

Conflict Mediation and Resolution

Affirmation:

We will seek mediation when we are in an unresolved conflict through a process that we will uphold as members of our Beloved Community.

Process:

When we are unable to resolve a conflict with another, we can ask for the assistance of Team on Ministry and Congregational Relations, which may be asked to mediate a resolution or to recommend seeking assistance from other sources. With input from all involved, The Team on Ministry and Congregational Relations will recommend the best methods to bring those involved to constructive interaction.

The Team on Ministry and Congregational Relations may wish to employ some of the following steps toward resolution:

- Facilitate face-to-face meeting(s)
- Identify the conflict
- Urge those involved to put the good of the community above personal needs
- Help to identify common ground
- Help the parties to understand their part in the conflict
- Establish a consensus-based solution that all parties will support.

Resources include:

- The Covenant of Beloved Community
- The Unitarian Universalist Principles
- Ministers
- Peace Treaty of the Community of Mindfulness
- The Team on Ministry and Congregational Relations
- Community Mediation Resources

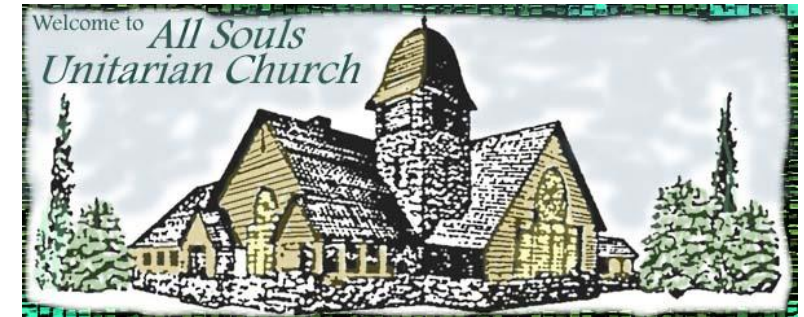
Outcome:

Through the mediation, we will offer compromise to our own positions, and accept a reconciliation of our once disparate goals.

Unitarian Universalist Association 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.



All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Colorado Springs

Covenant Of Beloved Community

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church encourages every Member and Friend to embrace this Covenant of Beloved Community as an essential part of our faith journey. The covenant is grounded in the Unitarian Universalist Principles; we intend this agreement to provide guidance in implementing these principles in our everyday lives. It is in loving relationship with those in our community that we have the opportunity to grow spiritually as individuals and as a fellowship. It is here, in this Beloved Community, that we come together to express our common purpose and to be strengthened through understanding, compassion, and forgiveness.

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church

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Our Collective Vision of Beloved Community

A Community of Common Purpose

All Souls is a safe haven that nurtures and enhances personal and spiritual growth. It is a place of trust where personal enrichment arises from serving the community.

Awareness of Self and Others

All Souls is a welcoming place where those in the community respect themselves and others. We are a shelter of many beliefs where minority and opposing views are accepted and respected.

Personal Responsibility

We maintain our dignity and integrity by taking responsibility for our actions. All Souls is a place where we invite constructive criticism when it is free of antagonism. We strive to recognize when our conflicts have become selfish and non-productive. Participation in the activities and leadership of the church is encouraged for all who would choose to act for the good of community and self.

Listening, Speaking and Acting with Unity of Purpose

All Souls is a place where we listen openly to the ideas of others. We actively listen for the meaning and feelings within others' words so that we may better understand their message.

We affirm the inherent worth and dignity of others and bring the intentions of kindness and respect to our spoken words. We are mindful of what we say and how our words may be interpreted by others, whether or not they are present. We are accepting of others' views and, while we may disagree, do not challenge the worth of the person behind those views.

We fulfill our commitments to the community and to each other. We give generously of ourselves within our means and are grateful that others do, as well. We come here to learn the skills of loving kindness and to practice what we have learned in our community.

Reconciliation and Forgiveness

We acknowledge and respect our personal differences. When disagreements arise, we help each other resolve them before they escalate to destructive levels of conflict. We offer the gift of forgiveness and are aware that reconciling conflict allows us to remain in fellowship.

Co-Creating Beloved Community

We choose to become part of a community with a common purpose to foster an atmosphere where the Unitarian Universalist Principles may be learned and practiced.

With this common purpose as our source, we covenant to:

- ❑ Welcome all who come to us with acceptance and respect for the differences among us.
- ❑ Keep our discussions to topics and issues rather than personalities.
- ❑ Practice patience and speak the truth directly and with compassion.
- ❑ Reflect carefully about the potential results of our words and actions before we speak or act.
- ❑ Acknowledge that we may not always agree with group decisions; however, we will support the consensus of the larger church community and seek to find our common goals.
- ❑ Seek to resolve our disagreements to our mutual satisfaction, and to ask for assistance when they cannot be resolved.
- ❑ Speak directly to those with whom we have disagreements rather than to a third party; we will not act as messengers between parties in conflict.
- ❑ Contribute to the community at a level that is healthy for us as individuals – intellectually, financially and with gifts of time and energy.
- ❑ Act with loving kindness as best we can at all times, seeking to promote justice, equity and compassion.
- ❑ Understand that being a member of Beloved Community requires learning and practice.

Resolution, Reconciliation and Healing

We know that there may be times in the life of relationships within the church that we do not model our vision of Beloved Community. The following steps to resolve, reconcile and heal our inevitable differences are offered to those on the path to Beloved Community so that we may remain in fellowship.

Interpersonal Conflict Resolution

Affirmation:

When we find ourselves involved in or experiencing conflict, we will not ignore it or pretend that it doesn't exist, rather we will talk to the person(s) involved with the intention of solving the problem.

Process:

Individuals and leaders bear the responsibility to recognize and name problems as they arise and address them under the terms of this covenant. When we find ourselves involved in a conflict, we accept this and become responsible for seeking solutions. As individuals, we will go directly to the other party and carefully listen to the other's point of view until we understand it; we will ask the other party to do the same. We will avoid "triangulation"-- telling others outside the conflict, about the problem; instead, we will engage in open communication with the person(s) directly involved. While we may sometimes need to agree to disagree, if it is in the best interest of the community to resolve our conflict, we will attempt to find a compromise that leads to a mutually satisfactory solution.

Resources include:

- The Covenant of Beloved Community
- The Unitarian Universalist Principles
- Our Selves
- Team on Ministry and Congregational Relations
- Church members and friends
- Minister
- Peace Treaty of the Community of Mindfulness
- On-going training and workshops in conflict resolution and communication

Outcome:

Our goal is the resolution of problems by negotiating a win-win collaborative or negotiated acceptable solution.