

Cottage Conversations

What did we hear?

Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Charlottesville

1. What does this congregation mean to you? or What brings you to UUCville?
2. How would you describe our purpose, the reason we exist?
3. What is important to you about how we impact the larger community and world?

Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Charlottesville

1. What does this congregation mean to you?

Community: family*, friendship, connections, belonging, companionship, friends, supportive (of each other), religious home, there for me during difficult/tragic times, welcoming, hope, second home, love, home away from home, kindness

Shared Values: like-minded people*, open-minded, open-hearted

Spirituality: reverence, sermons, spiritual home, many members raised in dogmatic religions and seek out individual freedom, I can explore, no creed or dogma, heart-centered and spiritually adventurous, spiritual growth

Personal growth: better person, navigate the world, be inspired, learn, grow and feel safe*, my search to find truth and meaning, encourage and support each other in this search, free to explore feelings, ideas, beliefs, here, without judgment*, acceptance

Service: reciprocity, care for outer world, wider community, social justice, make a difference in the world, food and finances, helping hands (e.g. meals)

Our Youth: OWL, RE offerings, values/RE for kids, values passed to kids, where children and teenagers can grow, great place to raise my kids, alternative peer group for them

2. How would you describe our purpose, the reason we exist?

Religious community: safe place, spirituality nurtures us, services at life events, spiritual growth, freedom of belief, respect for others, foster spiritual growth in our members, a place where people can find their own ground for spiritual exploration, shared spiritual growth, beacon, refuge for free thinkers, everyone has a place, still has the good aspects of what feels "churchy" (community, caring) but I don't have to park my beliefs at the door, non-creedal, theologically liberal community, support each other in times of grief, hardship, and joy

Make the world a better place: stewardship, social, environment, planet earth, manifesting our principles, practice our values, do good work, taking action, respect for the interdependent web, live our values (the seven principles), positive impact on the community, social justice, move forward, positive change for others as well as ourselves, to change the community and the world for the better

Help us become better persons: celebrate diversity of beliefs, come as you are, learning, open

Balance: social justice action and cultivating spiritual needs

3. What is important to you about how we impact the larger community and world?

Challenge ourselves to grow: constantly reevaluate: examine what we can do differently, ask what's next, how do we do better, book groups, discussions, etc. are a good start but must convert to action, more walk less talk, need more aggressive UU outreach and recruiting, there is a role for the "prophet" in the street telling those who will listen about who we are, sanctuary, variety of thoughts and beliefs, do it SO LOUD that it's really getting us noticed, be known [] by the success of our actions, give voice to an alternative way of being religious, be visible and vocal in our community, We need to *BE* and we need to *BE SEEN AS* a place that is welcoming to Black and brown people, have FUN! More music! More kinds of music! More music in general! More joy!

Serve broader community: serve large community, show up for different groups, serve without evangelizing or imposing, impacting community kindly and compassionately, "how" is as important as "what", be respectful to other's ideas and traditions, our natural world, how are we viewed by those in our community outside UU?, serve those in need within UU, esp. seniors (CareNet), action-orientation, we really live it, we rake action, show up, speak out, act, side with love and with justice, touch thousands of lives in thousands of ways,

3. What is important to you about how we impact the larger community and world?

Community Partnerships: make connections, get involved in wider community organizations, UVA, be presence/ally/support for other groups, partner with others doing great work rather than “do it our way”, e.g. PACEM and IMPACT, ASP, soup kitchen, refugee welcome project,
•Social Justice: tolerance, equality, equity, inclusivity and stewardship, we must stand for something, we have been brave in the past

Amplify individual efforts: education, broaden awareness, opens doors for us, expands our individual effect

Positive Examples: Welcoming Congregation, Green Sanctuary, Divestment, Supporting BLM, name change, Social Action Collection,

Draft Mission Statements

Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Charlottesville

a brief statement...

The UU Congregation of Charlottesville is a community of love in action.

Together we nurture mind, heart, and spirit.

Together we work for justice and peace.

a longer statement...

Our mission is to create a beloved community where every individual is valued, nurtured, and empowered to make a positive impact in the world.

We cultivate love as a transformative power that guides us towards social justice, environmental stewardship, spiritual growth, and intellectual freedom.

a series of points...

We, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville, exist to:

- Provide a sanctuary for spiritual, emotional, and intellectual growth
- Nurture children, youth, and people of all ages
- Create a welcoming and open-minded community
- Work toward a more just and equitable world
- Care for our planet and the interdependent web of existence

Feedback and Ideas?

You can also email us at

Mission@uucharlottesville.org

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Thank You!!

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