



UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION

UUA Article II
COUNTERPOINT

Resistance, Dissenters, "Gadflies"
"The Loyal Opposition"



Unitarian 4th Principle Group

An unaffiliated, grassroots group
Unitarian4thprinciple.wordpress.com
formed in Fall 2022
unitarian4thprinciple@gmail.com

Mary Bennett

Joined Vancouver Unitarians in 1991
Canadian Unitarian Council
Executive Director 2000-2008
Honorary Life Member

Blog: maryunitarian.wordpress.com

Unitarian Universalist Association By-laws, Article 2 = "Principles and Sources"

June 2020 - Commission formed

Fall 2022 - Draft circulated

January 2023 - Next draft circulated

Some changes made, notably, added text reflecting

Principle 4 ("free and responsible search for truth and meaning) and

Principle 5 ("democratic processes")

We affirm and promote



4th Principle

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.

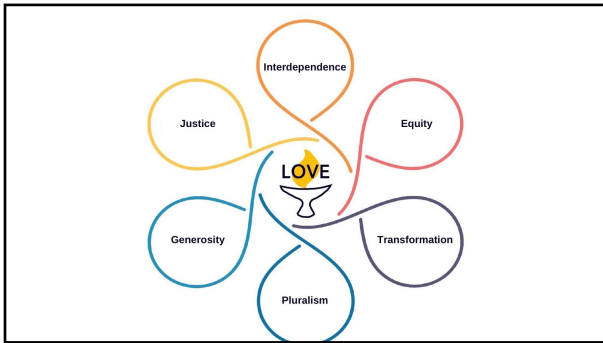
Charge to the Commission



Our commitment to personal, institutional and cultural change rooted in **anti-oppression, anti-racism, and multiculturalism** values and practices is **love in action**, and should be centered.

[and] **de-center** practices that **reinforce white supremacy culture.**

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/charge>



Principles > Values + Covenants

April 30 - Deadline for feedback <https://discuss.uua.org/>
 May - Public discussion workshops
 June 14 - UUA board posts final text
 June 22, 2023 - Article II mini-assembly
 June 25, 2023 - Last day of GA

Topic	Replies	Views	Activity
#66 Dick Burkhardt Changes to Freedom of Belief Amendment Ideas (C-2-S-Freedom of Belief)	2	37	6h
#15 Matthew Johnson Freedom and Conscience Amendment Ideas (C-2-S-Freedom of Belief)	5	53	6h
#141 Jay Kiskel Rewrite C-2.5 Freedom of Belief Amendment Ideas (C-2-S-Freedom of Belief)	0	15	2d
#83 Margie Storch Change "Belief" to "Search for Truth" Amendment Ideas (C-2-S-Freedom of Belief)	0	17	2d
#108 Jonathan Tweet Freedom and Autonomy Amendment Ideas (C-2-S-Freedom of Belief)	2	16	2d
#88 Tim Bartik Actionable Freedom of Belief Amendment Ideas (C-2-S-Freedom of Belief)	6	51	2d

GA #111 | Frances Kozlar | Tree Instead of Flower

What is your suggestion or idea?

I would like to propose a substantial change to the core values in section 2.2. I have attached a new version of a tree with all the values, rather than a flower. Among other modifications, I suggest adding "Covenant and Communication", "Radical Inclusion and Welcoming", and "Democracy" as central values. You may choose to just accept these and not the whole tree.

Unitarian Universalist Association
"Principles and Sources" = By-laws, Article 2

June 2023 - 50% to go forward
 June 2024 - 2/3 vote
 Amendments need a 3/4 vote
 From the UUA Board of Trustees or at least 15 congregations

- ### Groups speaking against UUA recent Directions
- Concerned about
- Deleting principles and sources - change to "values and covenants"
 - Changing purpose of the UUA
 - Perceived lessening of democratic process
 - Perceived discouraging of open dialogue
 - The anti-racism approach used by UUA ("dogmatic critical race theory")
 - UUA ignoring its own by-laws - e.g. only one candidate for President
 - UUA board more centralized, removed district elections

Who are these groups?

- Save the 7 Principles website
- Unitarian Universalist Multi-Racial Unity Action Council
- Fifth Principle Project - Democracy
- 4th Principle Group ("Tomato Soup Group") at Quimper UU Fellowship
- UU Inter Congregational Discussion Forum (email list)
- Vancouver-based 4th Principle Group inspired by Quimper group
- Rev. Todd Eklof/ UU Spokane/ "Gadflies" - 2019 Book The Gadfly Papers
- **North American Unitarian Association naunitarians.org**

What are concerned individuals doing?

Some are

- leaving their congregations
- joining some other religious group such as a Congregationalist church
- leaving (or staying) and joining the new Association/congregation (NAUA)
- splitting into two congregations (UU Spokane and Inland NW UU)
- joining or forming informal networking groups for "emotional support", advocacy and free discussion
- **"Quiet quitting"** - reducing their volunteer and financial contributions

Save the 7 Principles Website

A radical rewrite of Article II of the UUA bylaws threatens our liberal faith. Learn about this here.



Post Card 5½" x 4½"

<https://savethe7principles.org>

savethe7principles@gmail.com



Business Card 3½ x 2"

Save the 7 Principles Website includes

What is Changing?

Side-by-side presentation of **existing Article 2** and **proposed changes**.

Pro-Con Review Presentation of both sides of the issue.

A Brief Commentary (2 pages)

A Flawed Process

Discussion of failure to live up to its charge to make **incremental changes** and to carry out the process **transparently and inclusively**.

Why Retain the UU Principles? In-depth discussion

Detailed Analysis (17 pages)

Videos

Title	Author	Description
<i>Genealogy of the UU Principles</i>	Rev. Richard Trudeau	A video overview of the origins of the 7 Principles and 6 Sources.
<i>On Accountability</i>	Kenneth Ing	In this video Kenneth Ing makes a convincing case that the accountability language, combined with the covenantal language, the redefinition of the Purposes paragraph, and the changes to the Freedom of Belief paragraph in the Article II rewrite, WILL change Unitarian Universalism (UU). Kenneth backs up his assertions, with UUA leader statements, and UUA documents going back to 2015, and as recent as 2022 GA statements by current UUA President nominee Sofia Betancourt. Everyone who is thinking about how to vote on the Article II proposal should take the time to watch this video.

Changes make UU unrecognizable and undesirable

- deleting the 7 Principles
- replacing the Principles with 6 nebulous values
- introducing accountability (with an unspecified standard of measurement)
- stating a covenant for each value
- changing the purpose of the UUA
- inverting the flow of power and authority between congregations and the UUA
- eliminating freedom of belief

Principles in draft

Initial draft included text similar to

Principles 1, 2, 3 and 7

Text was added similar to Principle 4 (Free and responsible speech) (under "Pluralism") and 5 (Democratic process)

But not Principle 6 (world community)

Bruce Knott's presentation on Unitarian Universalists at UN - Past, Present Future (will be posted on naunitarians.org)

Bruce was Executive Director of the UU United Nations Office 2008-2022



Fifth Principle Project - Democratic Processes

Every Voice Deserves a Vote

organic grassroots initiative to gather into community UUs who want to **reinvigorate the right of conscience and renew the democratic process** in the governing of our denomination.

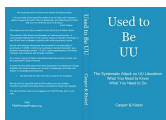
The current at-large nature of the UUA Board of Trustees renders the board:

- Unaccountable to the free and independent congregations it is required to serve.
- Isolates it from diversity of perspectives on the nature and direction of our faith movement.

Formed: 2018

Key people: **Jay Kiskel and Frank Casper**, Authors of "Used to Be UU"

Used To Be UU



The Systematic Attack on UU Liberalism

Published: **March 22, 2021**

Under the rubric of creating the "beloved community" Unitarian Universalist leadership seeks to move the denomination toward a more **ecclesiastical** rather than **associational** governing structure. This involves replacing the Unitarian Universalist belief system founded on the Seven Principles with something leadership calls "**liberatory theology**" where principled dissent will no longer be welcomed.

By Jay Kiskel and Frank Casper, founders of The Fifth Principle Project

Fifth Principle Project

We affirm and promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large

- Bylaw sticklers
- President - one candidate
- Change in UUA board make up
- Changes in procedures for getting a booth at General Assembly
- Changes in how to run by nomination

They believe there has not been a democratic process for developing the new statement, e.g. Charge to the Commission had instructions that limited scope

Wikipedia says

Unitarian Universalism is a [liberal religion](#) characterized by a "**free and responsible search for truth and meaning**". Unitarian Universalists assert no [creed](#), but instead are unified by their shared search for [spiritual growth](#).

From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitarian_Universalism

4th Principle Affinity Group

Quimper UU Fellowship, **Port Townsend**, Washington State

70 out of 300 members belong

They meet for a monthly potluck

Recently added a zoom discussion after

Affinity group is approved and on the fellowship's website

- Concerned about silencing and censoring and even shunning and shaming
- Members wanted to do an educational series but that was not approved

uu-inter-congregational-discussion-list@googlegroups.com

- email group with 142 members
- Approximately 20 messages per day
- Weekly "emotional support" zoom call
- Private group
- Contact: Julie Hotard <julie.hotard@gmail.com>
- Shared google drive

Mainly focused on "save the 7 principles" but conversation ranges

Vancouver based 4th Principle Group

28 members from 7 different congregations

14 are involved with Vancouver Unitarians congregation

Email group - Sharing information and concerns

Occasional in person and zoom meetings

Founding Statement sent to UCV and Beacon Boards for information

No congregational resources (zoom account, email lists, etc.) are used

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

Founding Statement:

Why the "Fourth Principle" Group?

The Fourth Principle states: We affirm and promote a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Members of this group are very concerned that the values embodied in this principle are being seriously eroded in the CUC, our congregations, and the UUA. The values expressed in all our principles are what attracted many to become Unitarians.

In 2021, the CUC managed the process for considering the 8th Principle in ways that for some Unitarians severely limited discussion of the need for and wording of the proposed principle, and ignored its own policy for full and open discussion of major proposals like this one.

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

There are a number of reported cases of members being intimidated and disrespected when trying to raise concerns with the proposed principle. Others took refuge in silence. Still others felt surprised and frustrated by the lack of genuine discussion forums. This has led some to cancel their membership, to reduce their volunteer activities, to reduce their financial support, or to just remain silent and dissatisfied.

To help build trust and dialogue, new members of the group are asked to post a short biography within a week or so describing their connections to their own congregation, any connections to the wider denominational communities, and their current concerns, especially as they relate to the Fourth Principle.

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

UUA Article II - Values and Covenants

In 2023, the UUA intends to change Article II of its bylaws where the seven principles (and six sources) are stated. The draft text of the revised Article II replaces the seven principles with seven "values and covenants".

The "Pluralism" value only mentions "free and responsible search for truth and meaning" as something we do and not as a value we affirm and promote.

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

As well, the revised article changes the purpose of the UUA from "serving" the needs of its independent member congregations to "assisting" in their ministry. The significance of the change is unclear but it appears the UUA intends to be more proactive about how member congregations conduct their ministry.

A significant number of UUs in the USA are troubled by the proposals, and by the authoritarian and intolerant ways in which the UUA is conducting the Article II review process.

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

Changes to the UUA bylaws are not binding on Unitarian congregations in Canada (unless, perhaps, they are also UUA members), but some Canadian Unitarians are concerned that there will be pressures to follow UUA's lead.

What happens at the UUA matters to Canadian Unitarians because, while Unitarian congregations can call any minister they want, for all practical purposes they are **limited to choosing a minister approved by the UUA**. Thus, those searching for a new settled minister (like UCV) select from a pool of candidates who may not be aligned with Canadian Unitarian principles and organizational purposes.

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

The members of the Fourth Principle Group are committed to:

1. Affirming and promoting a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. We support individuals in their **search for truth and meaning for themselves, and in speaking out against restriction of those explorations.**
2. Sustaining our liberal values- and principles-based faith tradition,
3. Supporting our congregations in fulfilling these commitments, and
4. Adhering to a Covenant of Healthy Relations like that of the Vancouver Unitarians.

*Unitarian Fourth Principle Group: Founding Statement -
- Revised January 22, 2023, to refer to modified Article II proposal.*

Unitarian 4th Principle Group

For more information

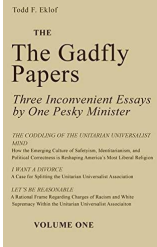
Website:

Unitarian4thprinciple.wordpress.com

Email: Unitarian4thprinciple@gmail.com

Googlegroup: 4thprinciple@googlegroups.com

The "Gadflies" - Gadfly Papers



By Rev. Dr. Todd Eklof, Minister at UU Spokane

Published and distributed June 2019 at UUA GA

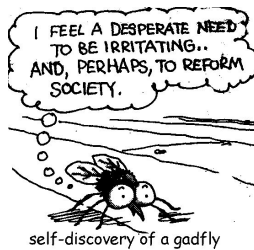
3 Inconvenient Essays

- The Coddling of the Unitarian Universalist Mind
- I Want a Divorce
- Let's Be Reasonable

Gad·fly /'gad,flī/ noun

- a fly that bites livestock, especially a horsefly, warble fly, or botfly.
- an annoying person, especially one who provokes others into action by criticism.

Socrates referred to himself as a **gadfly** as a way of saying his philosophical investigations are annoying but necessary to the moral health of Athens.



THE CODDLING OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MIND

How the Emerging Culture of Safetyism, Identitarianism, and Political Correctness is Reshaping America's Most Liberal Religion

I WANT A DIVORCE

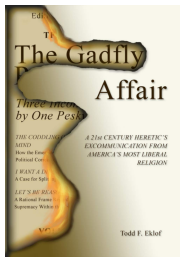
A Case for Splitting the Unitarian Universalist Association

LET'S BE REASONABLE

A Rational Frame Regarding Charges of Racism and White Supremacy Within the Unitarian Universalist Association



The Gadfly Affair - the sequel



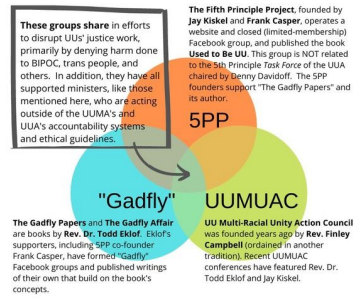
Rev. Todd Eklof was removed from UUMA Fellowship for noncooperation (bullying and abusive behavior) in 2020

- Published April 6 2021

Note he is *still* a Unitarian Universalist minister
Congregations ordain ministers.

UU Spokane is a member of the UUA.

A second congregation was formed in Spokane.



North American Unitarian Association

<https://www.naunitarians.org/>



Home Membership Services About Support Us Liberal Beacon - Newsletter Contact Us

Open to individuals and congregations

Encourage keeping UUA membership *and* joining NAUA

Open to Unitarians, UUs and those of liberal faith who are interested

Approximately 200 have joined

NAUA Board

President: Rev. Dr. **Todd Eklof**
Treasurer: **Lynn Jinishian**, Spokane WA.
Secretary: **Frank Casper**, Atlanta GA
Directors at Large:
Ron Strange, Port Townsend WA
Terry Anderson, PhD, Edmonton AB
Candace Schmidt, Spokane WA
Richard Gammon, Spokane WA
Robert Jinishian, Spokane, WA
Mike Long, Charlotte, NC



UU Spokane Board of Trustees meeting on youtube

Terry Anderson <https://virtualcanuck.ca/about/>

Virtual Canuck Teaching and Learning in a Net-Centric World

Home About Terry Anderson Contact Me Consulting and Speaking Some of My Open Access Publications Music Travel login



Home > Unitarian > Disruptive Critical Theory Strikes Canadian Unitarians

Disruptive Critical Theory Strikes Canadian Unitarians

May 9, 2022 Written by **terrya** 1 Comment

The following post will perhaps be of little interest to those not involved with Unitarian Universalism (UU). However I believe this issue has relevance in our broader society including the universities, government, NGOs and businesses. So please – read on!

The post documents the recent fall of Canada's most liberal church into one now dominated by critical theory ideology. Critical ideology has been gaining adherents in both social and commercial life since it emerged from the Universities in the last two decades. However, I hope the story will perhaps be of value to

NAUA Services

NAUA is a member service organization dedicated to supporting and promoting the practice of liberal religion by embracing **freedom, reason, and tolerance**—all rooted in our commitment to **human dignity without requiring adherence to any specific theological creed**.

- (Monthly) Community Worship
- Communication

THE LIBERAL BEACON

ISSUE 1

April 2023

Meetings, Small Groups and Learning

- Annual Meetings
- Small Group Ministry
- [NAUA Academy](#)
 - Learning about the history and values of liberal religion and other valuable topics are among the interesting classes and presentations provided in our ongoing education programs

Ministers and Ministerial Search

- **Ministerial Search**
 - ...a clearinghouse [for] ministers and congregations in search to find each other.
- **Professional Advice**
 - ...many experienced ministers ...are willing to provide guidance to congregations and fellowships...
- **Support for Ministers**
 - regular monthly meeting to foster support, collegiality, and learning.

The Unitarian Universalist Multi-Racial Unity Action Council

The Unity of Light and Dark Skinned People of the World

Third Wednesday night Vespers services on zoom with a sermon

<https://www.uumuac.org/>

UUMUAC

- committed to the **Seven Principles** as the only tools required for this work.
- a majority ...in the UUA, the UU Ministers Association, and both UU seminaries--are promoting a different approach
"Dismantle our white supremacy culture."
- we are convinced that it can only make racism worse.

UUMUAC Executive

Rev. Richard Trudeau, Chair

Rev. Dr. Finley C. Campbell, Vice-Chair

Dick Burkhart, Corresponding Secretary

Carl Wolf, Recording Secretary

Allan Lindrup, Treasurer



A Convocation of the UU Multiracial Unity Action Council In the Beloved Community Everyone is Allowed to Speak

Saturday, May 13, 2023, 11:00am-12:30pm Central time 9:00 am Pacific

Session 1. MLK'S 'Beloved Community' - Dr. Matthew Shear

Session 2. My Aunt Emma's Vision of the Beloved Community - Rev. Dr. Finley C. Campbell

Session 3. The Meaning of 'Love' in the Judeo-Christian Tradition - Rev. Richard Trudeau

Session 4. The Importance of Open Discussion and Honest Sharing - Rev. Richard Trudeau

Session 5. Frederick Douglass' 'Plea for Freedom of Speech in Boston' - Rev. Beverly Seese

--Open Conversation--

Who votes at UUA General Assembly?

Who will decide?

Delegates

All **certified congregations** have one member delegate for every 50 members (or fraction thereof), with a minimum of two delegates.

(same as Canadian Unitarian Council)

The Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF) has 22 member delegates.

PLUS Religious Professional Delegates

Religious professionals serving, affiliated with, or employed by [certified congregations](#) can be delegates (separate from the member delegates)

- **Ministers** employed at least half time
- **Community Ministers** working at least half time in any ministry setting.
- **Religious Educators** who are [active members](#) of the **Liberal Religious Educators Association** ("LREDA") and employed by the congregation.
- **Emeritus/a Ministers and Religious Educators**

Some Canadian congregations are UUA members

16 Canadian congregations are UUA members

10 are **certified** in 2022 (and therefore can vote)

- 4 contributed between \$11,000-\$20,000
- 2 contributed \$100
- 4 paid \$0 contributions

(6 did not certify in 2022)

Note: **North Shore**, but not UCV, Beacon and South Fraser are UUA members

An example: North Shore Unitarian Church

171 members - **4 member delegates** (at both CUC and UUA meetings)

Plus Religious Professionals Delegates

- + Minister
- + Director Emerita for Lifespan Learning
- + Community minister

(No current Religious Educator)

Total possible delegates: 7

https://www.uua.org/find/results?location%5Bsource_configuration%5D%5Borigin_address%5D=Canada&location%5Bvalue%5D=25

Will the Article II revision pass in June?

Will there be further revisions in advance or proposed changes at GA?

Will it be controversial?

Will some people be unhappy enough to leave?

How will it affect Canadians?

Will it pass with two-thirds in 2024?

“Even to question, truly is an answer.”

Questions and Comments? Further Discussion?

This forum was brought to you by the

Vancouver Unitarian 4th Principle Group

I welcome your corrections, questions and comments about this presentation

unitarianmary@gmail.com