

Amplifying the Charge



photo by QuianaDenae Perkins; chalice made by Dr. David Frank

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QuianaDenae would like to thank her family and friends who served as thought partners in creating these resources. QuianaDenae wants to give special recognition to the Southern Oregon UU Partnership Communities: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Klamath County, Unitarian Universalists of Grants Pass, and Rogue Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Thanks, as well, to the UUA Lifespan Faith Engagement team (Joy Berry, Anna Bethea, Susan Dana Lawrence) and the UUA Office for Equity, Belonging and Change (Gianni Fogliano, Rob Spirko) for their support, guidance, editing, and feedback which helped this resource grow and thrive.

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Introduction

Unitarian Universalism is in a new phase of growth and transition. In 2017, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Board of Trustees responded to congregational delegates' desire to amend our covenant, beginning to ask, explore, and deepen our understanding of who we are as an association of congregations. The work of self-evaluation has always been a part of our associational bylaws. Self-evaluation helps us stay in alignment with our aspiration to be a living tradition.

This led to the creation of the The Article II Study Commission. The Commission was issued a Charge ([Charge to the Article II Study Commission](#)) that details the expectations and process of evaluating our Association bylaws. Article II is the section of the UUA bylaws that, in the words of UUA Executive Vice President Carey McDonald, “has the language that is at the heart of our faith for many of us as UUs.” (View/hear a [video reading of the Charge to the Article II Commission](#) on YouTube; start at 4:24 and continue to 10:44).

The Article II Commission spent two years engaging the larger UU body in feedback sessions, videos, and surveys, which alone garnered 10,925 responses. Then, the Commission issued a report proposing changes to the UUA Article II bylaws that aligned with the spirit and energy of the charge.

In May 2023, following the process outlined by the Commission, the member congregations of UUA shifted into the Amendment phase. Congregants offered suggestions, changes, and recommendations to amend the proposed, new Article II bylaws. All of the suggested changes were brought to the annual business meeting of the UUA General Assembly of 2023 for discussion and voting. Again, using an outlined transparent process, 13 amendments were considered at General Assembly 2023.

On June 24, 2023, representative delegates to the General Assembly voted to continue considering adoption of the proposed changes and the incorporated amendments of the Article II Study Commission at the 2024 UU General Assembly. The final, integrated bylaws proposal will be available in the coming months.

In preparation for the next stage of the bylaws adoption process, with a desire to extend opportunities for adult faith formation and to support congregations to deepen their personal, communal, and denominational grounding, a multi-disciplinary team created this discussion series paired with resources for worship: AMPLIFYING THE CHARGE.

Implementation: How and Why

AMPLIFYING THE CHARGE offers discussions and worship, designed to be offered in parallel. Four discussion gatherings are paired with four sets of worship resources. Use the worship resources during a Sunday or other worship time as close as possible to the corresponding discussion session.

AMPLIFYING THE CHARGE provides a framework for multi-layered engagement. It supports communities to learn more about our faith, theology, and governance, incorporating personal experiences of faith, spirit, and humanity.

AMPLIFYING THE CHARGE invites congregations to engage in a moment of intentional study while also experiencing sermon topics and pulpit resources that strengthen the ongoing transformation process within the congregation and in our denomination.

Goals

- Support congregations with a process of self-paced learning
- Support small group adult faith formation
- Encourage relationship-building and covenant-keeping
- Provide historical information on our faith
- Provide theological grounding in Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism
- Increase understanding of the denominational governance structure
- Provide congregants with a safe space to process their faith journey, personal history, and theological understanding.

Learning Targets

- Practice integrated program delivery as demonstrated with the weaving together of small group ministry and Sunday services
- Learn to use the Mutual Invitation small group conversation model
The leader or a designated person will share first. After that person has spoken, [they invite] another to share. Whom you invite does not need to be the person next to you, and it is better if not. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share. If you don't want to say anything, simply say 'pass' and proceed to invite another to share. We will do this until

everyone has been invited. — from The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb by Eric Law


- Learn the power of deep listening in small group conversation
Deep listening is suspending judgment and being fully present with another person to understand [their] experience or point of view. Deep listening involves hearing more than the words of the speaker but taps into the deeper meaning, unspoken needs, and feelings conveyed. It is something that is done with the heart as well as the mind. Through deep listening, we not only communicate information but affirm and support others as well as build and transform relationships. — from The Art of Deep Listening by Roger K. Allen
- Practice collaborative Sunday Service planning and implementation

Recommendations

- Structure of the Program
 - The Amplifying the Charge program is designed for congregations to provide tandem, parallel experiences—in community worship and small group ministry discussion—that reinforce and stimulate each other, thereby reaching as many members of the congregation as possible.
 - In order for ATC to be effective for both small group ministries and Worship Teams, the two groups will need to work in collaboration. This will ensure the needs of most are being considered in the planning and implementation of ATC. Please note that planning teams for each community will look unique based on governance, size, resources, and volunteer capacity.
- Discussion Group
 - Short-term small-group ministry
 - To be offered in four sessions
 - Schedule weekly if possible; stretch the series no longer than eight weeks.
 - Requires a facilitation team, with critical roles being lead facilitator, timekeeper, and logistics
 - *Facilitators guide the process as outlined in the guide while also holding the group to a covenant of right relationship and positive engagement*
 - *The timekeeper monitors time for individual sharing and the timing of activities within each session.*

- *Logistics vary by community practices; consider your processes for registration, room reservations, and community/in-group communication.*
 - Facilitator preparation
 - Preview the sermons provided in the Worship section so you will be able to offer more context and support in the small group experience.
 - Plan to open and close discussion time as is your congregational practice. Explore the Worship Resources, below, for Opening and Closing words that can work for your small group.
 - Recommended practices
 - Most effective with two facilitators for a small group (8-10 people); 3-4 facilitators for larger groups (10-20 people)
 - Small groups should plan to meet for 90 minutes, and larger groups for 120 minutes; a further breakdown of activity times is provided in each session.
 - TECH NOTE: There are video components in each session; communities should plan for shared viewing (a shared screen the group can watch together and an Internet connection to stream online resources); large groups may require two monitors and a speaker.
- Worship Resources
 - Sermon topic prompts and pre-recorded sermon options
 - Musical suggestions that support the theme
 - Time for All Ages materials that support the theme
 - *All of these can be found in the Worship Resources section, below*

SESSION 1 DISCUSSION GUIDE	Who Am I? <i>A facilitated sharing circle about our spiritual past and present</i>
LEARNING TARGETS	<input type="checkbox"/> Build covenant <input type="checkbox"/> Build communal trust <input type="checkbox"/> Practice active sharing and listening <input type="checkbox"/> Practice small group dialogue and discussion
FACILITATION NOTES	
VIDEO	UUA Covenant: What Do We Promise One Another? (2:36)
GOOGLE SLIDE DECK	<i>There is no Google slide deck for Session 1.</i>
TIMING	Steps 1-6: approximately 30 min. Step 7: approximately 55-85 min. depending on group size Steps 8-9 approximately 5-7 min.
LOGISTICS	You may need to create smaller discussion circles, depending on group size. Please keep the whole group together until you have created a covenant.
EMAIL MESSAGE	<p>Send this message seven days before the program starts:</p> <p>Friends, We want to welcome you into the Amplifying The Charge small group ministry and Sunday service series.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In preparation for the next stage of the bylaws adoption process, with a desire to extend opportunities for adult faith formation and to support congregations to deepen their personal, communal, and denominational grounding, a multi-disciplinary team created a discussion series paired with resources for worship: AMPLIFYING THE CHARGE.</p> <p>Over the next few weeks, we will spend time in small discussion and sharing groups exploring our personal faith experiences,</p>

	<p>learning about the larger denomination’s formation and theology, and understanding proposed changes in our association's bylaws. In addition, these same themes will be shared in our Sunday services in our readings, time for all ages, and music.</p> <p>A reminder email will include the upcoming small group discussion topic for each week and any notes or links. Please make time to read these emails and come to the session prepared to engage.</p> <p>Each small group will meet four times; each session is [length of session] minutes. We are meeting at [date, time, location].</p> <p>Please bring journaling materials to each session for notes and personal reflections.</p> <p>Attached is the video for Week 1. We will watch the video in session together.</p> <p> Unitarian Universalist Covenant: What Do We Promise One A... (3:41)</p> <p>We look forward to being on this journey together.</p> <p>[signatures of facilitation team members]</p>
<p>CHALICE READING</p>	<p>Chalice Lighting on Thresholds By Florence Caplow</p> <p>We kindle this flame, Honoring the doorways in our souls: The windows through which we gaze at one another The balconies where we catch glimpses of sky The thresholds we stand on this morning Wondering, hoping, fearing, dreaming.</p>

SESSION 1 FACILITATOR SCRIPT

1. GROUNDING

Start the group in a single circle.

Introduce the facilitator team.

Read aloud the first six paragraphs of the Introduction to Amplifying the Charge (all of page 2, up to the heading, "Implementation").

2. CHALICE LIGHTING

Chalice Lighting on Thresholds by Florence Caplow

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each person to introduce themselves: name, pronouns, their goal in attending the group (short 1-2 min.).

Introduce the Mutual Invitation process in which each speaker invites someone else when they are done speaking. Say that as we share during this session we'll use this method to make sure everyone has opportunities to speak, speak later, or pass.

4. VIDEO

[UUA Covenant: What Do We Promise One Another?](#) (2:36)

5. COVENANT CREATION

Work with the group to create an Amplifying the Charge covenant that will hold the group across all four sessions. Include steps for relationship repair in the event of an oops/ouch/harm.

6. TODAY'S DISCUSSION

Say, using these words or your own:

We are glad everyone has agreed on the agenda, and we have a working covenant that we can use to be in deeper dialogue as we take this journey together.

For the remainder of the day, we will participate in an active listening circle. I want to define listening circles in case it is new to you. Each person will share as they feel moved. We will all listen with open hearts, offering no feedback or cross-talk.

The goal is to strengthen your sharing and listening muscles, to anchor yourself in relationship: to self, to the other participants, and to the work of this congregation.

Each person will be given time to share. We will leave 5 minutes before the session for check out and prep for the next session.

7. SHARING CIRCLE

Say:

The question we'll address today is:

What is your spiritual past and present, and what do you see as your spiritual future?

Give each person up to 6 minutes to offer a brief, overview answer to the question. Say the timekeeper will offer a 1-minute warning to each speaker.

Tell the group that, after each speaker, in unison you'll say "Thank you for sharing your truth." Lead them to practice one time before getting started.

Remind the group to use Mutual Invitation. Invite someone to go first (then, if needed, remind them to invite someone else).

8. CLOSE

Say:

We want to thank you all for coming today, for being honest and sharing with your whole heart.


We will meet next at [date, time, location].

We will be exploring our UU history from Europe to America.

Then say:

As part of closing, we will do a quick check-out round. Please share one word that describes today's session.

9. Lead the quick check-out round, thank everyone again, and extinguish the chalice.

SESSION 2 DISCUSSION GUIDE	How Did We Get Here? <i>An Overview of Unitarian Universalist Unitarian Universalist History</i>
LEARNING TARGETS	<input type="checkbox"/> Unitarian Universalist Unitarian Universalist History <input type="checkbox"/> Congregational governance <input type="checkbox"/> Practice small group dialogue and discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Practice active sharing and listening <input type="checkbox"/> The role of covenant in our faith <input type="checkbox"/> The role of congregational polity <input type="checkbox"/> History of Association Principles <input type="checkbox"/> Common practices among UU Congregations
FACILITATION NOTES	
VIDEO	We Are Unitarian Universalists (3:17)
GOOGLE SLIDE DECK	ATC Session 2 Google slide deck
TIMING	Steps 1-5: approximately 30 min. Steps 6-7: approximately 55-85 min. (depending on group size) Step 8-10: approximately 5-7 min.
LOGISTICS	You may need to create two discussion circles, depending on size of the group.
EMAIL MESSAGE	<p>Send this message six days before the session:</p> <p>Friends,</p> <p>We had a great time last week creating a group covenant to support our journey. We also shared and listened to our faith journeys to strengthen relationships and build connections.</p> <p>This week (Week 2), we will learn about the history of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism. Attached is the video for this week. We will watch the video in session together.</p> <p>Video:  We Are Unitarian Universalists- full video 3:18</p> <p>We look forward to seeing you [date, time, location].</p> <p>[signatures of facilitation team members]</p>

**CHALICE
READING**

**For the Freedom of Faith
By Heather K. Janules**

Our prophets died for the freedom of faith;
We are here in their spirit.
We are here to practice and sustain our living tradition;

To light a chalice,
Claiming for justice
The heat and power of fire.

In our free faith,
We are here,
Seeking freedom from despair,
The freedom to be loved as ourselves,
And the freedom to grow beyond imagination.

We are here,
Gathered in the name of all that we find holy.
Let us give thanks for the gift of gathering here.

Session 2 FACILITATOR SCRIPT

1. GROUNDING

Start the group in a single circle. Re-introduce the facilitator team.

2. CHALICE LIGHTING

For the Freedom of Faith by Heather K Janules

3. RE/INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each person to share their name, pronouns, and any quick thoughts, realizations, or ways the theme of the previous week (*Who Am I?*) showed up in their lives since the last meeting (short, 1-2 min.).

Invite one participant to go first and remind them to use Mutual Invitation.

4. REVIEW

Say:

Last week, in addition to creating a group covenant to support our journey, we also strengthened relationships and built connections by sharing and listening to faith journeys.

Before we move forward, let's read our covenant in a round.

Lead the group to share the reading aloud of their covenant.

5. TODAY'S DISCUSSION

Say:

This week we will learn about the history of Unitarianism|Universalism|Unitarian Universalism.

First, we will watch a video, [We Are Unitarian Universalists](#), to ground us.

Then we will work through a Google slide show presentation that outlines U|U|UU history and includes discussion questions.

6. VIDEO: [We Are Unitarian Universalists](#) (3:17)

7. GOOGLE SLIDE PRESENTATION

Share the slides, reading the information aloud or inviting volunteers to do so.

Facilitate discussion where indicated.

8. CLOSE

Say:

We thank you all for coming today, for being honest and sharing with your whole heart.

We will meet next at [date, time, location].

Next time, we will explore our UU theological understandings.

This next session relies heavily on personal journaling. Please bring journaling supplies with you.

Then, say:

As part of closing, we will do a quick check-out round. Please share one word that describes today's session.

9. Lead the quick check-out round, thank everyone again, and extinguish the chalice.

SESSION 3 DISCUSSION GUIDE	What Keeps Us Here? <i>A short overview of Unitarian Universalist theology</i>
LEARNING TARGETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of Unitarian Universalism’s Theology, Ecclesiology, Soteriology, Eschatology, Missiology, and Pneumatology <input type="checkbox"/> Develop, define, and articulate a personal understanding of Theology, Ecclesiology, Soteriology, Eschatology, Missiology, and Pneumatology <input type="checkbox"/> Practice journaling as a tool for deeper topical exploration <input type="checkbox"/> Practice small group dialogue and discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Practice active sharing and listening
FACILITATION NOTES	
VIDEO	The Big Words Full Video (22:00) with the Rev. Gail Lindsay Marriner, recorded Sunday, January 27, 2013
GOOGLE SLIDE DECK	ATC Session 3 Google slide deck <i>The slide deck will have to be manually paused at the times indicated in the slide deck (also listed below).</i>
TIMING	Steps 1-5: approximately 25 min. Step 6: approximately 55- 85 min. depending on group size Step 7-8: approximately 5-7 min.
LOGISTICS	You may need to create two discussion circles, depending on group size.
EMAIL MESSAGE	<p>Send this message six days before the third session:</p> <p>Friends, Last week we spent time exploring the history of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism. We hope that you learned more about our faith’s growth and expansion.</p> <p>In preparation for session three on theology, we are sharing a video, “The Big Words,” from the Rev. Gail Lindsay Marriner. The video is 22 minutes long and covers many theological concepts in depth. We invite you to watch the full video in advance if that will be helpful in your process. We will also watch the video together in the</p>

	<p>session.</p> <p>Video: https://youtu.be/gYT2GtS2H3c</p> <p>The session interweaves video and journaling. Please bring a journal and writing implements.</p> <p>We look forward to being in community with you [date, time, location.]</p> <p>[signatures of facilitation team members]</p>
<p>CHALICE READING</p>	<p>Exploring Who We Are By Melanie Davis</p> <p>Roasting marshmallows over glowing coals Under the right circumstances, playing with fire is a delight— imagine being gathered round a firepit as the crackling flames invite us to sing, dance, and roast a marshmallow or two.</p> <p>Our chalice also invites us to play, although with ideas rather than with marshmallows. The flame encourages us to explore who we are, our neighbors, and where we are on our spiritual journeys.</p> <p>Today, we light this chalice in the spirit of play. Let us trust the light to guide us in this hour and the days to come, finding joy along the way.</p>

SESSION 3 FACILITATOR SCRIPT

1. GROUNDING

Start the group in a single circle. Re-introduce the facilitator team.

2. CHALICE LIGHTING

Exploring Who We Are by Melanie Davis

3. RE/INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each person to share their name, pronouns, and any quick thoughts, realizations, or ways the theme of the previous week (*How Did We Get Here?*) showed up in their lives since the last meeting (short, 1-2 min.). Invite one participant to go first and remind them to use Mutual Invitation.

4. REVIEW (script)

Say:

Last week we spent time exploring our Unitarian-Universalist-Unitarian Universalist history. We hope that you learned more about U-U-UU growth and expansion. Before we move forward, let's read our covenant in a round.

Lead the group to share the reading aloud of their covenant.

5. TODAY'S DISCUSSION (script continued)

Say:

This time we are going to learn about Unitarian Universalist Theology. This week's video is interwoven into the Google slides we're about to present. We will also have time for personal reflection and discussion.

6. GOOGLE SLIDE PRESENTATION

Share the slides, reading the text information aloud and facilitating the journaling and sharing as indicated.

Manually pause the video after each section, at the times listed:

Intro: 0:00-4:34

God talk: 4:39-8:45

Congregate: 8:45-9:58
Soteriology/Eschatology: 9:58-15:00
Missiology: Video: 15:00-19:02
Pneumatology: Video: 19:02- 22:52

7. CLOSE

Say:

Thank you all for coming today, for being honest and sharing with your whole heart. We will be meeting next [day, time, location]. We will explore our UU Governance and the history of Article II, including the proposed bylaw changes.

Then say:

As part of closing, we will do a quick check-out round. Please share one word that describes today's session.

8. Lead the quick check-out round, thank everyone again, and extinguish the chalice.

SESSION 4 DISCUSSION GUIDE	Where Are We Going? A brief history of Association Governance and Article II Bylaws
LEARNING TARGETS	<input type="checkbox"/> UU Governance model <input type="checkbox"/> Definition of Association Article II bylaws <input type="checkbox"/> History of UU Association Article bylaws (1889, 1853, 1961, 1985) <input type="checkbox"/> Interconnected systems—personal, congregational, and association <input type="checkbox"/> Charge to the Article II Study Commission <input type="checkbox"/> Article II Study Report <input type="checkbox"/> Next moves—personal, congregational, association
FACILITATION NOTES	
VIDEOS	Intro to Article 2 Study Commission (19:00); the reading of the charge by Elandria Williams starts at 4:24 (10:20)
GOOGLE SLIDE DECK	ATC Session 4 Google Slide Deck
TIMING	<p>Steps 1-5: approximately 25 min. Step 6: approximately 55-85 min. depending on group size Step 7-9: approximately 8-10 min.</p> <p>(Please note you may need to create two discussion circles depending on group size)</p>
EMAIL MESSAGE	<p>Send this message six days before the session:</p> <p>Friends, we are heading into our last session together. Last time, we explored Unitarian Universalist Theology. We hope that you learned more about the roots of faith and our “theological house.”</p> <p>This week we are going to learn about Unitarian Universalist Association governance as outlined in Article II of our bylaws and about the proposed changes.</p> <p>We will also watch a short section of the video in the session. We invite you to watch the full video in advance if that will be helpful in your process.</p>

	<p>Video: Intro to Article 2 Study Commission 19:00</p> <p>We look forward to being in community with you [DATE, TIME, LOCATION].</p> <p>[signatures of facilitation team members]</p>
<p>CHALICE READING</p>	<p>Blessed is the Fire That Burns Deep in the Soul by Eric A Heller-Wagner</p> <p>Blessed is the fire that burns deep in the soul. It is the flame of the human spirit touched into being by the mystery of life. It is the fire of reason; the fire of compassion; the fire of community; the fire of justice; the fire of faith. It is the fire of love burning deep in the human heart; the divine glow in every life.</p>
<p>CLOSING BENEDICTION FOR THE DISCUSSION SERIES</p>	<p>The Turning by QuianaDenae Perkins</p> <p>At the last turning, I was invited to a meeting among The sun, the earth, and the moon.</p> <p>The sun asked, "Do you have space in your heart for a great light?" The earth said, "I will hold you down if you are willing." The moon said, "I will guide you if you need it."</p> <p>And it was easy to say YES to the energies of balance. So for a turning, we have found ourselves dancing.</p> <p>The sun took the lead, Sharing a drop of their luminescence. Held deep in my heart when the darkness loomed Held it on the tip of my fingers when others called for it Coming to understand space Becoming a beacon. Learning the nuance of shadow and light.</p>

The earth kept her word.
I was planted deep and rooted hard.
I was uprooted, replanted, and loved until
I was healed and able to feel the small tug from soil calling me
down,
demanding I grow.
again.

And the moon, a sister auntie, stayed faithful at my side.
Always hovering,
Always playing, laughing,
reminding me that joy takes many forms and keeps no schedule
Reassuring me with loving pats and oh child! whispered
commentary.
A subtle and wanted companion on this journey.

And the turning is coming again.

The sun said, Daughter, you have done well.
The earth said, Healer who is still healing, you always have a home.
The moon said, beloved shadow worker, we will cast new spells
soon.

We radiate the LIGHT
We rotate the LIFE
We revolve back into LOVE

SESSION 4 FACILITATOR SCRIPT

1. GROUNDING

Start the group in a single circle. Re-introduce facilitators.

2. CHALICE LIGHTING

Blessed is the Fire that Burns Deep in the Soul by Eric A. Heller-Wagner

3. RE/INTRODUCTIONS

Allow each person to share their name, pronouns, and any quick thoughts, realizations, or ways the theme of the previous week (*What Keeps Us Here?*) showed up in their lives since the last meeting (short, 1-2 min.). Invite one participant to go first and remind them to use Mutual Invitation.

4. REVIEW (script)

Say:

Last week we spent time exploring our Unitarian Universalist theology. We hope that you learned more about the roots of our faith and our theological "house." Before we move forward, let's read our covenant in a round.

Lead the group to share the reading aloud of their covenant.

5. TODAY'S DISCUSSION (script continued)

Say:

This week we are going to learn about Unitarian Universalist governance, as outlined in Article II of our bylaws.

6. GOOGLE SLIDE PRESENTATION

Share the slides, reading the text information aloud and facilitating the journaling and sharing as indicated.

7. CLOSE

Say:

We want to thank you all for coming today, for being honest and sharing with your whole heart, for attending this whole series to better ground yourself as UU and ground our community in the work ahead.

Please join us for Sunday worship [share the date planned for a worship service to close the Amplifying the Charge series] when we will gather to close this series with a sermon entitled [share the sermon name].

Then say:

As we close this final time, we ask you to share how participating in this series has affected, helped, or changed you.

Invite each person to take up to one minute to share. You might ask one person to start and remind the group to use Mutual Invitation.

8. After all who wish to share have spoken, offer as closing words the benediction, "The Turning," by QuianaDenae Perkins.

Extinguish the chalice.

Who Am I? 1st Sunday WORSHIP RESOURCES

Charge: <i>Words from the Charge that support this week's sermon</i>	“Seek to engage the active participation of UUs across all demographics, identities, and theological/philosophical beliefs”
Session 1's discussion topic	A facilitated sharing circle about our spiritual past and present: What is your spiritual past, and present, and what do you see as your spiritual future?
Sermon options	Prompt: The Journey to Self - A reflection on the journey to Unitarian Universalism as personal faith identity
	Prompt: We Covenant for Community - A reflection on the role of covenanting as it relates to the UU faith experience; how it can be used as a tool for relationship repair
	Recorded Sermon: "What's Love Got to Do With It?" Rev. Elaine Gallagher Gehrman, Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula 2/19/23 worship service, sermon What's Love Got to Do With It? 44:00- 109:10
	Prompt: Personal credo sharing
Chalice reading	Chalice Lighting on Thresholds By Florence Caplow We kindle this flame, Honoring the doorways in our souls: The windows through which we gaze at one another The balconies where we catch glimpses of sky The thresholds we stand on this morning Wondering, hoping, fearing, dreaming.
Time for All Ages	<i>Earth Dance</i> by Joanne Ryder, Illustrated by Norman Gorbaty 1999 Available from Amazon

	Youtube video: Earth Dance (4:22)
Songs	Open: STJ #1007 There's A River Flowin in My Soul Close: STLT #18 What a Wondrous Love

How Did We Get Here? 2nd Sunday WORSHIP RESOURCES

Charge <i>Words from the Charge that support this week's sermon</i>	"They should be honest about our past, name what we are facing and our aspirations, and where we hope to be not for just today but looking out at the horizons."
Session 2's discussion topic	An overview of Unitarian Universalist Unitarian Universalist History
Sermon options	Prompt: The Journey to Us - A brief telling of the congregational history, highlighting ministers, movements, and social justice actions that have shaped our experience
	Prompt: We Are Called to Justice - A reflection on the role of social action in our denomination (abolition, workers rights, women's movements, youth/ young adult advocacy, GLBTQI rights, etc)
	Recorded Sermon: Article Two, What Does It Do? - The Rev. Jami A. Yandle & DRE Corinna Whiteaker-Lewis, San Gabriel Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (Texas) January 15, 2023 worship service (full video 45:41; Time for All Ages* starts at 11:49; sermon (24:50) is at 14:37-39:25). <i>*NOTE: This sermon refers to the book "Petra" by Marianna Coppa, available from Amazon. For your Time for All Ages story, you can obtain the book and read it in person or share the version provided on this worship recording; it starts at 11:49.</i>
	Prompt for UU Social Justice Committee: Chalice History
Chalice reading	For the Freedom of Faith By Heather K. Janules

	<p>Our prophets died for the freedom of faith; We are here in their spirit. We are here to practice and sustain our living tradition;</p> <p>To light a chalice, Claiming for justice The heat and power of fire.</p> <p>In our free faith, We are here, Seeking freedom from despair, The freedom to be loved as ourselves, And the freedom to grow beyond imagination.</p> <p>We are here, Gathered in the name of all that we find holy. Let us give thanks for the gift of gathering here.</p>
<p>Time for All Ages options</p>	<p><i>Are We There Yet?</i> by Dan Santat, 2016 Available from Amazon. YouTube video: Are We There Yet? (6:14)</p> <p><i>Petra</i> by Marianna Coppa Available from Amazon Embedded in the Article Two, What Does it Do? video (11:49-14:39)</p>
<p>Songs</p>	<p>Open: STLT #67 We Sing Now Together</p> <p>Close: STJ # 1017 Building A New Way</p>

What Keeps Us Here? 3rd Sunday WORSHIP RESOURCES

Charge <i>Words from the Charge that support this week's sermon</i>	"Proposed changes should articulate core UU theological values. The Board believes that one core theological value, shared widely among UUs, is love."
Session 3's discussion topic	A short overview of Unitarian Universalist theology
Sermon options	Prompt: Our Relationship with the Stars - A reflection on one or more of the big words (Theology, Ecclesiology, Soteriology + Eschatology, Missiology, Pneumatology) that speaks to both the personal and communal perspective
	Prompt: It's a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood - A reflection on interfaith work and connection: How can we be good religious neighbors? How does Unitarian Universalism show up for other faith traditions and how have other faith traditions shown up for Unitarian Universalism? If you share space with another faith group, share more about the connection.
	Recorded Sermon: "The Big Words: Our Theological 'House'" Rev Gail Lindsay Marriner Unitarian Universalist Santa Fe January 27, 2013 The Big Words 00:00-22:52
	Prompt: An Exploration of Humanism - Reflections on its past/present/future in the Unitarian Universalist faith landscape
Chalice reading	Exploring Who We Are By Melanie Davis Roasting marshmallows over glowing coals Under the right circumstances, playing with fire is a delight— imagine being gathered round a firepit as the crackling flames invite us to sing, dance, and roast a marshmallow or two.

	<p>Our chalice also invites us to play, although with ideas rather than with marshmallows. The flame encourages us to explore who we are, who our neighbors are, and where we are on our spiritual journeys.</p> <p>Today, we light this chalice in the spirit of play. Let us trust the light to guide us in this hour and in the days to come, finding joy along the way.</p>
<p>Time for All Ages options</p>	<p><i>Elle the Humanist</i> by Elle Harris and Douglas Harris, 2020 Available from Amazon Youtube video: Elle The Humanist (6:46)</p> <p><i>All Are Welcome</i> by Alexandra Penfold, 2018 Available from Amazon Youtube video: All Are Welcome Here (4:00)</p>
<p>Songs</p>	<p>Open: STLT #170 We Are a Gentle Angry People</p> <p>Close: STJ #1008 When Our Heart is in a Holy Place</p>

Where Are We Going? 4th Sunday WORSHIP RESOURCES	
Charge <i>Words from the Charge that support this week's sermon</i>	"Proposed changes should articulate core UU theological values. The Board believes that one core theological value, shared widely among UUs, is love."
Session 4's discussion topic	A brief history of Association Governance and Article II Bylaws
Sermon options	<p>Prompt: Love Will Guide Us - A reflection on the role that love, community care, pastored care, and interconnectedness play in our congregations and larger denomination</p> <p>Prompt: We are a Living Tradition - A reflection on what it means to be a living tradition; a tradition that considers the past and the present to plan for the future</p> <p>Prompt: We are the Garden - A reflection that offers a textbook definition and living examples of the proposed article II bylaw values</p> <p>Recorded Sermon: "What Are We Growing?" Seminarian QuianaDenae Perkins, Unitarian Universalists of Grants Pass (OR), December 4, 2022 worship service 19:35-41:41</p> <p><i>*NOTE: This sermon refers to the book, "Errol's Garden" by Gillian Hibbs. For your Time for All Ages story, you can read it in person or share the animated version from First Unitarian Universalist of Ann Arbor, via YouTube.</i></p> <p>TFAA Story link: UUAA Errol's Garden Purchase link: amazon</p>
Chalice reading	Blessed is the Fire That Burns Deep in the Soul By Eric A Heller-Wagner

	<p>Blessed is the fire that burns deep in the soul. It is the flame of the human spirit touched into being by the mystery of life. It is the fire of reason; the fire of compassion; the fire of community; the fire of justice; the fire of faith. It is the fire of love burning deep in the human heart; the divine glow in every life.</p>
<p>TFAA</p>	<p><i>Going Places</i> by Peter and Paul Reynolds, 2014 Youtube video: Going Places (4:20) Book available from Amazon</p> <p><i>Errol's Garden</i> by Gillian Hibbs, 2018 Available from Amazon Youtube video: UUAA Errol's Garden (1:50) from First Unitarian Universalist of Ann Arbor (MI)</p>
<p>Amplifying the Charge Benediction</p>	<p>The Turning By QuianaDenae Perkins</p> <p>At the last turning, I was invited to a meeting among The sun, the earth, and the moon.</p> <p>The sun asked, "Do you have space in your heart for a great light?" The earth said, "I will hold you down if you are willing." The moon said, "I will guide you if you need it."</p> <p>And it was easy to say YES to the energies of balance. So for a turning, we have found ourselves dancing.</p> <p>The sun took the lead, Sharing a drop of their luminescence. Held deep in my heart when the darkness loomed Held it on the tip of fingers when others called for it Coming to understand space Becoming a beacon. Learning the nuance of shadow and light.</p> <p>The earth kept her word. I was planted deep and rooted hard. I was uprooted, replanted and loved until I was healed and able to feel the small tug from soil calling me down,</p>

	<p>demanding I grow. again.</p> <p>And the moon, a sister auntie, stayed faithful at my side. Always hovering, Always playing, laughing, reminding me that joy takes many forms and keeps no schedule Reassuring me with loving pats and oh child! whispered commentary. A subtle and wanted companion on this journey.</p> <p>And the turning is coming again.</p> <p>The sun said, daughter you have done well. The earth said, Healer who is still healing, you always have home. The moon said, beloved shadow worker, we will cast new spells soon.</p> <p>We radiate the LIGHT We rotate the LIFE We revolve back into LOVE</p>
Songs	<p>Open: STJ # 1003 Where Do We Come From</p> <p>Close: STLT #131 Love Will Guide Us; STLT #95 There Is More Love Somewhere</p>