



## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL PARISH, UNITARIAN PETERSHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

### **Seven Principles and Purposes**

Deliberately without an official creed or dogma (per the principle of freedom of thought), many Unitarian Universalists make use of the Principles and Purposes as a list of principles for guiding behavior. These “Principles and Purposes” are taken from the by-laws which govern the Unitarian Universalist Association. While these were written to govern congregations, not individuals, many UUs use them as guides for living their faith. The "Seven Principles" were created in committee and affirmed democratically by a vote of member congregations at an annual General Assembly (a meeting of delegates from member congregations). Adopted in 1960, the full Principles, Purposes and Sources can be found in the article on the Unitarian Universalist Association. The Principles are as follows:

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.

Unitarian Universalism is often referred to by its members as a *living tradition*, and the principles and purposes have been modified over time to reflect changes in spiritual beliefs among the membership.

### **Diversity of practices**

The Unitarian belief that God embraces all people equally has led to the current Unitarian Universalist belief that truth and spiritual meaning can be found in all faiths.