

Proposed Bylaws Revision of Article II as Amended at the UUA General Assembly, June 21–25, 2023

- Prepared for the UUCC Denominational Connections Committee -

UUA bylaws require the study commission to prepare, within six months, a proposal “taking into account the decisions of the General Assembly.” The language might end up looking a little different from the exact wording approved at GA2023, incorporated below.

NOTE: Crossed out text indicates text to be deleted; underlined text is to be inserted.

Section ~~C-2.2~~. C-2.1. Purposes.

The Unitarian Universalist Association ~~shall~~ will devote its resources to and ~~exercise its corporate~~ use its organizational powers for religious, educational and humanitarian purposes. ~~The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen Unitarian Universalist institutions and implement its principles.~~

Its primary purposes are to assist congregations in their vital ministries, support and train leaders both lay and professional, to foster lifelong faith formation and spiritual development, to heal historic injustices, to support and encourage the creation of new Unitarian Universalist communities, and to advance our Unitarian Universalist values in the world.

The purpose of the Unitarian Universalist Association is to actively engage its members in the transformation of the world through liberating Love.

DELETE THE 7 PRINCIPLES:

Section C-2.1. 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.

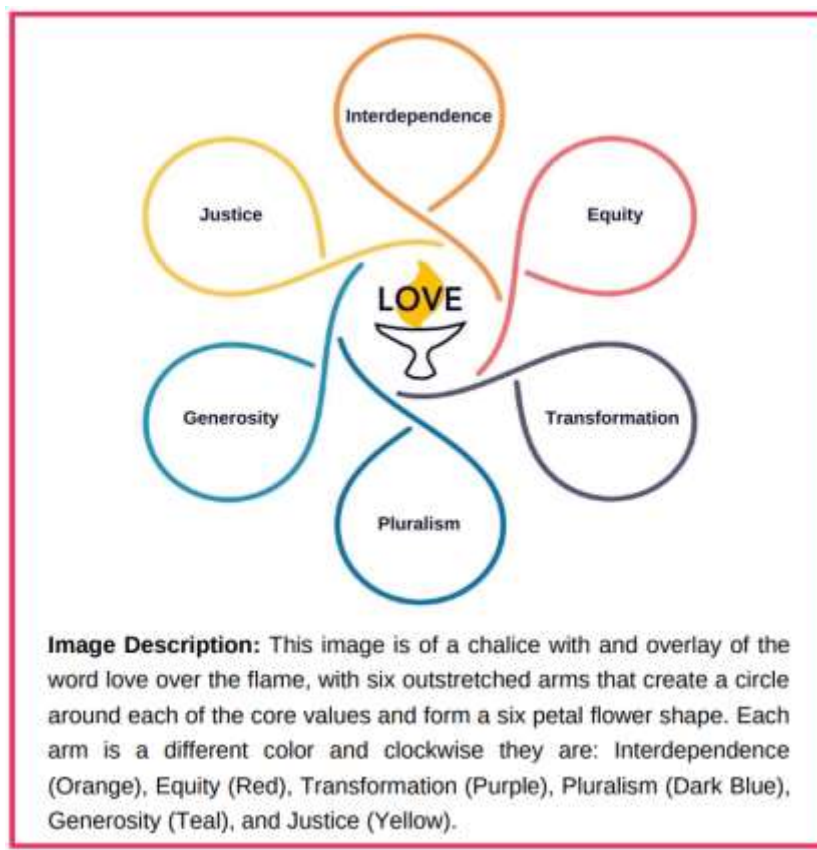
REPLACE PRINCIPLES WITH:

Section C-2.2. Values and Covenant.

As Unitarian Universalists, we covenant, congregation-to-congregation and through our association, to support and assist one another in our ministries. We draw from our heritages of freedom, reason, hope, and courage, building on the foundation of love.

Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love.

Inseparable from one another, these shared values are:



Interdependence. We honor the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

With humility and reverence, we covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation, creating and nurturing sustainable relationships of repair, mutuality and justice.

Pluralism. We celebrate that we are all sacred beings diverse in culture, experience, and theology.

We covenant to learn from one another in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We embrace our differences and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect.

Justice. We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive.

We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregation [sic] and the society at large.

Transformation. We adapt to the changing world.

We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically. Openness to change is fundamental to our Unitarian and Universalist heritages, never complete and never perfect.

Generosity. We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.

We covenant to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. Our generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality.

Equity. We declare that every person has the right to flourish with inherent dignity and worthiness.

We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities.

DELETE SOURCES:

Section C-2.1. Principles. (continued)

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

REPLACE SOURCES WITH INSPIRATIONS:

Section C-2.3. Inspirations.

As Unitarian Universalists, we proclaim that direct experiences of transcending mystery and wonder are a primary source of inspiration. These experiences open our hearts, renew our spirits, and transform our lives. We draw upon, and are inspired by, sacred, secular, and scientific understandings that help us make meaning and live into our values. We respect the histories, contexts, and cultures in which these understandings were created and are currently practiced. These sources ground us and sustain us in ordinary, difficult, and joyous times. Grateful for the experiences that move us, aware of the religious ancestries we inherit, and enlivened by the diversity which enriches our faith, we are called to ever deepen and expand our wisdom.

Section C-2.3 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 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 who share our values. ~~and~~ We commit to being an association of congregations structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empowers and enhances everyone's participation, especially those with historically marginalized identities.

Section C 2.4 2.5 Freedom of Belief belief.

~~Congregational freedom and the individual's right of conscience are central to Nothing herein shall be deemed to infringe upon the individual freedom of belief which is inherent in the Universalist and Unitarian heritages our Unitarian Universalist heritage. Congregations may establish or to conflict with any statements of purpose, covenants, and or bonds of union so long as they do not require that members adhere to a particular creed used by any congregation unless such is used as a creedal test.~~

THE TWO FREEDOM OF BELIEF CLAUSE STATEMENTS WITHOUT MARKUP:

Current bylaws:

Section C-2.4. Freedom of Belief.

Nothing herein shall be deemed to infringe upon the individual freedom of belief which is inherent in the Universalist and Unitarian heritages or to conflict with any statement of purpose, covenant, or bond of union used by any congregation unless such is used as a creedal test.

Proposed replacement:

C-2.5 Freedom of belief.

Congregational freedom and the individual's right of conscience are central to our Unitarian Universalist heritage. Congregations may establish statements of purpose, covenants, and bonds of union so long as they do not require that members adhere to a particular creed.

Resources:

UUA Bylaws – https://www.uua.org/files/2022-10/uua_bylaws_10312022.pdf

Back up link, since bylaws change: UUA Bylaws and Rules webpage – <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/bylaws>

“Article II Study Report, 2021-2023” – www.uua.org/files/2023-01/a2sc_rpt_01172023.pdf

GA document: “Article II Proposal (amendments listed separately below)” – <https://www.uua.org/files/2023-06/Article%20%20Package.pdf>