honoring our varied  
45 backgrounds and paths. We are called to stretch and deepen our faith through religious  
46 education, creative engagement, and spiritual practice in our congregations and in our lives.

47 *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning*

48 Unitarian Universalism is an evolutionary religion that encourages and supports lifelong  
49 spiritual exploration. Unitarian Universalist religious authority lies in the individual,  
50 nurtured and tested in congregation and wider community. In a spirit of humility and  
51 openness, we are called to seek truth and meaning, wherever found, through experience,  
52 reason, intuition, and emotion.

53 *The right of conscience and the use of democratic processes*

54 We seek to ensure that all voices are heard, especially those often left out on the margins.  
55 We are called to promote fairness, accountability, honesty, and transparency.

56 *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all*

57 We seek to create, sustain, and celebrate multi-generational and multi-cultural communities  
58 where oppression cannot thrive and where hope and peace flourish. We are called to  
59 counter legacies of injustice and to foster reconciliation.

60 *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*

61 Inspired by the beauty and holiness of the Earth, we become more willing to relinquish  
62 material desires. We recognize the need for sacrifice as we build a world that is both just  
63 and sustainable. We are called to be good stewards, restoring the Earth and protecting all  
64 beings.

65 As free yet interdependent congregations, we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our  
66 mutual trust, kindness, and support. Should we break this covenant, we will seek to repair the  
67 relationship and recommit to the promises we have made.

68 **Section C-2.5 Inclusion.**

69 We strive to be an association of congregations that welcome persons of every identity while calling  
70 them to act in right relationship. We encourage the fullest participation allowed by law, with no  
71 person excluded solely on the basis of age or identity.

72 Structures of power have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with certain identities,  
73 abilities, and histories. Dissatisfied with mere non-discrimination, we commit to structuring  
74 congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance the efforts and experiences  
75 of every participant.

76 **Section C-2.6 Freedom of Belief.**

77 Freedom of belief is central to the Unitarian Universalist heritage. Nothing in these bylaws shall be  
78 deemed to infringe upon individual freedom of belief. Although no statement of belief can be  
79 required as a creedal test for individual membership in a congregation or congregational affiliation  
80 with the Association, congregations are free to establish their own statements of purpose, covenants,  
81 and bonds of union.