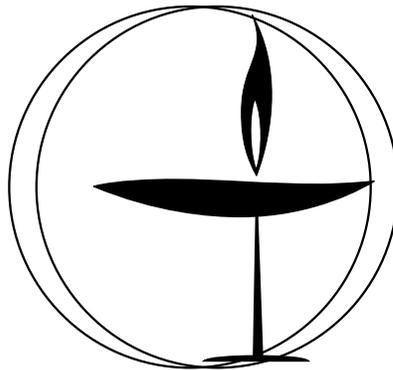


The Leaders Guide to  
**Remember  
Universalism  
Into  
Life**

*An Eight Week Adult Discussion Series  
for Unitarian Universalist Societies*



by  
The Reverend Raymond R. Nasemann  
The Reverend Elizabeth M. Strong

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## **Leaders and Participants Information and Introduction**

There are basic life questions for which humans seek answers and to which there are religious and ethical dimensions. Religions have posited answers to these questions throughout the centuries, and Unitarian Universalist faith practices have provided us with varying degrees of ability to find our own answers, and enable us to live our lives.

Participants will explore, through the Keynote addresses of the New York State Convention of Universalists, and historic Universalist statements of faith, ways to enable them to better answer these basic life questions.

The program thus offers an opportunity to understand Universalism's contribution to the Unitarian Universalist faith and an opportunity to explore one's own developing personal faith.

Each session is designed for a 2 hour time block. A time for a break and snack is suggested in the first session, and you may choose to include these in each of the sessions.

We suggest a team of leaders as this provides you with a greater ability to work with the different responses to the material, and to enable you to have a continuity of leadership if one leader needs to be away.

We suggest that you go through the entire program, and the reading before the sessions begin to familiarize yourself with all of the dimensions of the program. Newsprint, paper, magic markers, masking tape, a chalice, matches, a candle, pencils and/or chalk and chalkboard will be needed in most every session. We recommend that each participant have a folder in which to keep the handouts and writing from each session.

PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE THE ADDRESSES AND TO HAVE READ THEM BEFORE THE SESSIONS IN WHICH THEY ARE USED.

Please be as flexible as you need to be in working with the suggested format and structure of the exercises. If you have fewer than 6 participants you may, for example, choose not to break into small groups for sharing. Some find the use of newsprint unhelpful, others find it very helpful; use your judgement after the experience of the first session. We have included several options for readings at the opening Chalice lighting time. Please use others if you choose.

The Participant's Packet is to be distributed at the time of registration for the class. In it we have included a brief history of Universalism, an overview of the program, a diagram of Universalist belief systems that are compared with Orthodox beliefs of the times and this Leader and Participant information page.

# REMEMBER UNIVERSALISM INTO LIFE

AN ADULT DISCUSSION SERIES

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## **Remember Universalism Into Life**

by The Revs. Raymond R. Nasemann and Elizabeth M. Strong

### Overview of Sessions

- I. Introductory Session: Faith, Hope, Love: Universalism's Response to Life  
Overview of program.  
Exploration of life's essential questions in relation to Universalism: past and present  
**Papers by Gordon McKeeman, Christopher Raible, Peter Lee Scott**  
Goals of Session:  
To begin to understand how life's basic questions relate to the development of Universalism: past, present and future.  
To begin to learn the fundamental concepts of Universalism and how they relate to us.
- II. Universalist Theological History  
1. Universalist philosophy and theology  
**Papers by Dorothy Spoerl and Max Coots (Ellsworth Reamon optional)**  
Goals of Session:  
To learn how various historical forms of Universalism (Confessions, Professions, Bonds, Principles & Purposes) address and/or respond to basic life questions.  
To discover the fundamental concepts of Universalism and how they have changed throughout our history.
- III. Universalist History  
1. Historical Universalism  
**Papers by Cynthia Grant-Tucker and Brian Kopke**  
Goals of Session:  
To learn of the history and heritage of the Universalist Church of America.  
To explore our connection to that history and heritage.
- IV. Salvation: Then and Now.  
1. The traditional theology of salvation  
2. A meaningful interpretation for today  
**Papers by Mark & Donna Morrison-Reed, Richard Gilbert (pages 81-84)**  
Goals of the Session:  
To learn about Universalism's historical belief in Universal Salvation.  
To develop definitions of salvation meaningful to us.

- V. Empowerment and Motivation Universalist Style
1. Universalist theology and self understanding
- Paper by Carolyn Owen-Towle**
- Goals of the Session:
- To gain a deeper understanding of our motivations.
  - To increase our dimensions of empowerment.
  - To connect with the understanding, motivation and empowerment in the Universalist tradition.
- VI. Ethics: What Is Required of Us?
1. Ethical Universalism
- Paper by Richard S. Gilbert pages 84 to end.**
- Goals of the Session:
- To explore the ethical implications of Universalism in our lives.
  - To look at the sources of empowerment in ethical Universalism and in ourselves.
  - To try to answer the question: What ought I to do?
- VII. Church: Institutional/Political and the Individual
1. Institution and Individual, on which do I rely?
- Papers by Forrest Church, Kenneth Patton and John Buehrens**
- Goals of the Session:
- To engage in dialogue with the issues of personal religious freedom within an institution.
  - To engage in dialogue with the issues of institutional authority in religious life.
- VIII. Remember Universalism Into Life
1. What is the essence of Universalism?
  2. Faith and meaning: Am I A Universalist?
  3. How am I answering the questions posed by my life?
  4. How then do I remember Universalism into life?
- Goals of the Session:
- To determine Universalism's message for me and for the world.
  - To remember Universalism into life.

## Universalist History

"In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Universalist view ...made great strides. In Germany many Universalist groups expanded and further defined the Universalist doctrine. In 1759 in England, James Rely published 'Union,' which denied the Calvinistic doctrine of salvation for the few and claimed that all would be saved.

"John Murray, a follower of Rely, helped deliver the Universalist movement safely to the shores of America. In 1779 Murray occupied the pulpit of the Independent Christian Church of Gloucester, Massachusetts, which was the first organized Universalist church in America. Twenty-six years later the movement's greatest exponent, Hosea Ballou, articulated Universalist doctrine in his book, 'A Treatise On Atonement,' which sought to prove the doctrine of the trinity was unscriptural, and argued against miracles and the view of men and women as depraved creatures who would burn in hell.

"In 1785 a Universalist convention adopted a Charter of Compact which eventually evolved into the Universalist Church of America."

Gary Provost  
*A Brief History of Unitarian Universalism*  
UUA Pamphlet

It was during the Great Awakening of the mid to late 1800's that Universalism's message of universal salvation, no hell and belief in a loving God swept across New England out into Ohio and south to Georgia. It grew in response to the Revival Camp Meeting theology of preachers like Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney, who sought conversion of depraved sinners dangling over the pits of hell in the hands of an angry God. Universalist preachers declared there was no hell, all were saved, and God was loving and forgiving, not angry, and that humanity was worthy of salvation.

### **Important Dates in Universalist History from Universalist Bicentennial Celebration Newsletter #2**

- 225 Origen, one of the Church Fathers, writes On First Principles, advocating a belief in universal salvation.
- 544 Belief in universal salvation proclaimed as a heresy by church council.
- 1315 The Lollards maintain a belief in universal salvation.

- 1637 Samuel Gorton, a pioneer of Christian Universalism, driven out of Massachusetts for his political and religious radicalism.
- 1703 Birth of George de Benneville, one of the leaders of American Universalism in London, England.
- 1740 High point of the Great Awakening (whose emotional excesses stimulated a desire for a more rational religion).
- 1741 John Murray, one of the leaders of American Universalism, born in Alton, England.
- 1741 de Benneville emigrates to Pennsylvania
- 1743 Christopher Sower, a Universalist Quaker, with the assistance of George de Benneville, prints the first Bible in America translated into the German language. Passages supporting the universal character of religion published in bold typeface.
- 1750 In England, James Relly establishes himself as an independent preacher of the doctrine of universal salvation.**
- 1759 Union, a theological treatise on universal salvation by Relly, is published in London.
- 1770 John Murray arrives at Good Luck on Barnegat Bay, New Jersey. On September 30, Murray preaches his first sermon in America in the meeting house of farmer Thomas Potter.**
- 1771 Birth of Hosea Ballou, great Universalist theologian, in Richmond, New Hampshire.
- 1774 John Murray preaches in Gloucester, Massachusetts.
- 1778 Caleb Rich organizes the General Society (Universalist) to ordain ministers and issue preaching licenses.
- 1779 Gloucester Universalists organize the first Universalist Church in America.**
- 1785 The first Universalist convention with delegates from churches held in Oxford, Massachusetts.**
- 1786 Gloucester Universalists win the right not to be taxed by the state to support the established church.**
- 1788 Murray wins the right for Universalists and other dissenting ministers to be recognized as ordained ministers with authority to perform marriages.

- 1790 The Philadelphia Convention of Universalists adopts a declaration of faith and a set of principles of social reform.
- 1793 **General Convention of Universalists organized on September 4th at Oxford, Massachusetts, which under different names, continued down to the merger with the Unitarians in 1961.**
- 1803 Winchester Profession of Faith adopted by Universalists at Winchester, New Hampshire.
- 1805 Hosea Ballou writes A Treatise On Atonement, a defense of universal salvation and also the first book published in America openly rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity.
- 1811 Maria Cook, generally considered the first woman to preach in Universalist pulpits, begins her work.
- 1819 The Universalists begin publishing a weekly paper under the name of The Universalist Magazine, which later became The Christian Leader. It has been published continuously until succeeded by the UU World.
- 1841 Adin Ballou founded the utopian Hopedale Community.
- 1843 A Universalist church established in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 1847 The Universalist General Reform Association is organized.
- 1852 Tufts College (now University), including Crane Theological School, is founded by Universalists at Medford, Massachusetts.
- 1856 Saint Lawrence University and Theological School founded by Universalists at Canton, New York.
- 1856 Children's Sunday started by the Universalist Church in Chelsea, Massachusetts.
- 1863 Ordination of Olympia Brown, first woman to be ordained by a denomination.
- 1869 Women's Centenary Association formed, later called the Association of Universalist Women.
- 1870 Centennial celebration of Universalist church held in Gloucester, Massachusetts.
- 1884 Richard Eddy publishes his two volume history,  
1886 Universalism In America.

- 1889 Joseph H. Jordan fellowshiped with the Universalists as the first black Universalist minister.
- 1889 Young People's Christian Union formed (later called the Universalist Youth Fellowship).
- 1890 Universalists begin a mission to Japan.
- 1891 Orello Cone became the foremost Universalist Biblical Scholar with the publication of his Gospel-Criticism and Historical Christianity.
- 1898 Isaac Morgan Atwood became the first General Superintendent of the Universalist Church.
- 1899 The Boston Declaration adopted at Boston, Massachusetts.
- 1904 Joseph Fletcher Jordan became the third fellowshiped black minister, and subsequently founded Jordan Neighborhood House in Norfolk, Virginia.
- 1913 The General Sunday School Association organized in Utica, New York.
- 1917 The Universalist General Convention adopts a Declaration of Social Principles written by Clarence R. Skinner.
- 1921 Universalist women acquire Clara Barton homestead and develop it into a camp for diabetic girls.
- 1935 Statement of Faith adopted by Universalists at Washington, D.C. called Bond of Fellowship
- 1945 The Universalist Service Committee organized.
- 1953 Liberal Religious Youth formed from a merger of the Universalist and Unitarian youth organizations.
- 1955 The Council of Liberal Churches organized merging the departments of publication, education and public relations of the Universalist and Unitarian Denominations.
- 1956 The Commission on Merger formed to examine feasibility of merging the two denominations.
- 1961 The Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association officially consolidate and become the Unitarian Universalist Association.

**Beliefs of Universalism compared to the Orthodoxy of the early 1900's.**

Orthodoxy taught that:

God

is three persons, known as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which must be accepted through faith and is known as the Trinitarian Dogma.

is both vengeful and loving at the same time.

is a supreme being perhaps in the form of a man.

must be appeased by the sacrifice of Jesus "the Christ" on the cross.

as described above is a Christian concept.

is known to men through the third part of the Trinity, The Holy Spirit.

Jesus

is God, the second person of the Trinity.

is the Savior of all who believe in Him.

may come again in person.

was bodily and/or spiritually resurrected and ascended to heaven.

Humankind

is born in sin because his/her inherited nature is evil and depraved.

Universalism taught that:

God

is one.

is love.

is spirit.

does not need appeasement.

is the God of all persons.

is known to all through their personal social and religious experiences in life.

Jesus

was a man -- a religious genius.

was a teacher and an example of the good life.

taught principles of eternal truth which the world still needs.

proclaimed a message which still influences us today.

Humankind

is born sinless.

needs to be saved by each person's acceptance of Christ, a Savior-God, given as God's only begotten Son to atone for humanity's sin.

is born to glorify God, to do His Divine will and to bring sinners to "Christ."

#### Truth

find its basis in the Bible.

finds its basis in the dogmas of the early church.

#### The Bible

is the revealed Word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit and usually considered sufficient for salvation.

is open to interpretation in general is to be accepted as God's "Holy Word."

is the authority for religious truth revealed by God and essential for 'salvation.'

may foretell the future of humanity's existence and the end of the world.

#### The Kingdom of God

may be brought about by the miraculous coming of Jesus at the end of the world.

is conceived as being fully possible only in the future life.

will eventually be ruled by God for those who have been 'saved.'

although born sinless acquires the capacity for good and evil but is never eternally lost. Personal "salvation" is a matter of growth and social development.

is here to build the Kingdom of God, the good society, through recognizing human fellowship.

#### Truth

is found through all human experiences.

is known by the research and insights of all people.

#### The Bible

is a collection of books recording the moral and religious growth of a people.

is a frank and fearless account of a people's varied experiences in history.

is one of many sources of ethical and religious values.

records the varying ideas of a particular people concerning life here and hereafter.

#### The Kingdom of God

is attainable on earth through human efforts.

is conceived as being possible on earth.

will be shared by all people.

Sin

is inherited by all people as part of their natures.

is punished in some future state.

The Church

is the prime medium of salvation.

is the Holy Institution.

Immortality

means a home in heaven where the individual human spirit lives forever.

Prayer

is a communication with and a communion with God who is conceived of as a supernatural being who may change the natural order of the universe in deference to humankind.

The Sacraments

in general to consist of two but may consist of seven. Supernatural power is in each by virtue of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Sin

is humanity's deliberate rejection of the known good.

carries its own punishment.

The Church

is a fellowship for moral and spiritual growth and a school of religion.

is a group of people organized for worship and for service to humankind.

Immortality

is open to individual interpretation and acceptance.

Prayer

is an expression of one's innermost thoughts, feelings and aspirations to the highest that one knows, an attempt to know the right and do it.

The Sacraments

ordinances, if observed at all, are not considered magic. They are human symbols, designed to aid a person in his or her quest for the good life.

# Remember Universalism Into Life

## SESSION ONE

### Faith, Hope, Love: Universalism's Response to Life

#### Goals:

- \* To begin to understand how life's basic questions relate to the development of Universalism: past, present and future, and to each of us.
- \* To begin to learn the fundamental concepts of Universalism and how they relate to us.

#### Preparation:

- \* Read the papers of Gordon McKeeman, Christopher Raible and Peter Lee Scott
- \* Copy Handouts 1 and 2 for participants
- \* Have necessary materials available
- \* Prepare for Break/snack if choose
- \* Put questions on newsprint or chalkboard
- \* Put name tag instructions on newsprint or chalkboard

#### Materials needed:

- \* Newsprint, markers, masking tape
- \* Chalice, matches, candle
- \* Copies of Handouts 1 & 2
- \* Name tag materials, pins and instructions on newsprint
- \* Paper, pencils for participants
- \* Folders for each participant
- \* Extra copies of Participant's Packet

## Session One

As participants arrive have them make a name tag.

Include on a name tag the following information:

Name  
How long have you been a Unitarian Universalist?  
One thing you know about Universalism  
What do I hope for in my life?  
One thing about myself I would like the group to know

### Chalice Lighting

5 minutes

#### **Leader:**

Read from Cynthia Grant-Tucker's paper:

"In a sense, we are performing a ritual much like our Jewish brothers and sisters perform at Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. During that season, memory's power was recognized as the dominant force that moves a community forward to a better future; and that's why on both Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, the people prayed with one voice, Zachrenu Lehayyim, which means "Remember us into life."

This is the source of the name chosen for this program, "Remember Universalism Into Life." We light our chalice to help us remember Universalism into our lives, and to take from it the messages of love, hope and courage that have been so powerful throughout its history.

### Activity

15 minutes

Divide the group into diads to share name tag answers with one another. Then have each introduce the other person to the group.

#### **Leader:**

15 minutes

Read through the goals for this session. Discuss housekeeping information (length of each session is 2 hours, will you have formal break or snack time). Go through the Participant's Packet that was handed out at registration.

**Leader:**

10 minutes

There are basic life questions that one has from childhood to death. All religions address these questions in some way. In this curriculum we want to use these basic life questions in a threefold manner.

The questions will be addressed to historic Universalism, the essays, and to you, the participants. You will use them as a tool to address the texts and to explore your own religious development.

**Leader:**

5 minutes

What are the basic life questions you have struggled with and with which you are presently struggling? Take time by yourself to write these out on a piece of paper.

**Leader:**

**distribute Handout 1**

5 minutes

The authors of this program have prepared a partial list of basic life questions as Handout 1. Take a look at the list and see if there are any more questions it raises for you that you would like to add to your own list.

When the participants have finished, ask them to post their list for the full group to read.

**This is a good time for a break if you are planning one.**

Activity

50 minutes

Allow 15 minutes for each section.

You may choose to stay in one group, or if there are more than 8 people in the group, divide into small groups of 3 or 4. If you break into small groups, wait until the end of all three sections to share a synopsis with the full group. If you do not break into small groups the sharing will take longer but not be broken into the two time frames.

**Leader:**

I have three readings from papers by Gordon McKeeman, Peter Lee Scott and Christopher Raible and some questions based on the readings for us to work with at this time. Read along with me in your books. Respond individually in writing to the questions at the end of each reading and then we will share what of your answers you choose with the (small) group.

Christopher Raible writes in his paper on page 70:

"Think about that for a moment. If all persons are saved, you are saved. No matter what, God still loves you. You know yourself. You know your weaknesses, you know your failures, your errors. You know the evil -- dare I call it sin -- you have done, the hurt you have caused, the wrongs you have committed. Nevertheless, our Universalist forbears declared, God still cares for you. There is no way you can separate yourself from the love of God."

**Leader:** What does Raible's statement suggest to you?  
Which basic life questions are addressed by this statement? In what way?

**Take five minutes now to respond individually in writing to these two questions and then discuss the responses either in your small group or the whole group.**

Peter Lee Scott writes in his paper on page 144 & 145:

"Perhaps we should say that only the focus of our faith was changed, for the confidence of Universalism remained though centered on this world, this life." ...

"You may well say that we carry on these daily affirmations of life out of ignorance, that we repress our awareness of the horrors hanging over us. And perhaps this is so. But I sense as well a gut-level faith or optimism, built into the human race basic to Universalism in all generations."

**Leader:** What does Scott's statement suggest to you?  
Which basic life questions are addressed by this statement? In what way?

**Take five minutes to respond individually in writing to these questions and then discuss the responses either in your small group or the whole group.**

Gordon McKeeman states in his paper on page 50:

"We (Universalists) are the religious expression of the basic universal nature of life itself, with its urgency to wholeness and integration."

**Leader:** What does McKeeman's statement suggest to you?  
Which basic life questions are addressed by this statement? In what way?

Take five minutes to respond individually in writing to these questions and then discuss the responses either in your small group or the whole group.

If you have been working in small groups take time now to briefly share in the whole group.

Preparation for next session

5 minutes

Read through the goals for the next session.

Assignments:

Invite participants to arrive one half hour early to complete reading they may be unable to do during the week.  
Read the papers of Dorothy Spoerl and Max Coots. The Ellsworth Reamon paper is optional reading.  
Distribute Handout 2 and briefly explain that they are Universalist statements of faith and Dorothy Spoerl refers to them all through her paper.  
Sign up for snacks if you are having them.  
Ask the participants to bring all Handouts and writing to each session as they will be working with them throughout the program.

Closure

Form a circle around the chalice.

5 minutes

**Leader:**

Read again this paragraph from Cynthia Grant-Tucker's paper:

"In a sense, we are performing a ritual much like our Jewish brothers and sisters perform at Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. During that season, memory's power was recognized as the dominant force that moves a community forward to a better future; and that's why on both Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, the people prayed with one voice, Zachrenu Lehayyim, which means "Remember us into life."

Invite sharing by participants of feelings, ideas, whatever they would like to share.

**Leader:**

We have begun our journey of remembering Universalism into life. As we extinguish the chalice we take with us the challenge to remember.

Remember Universalism Into Life

**SESSION TWO**

Universalist Theological History

Goals:

- \* To learn how various historical forms of Universalism (Confessions, Professions, Bonds, Principles & Purposes) address and/or respond to life's basic questions.
- \* To discover the fundamental concepts of Universalism and how they have changed throughout our history.

Preparation:

- \* Read the papers by Dorothy Spoerl and Max Coats. The Ellsworth Reamon paper is optional reading.
- \* Make copies of Handout 3 for participants
- \* Collect needed materials
- \* Prepare for break and snack if choose

Materials:

- \* Chalice, matches, candle
- \* Copies of Handout 3 for participants & extras of 2
- \* Newsprint, markers, masking tape
- \* Paper and pencils for participants

Session Two

Chalice Lighting

5 minutes

**Leader:**

In 1935, a group like us might have lit their chalice with this reading from the 1935 Washington Declaration, found in the blue hymnal:

We avow our faith:

In God as eternal and all conquering love,  
In the spiritual leadership of Jesus,  
In the supreme worth of every human personality,  
In the authority of truth known or to be known,  
And in the power of (people) of good will and  
sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil, and  
progressively establish the kingdom of God.

**Leader:**

10 minutes

Have participants make a name tag with just their name in letters large enough to be read across the room.

Read the session goals and re-introduce and welcome participants, especially any new people.

Have them take out Handout 2 for a quick review.

**Leader:**

10 minutes

You may be finding it difficult to translate some parts of Universalism's past Confessions/Professions into statement that make sense to you. Can you focus on the readings you have done and complete the statement:

Helpful to me has been \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_'s paper(s). How has this been helpful to you?

You may wish to have the group write down their responses as a clarifying exercise and then share what they choose within the group.

**Leader:**

30 minutes

Have the participants take out the life questions from the last session. Say to them something like:

Take a few minutes to clarify and write down your answers to the following questions and then share them in diads (or if your group is small this can be done in one group).

What are the points of belief you share with these Statements of Faith? What are the points where you differ?

What are the connections you see between the historical forms of Universalism and your own religious thinking and journey?

Develop a discussion of the points, the connections and the differences.

**Leader:**

30 minutes

- \* Universalism began in a time when Christian theism was taken for granted by the culture.
- \* The initial departure of Universalism from Christian orthodoxy was to a God who was loving and offered salvation to all, rather than an angry God who elected some for salvation and some for damnation.
- \* Slowly Universalism broke from sharing Christian theism and developed a more universal theism
- \* Later on, God is no longer taken for granted and the emphasis is on the human response to life's basic questions.

**Leader:**

From your reading of Dorothy Spoerl and Max Coats (Ellsworth Reamon) can you determine why this movement has taken place?

What were the factors that created it?

How does this movement reflect your own personal movement in theological thinking?

If you have a group of more than 8 participants, discuss these questions in the small groups of 3 or 4. Then come together for full group synopsis sharing, otherwise share in the full group.

Preparations for next session

5 minutes

Read through the goals for the next session.

Assignments:

Read the papers by Cynthia Grant-Tucker and Brian Kopke  
Review the ones by Raible, Scott and McKeeman.  
Distribute Handout 3 and be prepared to respond to the  
questions on it in our next session.

Closure

Form a circle around the chalice.

5 minutes

**Leader:**

Read this later version of the Universalist affirmation from the  
Blue Hymnal by James Vila Blake (# 494)

Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law.  
This is our great covenant:  
To dwell together in peace,  
To seek the truth in love,  
And to help one another.

Invite sharing by the participants.

# Remember Universalism Into Life

## SESSION THREE

### Universalist History

#### Goals:

- \* To learn of the history and heritage of the Universalist Church of America
- \* To explore our connection to that history and heritage

#### Preparation:

- \* Read the papers by Cynthia Grant-Tucker and Brian Kopke
- \* Review the papers by Dorothy Spoerl and Gordon McKeeman
- \* Prepare 4 newsprint pages with the questions from Handout 3
- \* Make copies of Handout 4 and Handout 5

#### Materials:

- \* Chalice, matches, candle
- \* Newsprint, markers, masking tape
- \* Four questions from Handout 3 on newsprint
- \* Paper, pencils
- \* Copies of Handout 4
- \* Copies of Handout 5 for distribution at end of session

## Session Three

### Chalice Lighting

5 minutes

#### **Leader:**

Each of us is an artist  
Whose task it is to shape life  
Into some semblance of the pattern  
He or she dreams about. The molding  
Is not of self alone, but of shared  
Tomorrow and times we shall never see.  
So let us be about our task.  
The materials are very precious  
and perishable.

Arthur Graham  
in *73 Voices*,  
UUA meditation manual, 1971

#### **Leader:**

20 minutes

Read through the goals for this session.

On four posted pieces of newsprint have the four questions given as homework, Handout 3, at the end of Session Two. Have the participants write down their responses on each newsprint page. Allow time for all to read the statements written.

Engage them in a brief discussion of their response to the newsprint writing.

#### **Distribute Handout 4 and read through the statements.**

15 minutes

#### **Leader:**

These writers offer us the options to modernize or update our history, to extract the essence and build on it in our lives; to capitalize on the process that made it relevant in the first place.

Brian Kopke -- The essential identity of Universalism is not the correcting or updating of the statements of faith, it is a process of always being open to new understanding. The statements of faith are landmarks pointing to the process that enabled them.

Gordon McKeeman -- There is an essential content that one can extrapolate from the various statements. Take this essence and incorporate it into your life now.

Dorothy Spoerl -- extract the doctrines and statements and modernize them for today's relevance. The history can move with us.

Cynthia Grant-Tucker -- test the history against the reality of broader history and look for the 'unwritten' texts. Seek for what was left out.

Christopher Raible -- extracts the essence for today's message.

Peter Lee Scott -- look for that in our history that gives us hope and confidence for its time and for our own.

**Leader:**

Ask the participants to reposed to the following questions.

- 1) Are you a person who attempts to determine the central message of what your church/religion stands for?
- 2) Are you a person who seeks to modernize and update the historical and theological traditions of Unitarian Universalism?
- 3) Are you a person who looks for a process to continuously renew the religious journey that is central to your life?
- 4) Are you a person for whom espoused beliefs and life actions must be congruent and reality checked?
- 5) Are you a person whose primary focus is on your own basic life questions?
- 6) Do you use more than one of these methods of religion making in your life?

Take a few minutes to reflect on the methods you utilize in the ongoing development of your Unitarian Universalist religious quest.

BREAK if you have one

**Leader:**

30 minutes

If you prefer one of these methods, what then are the implications of your involvement in Unitarian Universalism, and in the direction that you see Unitarian Universalism needs to go in the future?

**Form three groups and follow the process for the group you choose.**

Group One will look at the current Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes. How well has this updated the tenets of Universalism?

Group Two needs to create a statement of the essence of Universalism.

Group Three needs to develop a process or approach to life that, if followed, would continuously renew their religious life.

**Leader:**

Ask each person to respond in writing to the question, "How congruent is my life/congregation/the Unitarian Universalist Association with my response to the above exercise? When completed, ask those who choose, to share with the full group.

Preparation for Next Session

5 minutes

Read the goals for the next session.

Assignments:

Read the papers by Mark & Donna Morrison-Reed, pages 81-84 of Richard S. Gilbert.

Review the papers by Christopher Raible, Dorothy Spoerl and Gordon McKeeman.

Distribute Handout 5 and assign as reading

Check on snack arrangements if appropriate

Review Handout 2 and have available for next class

Closure

Gather into a circle around the Chalice.

10 minutes

**Leader:**

Suggest that they share a response to one of these statements:

- 1) My basic approach to my continuing religious journey is\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) What has been most helpful to me in this session is\_\_\_\_\_

Remember Universalism Into Life

**SESSION FOUR**

Salvation: Then and Now

Goals:

- \* To learn about Universalism's historical belief in Universal Salvation
- \* To develop working definitions of salvation meaningful to us

Preparation:

- \* Read the papers by Mark & Donna Morrison-Reed, Richard Gilbert--pages 81 - 84
- \* Prepare a newsprint sheet with the statement, "Since the world is not obviously...."
- \* Make copies of Handouts 6 and 7 for distribution at end of session
- \* Review the paper by Dorothy Spoerl and Handout 2

Materials:

- \* Newsprint, markers, masking tape
- \* Chalice, matches, candle
- \* Paper and pencils for participants
- \* Participants will need to have Handout 2 available

Session Four

Chalice Lighting

5 minutes

**Leader:**

What is required of us is the recognition of the frontiers between the centuries.

And to take heart: to cross over.

...

What is required of us, Companions, is the recognition of the frontiers across this history, and to take heart: to cross over\_\_\_\_\_

to persist and to cross over and survive

But to survive

to cross over.

Archibald Macleish  
*Geography of This Time*, excerpted  
Reading # 436, Blue Humnal

**Leader:**

10 minutes

Read the session goals.

**Go around the circle and ask each person to give their immediate response to the phrase: salvation is \_\_\_\_\_.** NO DISCUSSION OF THE RESPONSES UNTIL AFTER THE NEXT EXERCISE.

**Leader:**

15 minutes

Give the participants 2 minutes to write a quick response to the statement:

Since the world is not obviously good or safe, what is your response to the Universalist assertions on Universal Salvation that God created the world and life for good and will save humankind?

**Share in the group the responses to the above two exercises.**

**Leader:**

20 minutes

Read the following definition of salvation:

Salvation, in its traditional definition is about God's relationship to humankind. It is about what happens to us when we die. Salvation is about death, immortality, and the meaning of life.

**Leader:**

Ask the participants to respond in writing to these questions:

In what or whom do you trust? If not God, then whom/what?  
If not the world or the universe, then what?  
Do you believe in the inherent dignity and worth of every  
human being? In what sense?

Share the responses with the full group, or if your group is larger than 8, you may choose to do this in smaller groups of 3 or 4, and then come back together for a synopsis sharing.

**Leader:**

55 minutes

Take out and review Handout 5 and look at the statements on salvation.

Look at your responses to the questions, In what or whom do I trust? If not God--then whom? If not the world or the universe--then what?

Let us compare the ways historical Universalism answered salvation questions, and the way we now do, and where the similarities and differences lie. Using Handout 2 and the paper by Dorothy Spoerl, follow the movement of the belief in salvation through the Universalist documents.

Briefly list the movement on newsprint so the pattern can be seen quickly and easily.

Individually, take your responses and use them to work through the process of developing an updated definition of salvation with which you feel comfortable.

Complete the sentence:

When I translate the word salvation into notions I have that give meaning for my life, I put it this way (these ways)\_\_\_\_\_.

**Leader:**

Have each person put the result of this process on a sheet of newsprint, and post the newsprint. Allow 20 minutes for participants to read these responses and to hold a discussion of them. Share the statements in the full group.

Preparation for next session

5 minutes

Read through the goals for the next session.

Assignments:

Read the paper by Carolyn Owen-Towle  
Review paper by Cynthia Grant-Tucker  
Check on who will bring snack, if appropriate  
Distribute Handout 6

Closure

Form a circle around the chalice.

5 minutes

**Leader:**

Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime;

THEREFORE, WE ARE SAVED BY HOPE.

Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history;

THEREFORE, WE ARE SAVED BY FAITH.

Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone;

THEREFORE, WE ARE SAVED BY LOVE.

No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our own;

THEREFORE, WE ARE SAVED BY THE FINAL FORM OF LOVE WHICH IS FORGIVENESS.

Reinhold Niebuhr  
"We Must Be Saved"  
p. 10, *UUA Readings For Common Worship*

**SESSION FIVE**

Empowerment and Motivation Universalist Style

Goals:

- \* To gain a deeper understanding of our motivations
- \* To increase our dimensions of empowerment
- \* To connect with the understanding, motivation and empowerment in the Universalist tradition.

Preparation:

- \* Read the paper by Carolyn Owen-Towle and review the paper by Cynthia Grant-Tucker
- \* Prepare for break or snack if choose
- \* Print first activity questions and word definitions of Motivate and Empower on newsprint

Materials:

- \* Chalice, matches, candle
- \* Pencils, paper for participants
- \* Newsprint pages of words and questions for the first activity
- \* Handout 7
- \* Newsprint sheets

## Session Five

### Chalice Lighting

10 minutes

#### **Leader:**

A candle is a careless thing, God wot. See how it is always stretching up and reaching out.

It gives its substance without murmur or complaint to the flame that is consuming it. It doesn't even seem to care into what corner the flame flings its light; whether the corner is clean or dirty, pretty or ugly, far or near, high or low, deserving or forgotten, useful or neglected. Apparently, too, it doesn't care to whom it sends its warmth; whether to the outer chill, a lonely heart, a child's delight, a bore or a lout.

A candle that tries to conserve its substance is poor company on a dark night. It was pleasant to look at in the day time. It was slender, smoothly appealing. But any candle that does not give itself away is a disappointment in the deepening shadows of a long evening. Some friends are like that. Good fun in days of play, poor company in the hours of dusk and trouble.

A candle must give itself away. In the giving, the spending, the spreading, the sending, it finds itself.

John E. Wood  
"The Careless Candle"  
in *To Meet the Asking Years*,  
UUA Meditation Manual, 1984  
originally in *Spiritual Embers*,  
Universalist Church of America Lenten Manual, 1952

#### **Leader:**

15 minutes

Read the session goals and you might like to have a brief check-in with the participants. This can be a personal check-in to help them become better acquainted.

### Activity

20 minutes

Post definitions of words "motivate" and "empower":

Motivate: to provide with, or affect as, a motive or motives; incite or impel

Empower: to give power or authority to; to authorize.  
to give ability to; enable; permit

Have the participants respond in writing to the following questions. Then have them share their responses with one other person, providing each person 5 minutes to talk.

Post questions:

What motivates you to do what you do?

What would/does empower you to do what you think you ought to do?

**Leader:**

15 minutes

Give the participants time to review Handout 6.

Post two newsprint sheets one headed by words: Motivate/Motivation and the other by words: Empower/Empowerment.

Engage the group in brainstorming what Carolyn Owen-Towle and Cynthia Grant-Tucker define as motivating forces, motives, empowerment or empowering forces in their papers. Fill the two sheets of newsprint with the words and ideas that emerge.

**Leader:**

20 minutes

Have the participants take out Handout 2 and the brief history of Universalism, giving them time to review these documents.

Ask the participants to take 10 minutes to respond in writing to the question:

Identify how you think the Universalist statements/beliefs empowered or motivated the people of their time.

Take 10 minutes to share with a small group of three to four others, or with the whole group if it is less than 8 people.

**Leader:**

20 minutes

Are there any things, from our Universalist tradition that you can identify as motivating and/or empowering forces in your life?

If not, is there something in the tradition that corresponds with what does motivate and/or empower you?

Invite the participants to share their responses with the whole group.

Preparation for next session

5 Minutes

Read the goals for the next session.

Assignments:

Finish the paper of Richard S. Gilbert  
Review the paper by Carolyn Owen-Towle  
Sign up for snack if doing them  
Distribute Handout 7

Closing

Form a circle around the chalice.

10 minutes

Share responses from the session and affirm one another's work. You may wish to be specific and ask them to complete one or both of these sentences:

I am motivated to ...

I would like to be empowered to ...

## Remember Universalism Into Life

### SESSION SIX

#### Ethics: What Is Required Of Us?

##### Goals:

- \* To explore the ethical implications of Universalism in our lives
- \* To look at the sources of empowerment in ethical Universalism and in ourselves
- \* To answer the question: What Ought I To Do?

##### Preparation:

- \* Read the remainder of the paper by Richard S. Gilbert and review papers by Carolyn Owen-Towle & Peter Lee Scott
- \* Make copies of Handout 8
- \* Write out the 4 sets of questions on sheets of newsprint or on chalkboards
- \* Make copies of Handout 9 for distribution at end of session

##### Materials:

- \* Chalice, matches, candle
- \* Paper and pencils for participants
- \* Copies of the Handouts 8 and 9

## Session Six

### Chalice Lighting

5 minutes

#### **Leader:**

Therefore I'll dream.  
I'll light the candle yet again, illumine  
The dark forsaken house, bring back the folk  
Who thrilled at glimpses of a fairer world;  
People the stage with pageantry and bid  
Full panoplied illusion still enact  
The epic community.  
I'll summon from out of time's unfathomed store  
Great souls, who in the midst of hopeless days,  
Kept faith and knew the loneliness of God.  
Those splendid deaths and yet more splendid lives  
Which rallied their faltering age with valiantness  
And left strong memories to breed strong hopes.  
For such undying fellowship has power  
To swell our shrunken souls to ampler mold  
And make us truer folk.  
I'll still proclaim  
The "Vision Splendid" till it strikes God-fire  
In old and broken hearts, and urges on  
The world to consummate its dream.  
God's unsundered. So am I! Therefore  
I will live communicate with hope. I light  
The Candle and --- I dream.

Clarence R. Skinner, Universalist minister  
"Therefore I'll Dream"  
in *To Meet the Asking Years*,  
UUA Meditation Manual, 1984  
originally in *Wisdom About Life*,  
Universalist Church of America Lenten Manual, 1953

#### **Leader:**

20 minutes

Read through the session goals and have a brief check-in if the group wishes to do so.

Have the participants review Handout 7.

#### **Leader:**

Briefly share your responses to the questions:

What are the messages of these stories/statements?  
Do they speak to you? Why? How?

Have participants review Handouts 1 and 8. If your group is larger than 8 you may wish to form into smaller groups of three or four. Discuss the questions that are listed below after you have read the statement about Dick Gilbert's theory.

**Leader:**

30 minutes

Dick Gilbert posits that theological Universalism has moved to an ethical Universalism that has relevance for the future.

Post the following questions on newsprint:

1. Do you agree with Dick's thesis that Universalism has moved from theological Universalism to ethical Universalism?
2. If not, what is your thesis about the changes in Universalism from the 1700's to present day?
3. Is there a corresponding change in the way basic life questions are answered?

**Leader:**

40 Minutes

Carolyn Owen-Towle writes in her paper of three issues to which she has responded that are in direct concert with her Universalist heritage.

The first issue is that of capital punishment and prison reform.

The second issue is that of sexual malfeasance by one of our Unitarian Universalist Parish Ministers.

The third issue emerged when one of her children became addicted to drugs.

She writes: "I am indebted to our Universalist tradition which affirms the everlasting, unfathomable, undeserved love of God. No one, however criminal, addicted, incorrigible or ruthless is beyond redemption. At the same time no one, but no one, completes a life without wrongdoing or hurting another. Part of our job as Universalists is to make way for justice and redemption to take place, not only in our lives but among the marginalized and disenfranchised who need advocates; the convicted prisoner, the ostracized colleague, the wayward child."

**Leader:**

What ethical and moral issues does her paper raise for you? Are there issues in your life that connect you to the issues she raises? How might you use her reasoning and our Universalist heritage and faith to provide grounding for you in your daily life and work?

Share your responses within the (small) group.

**Leader:**

20 minutes

Respond to these questions in writing and then share in the group, or in small groups if you have more than 8 participants:

1. What is the next step in my ethical development and how will I proceed?
2. Name an action based on your ethical beliefs that you have always wanted to do, or have recently come to want to do.

Work out a plan to begin this action. If you reach a point where action is blocked, brainstorm with your (small) group solutions to the block.

Preparation for next session

5 Minutes

Read the goals for the next session.

Assignments:

- Read the papers by Kenneth Patton, John Buehrens and Forrest Church
- Arrange for snack if choose
- Distribute Handout 9 to be read before the next session

Closure

Form a circle around the chalice.

5 minutes

Invite sharing from the group about the action they have chosen to take, or are struggling to take, and how they feel about their decision.

**SESSION SEVEN**

Church: Institution and Individual--On Which Do I Rely?

Goals:

- \* to engage with the issues of personal religious freedom within an institution.
- \* to engage with the issues of institutional authority in religious life.

Preparation:

- \* Read papers by Forrest Church, John Buehrens and Kenneth Patton
- \* Review papers by Scott-pg 146-147, McKeeman-pg 51, Kopke-pg 119
- \* Prepare the newsprint for the two opening exercises
- \* Read through the case study exercise at the end of the session

Materials:

- \* Chalice, matches and candle
- \* Newsprint, markers, masking tape
- \* Paper and pencils for participants

Session Seven

Chalice Lighting

5 minutes

**Leader:**

We arrive out of many singular rooms, walking over the  
branching streets.  
We come to be assured that our brothers (and sisters)  
surround us, to restore their images upon our eyes.  
We enlarge our voices in common speaking and singing.  
We try again that solitude found in the midst of those who  
with us seek their hidden reckonings.  
Our eyes reclaim the remembered faces; their voices stir the  
surrounding air.  
The warmth of their hands assures us, and the gladness of our  
spoken names.  
This is the reason of cities, of homes, of assemblies in the  
houses of fellowship.  
It is good to be with one another.

Kenneth Patton  
"We Arrive out of Many Singular Rooms"  
Reading # 470, Blue Hymnal

**Leader:**

15 minutes

Read through the session goals.

In the group, have the participants share their responses to the questions below. List on newsprint the reasons given as to why or why not.

Post questions:

Can you be a Unitarian Universalist without knowing it?  
Can you be a Unitarian Universalist alone?  
Can you be a member of a Unitarian Universalist congregation  
and not be a Unitarian Universalist, andnot know it?

**Leader:**

15 minutes

Keeping your responses to the above questions in mind, write out your answers to these questions:

On which do I rely for my thinking, acting, nurture, faith--  
myself alone, my congregation, both?

When do I rely on each of these? What are the circumstances when the community sustains and supports me? When do I rely on my own resources? When do I need both? What does membership in my congregation contribute to meaning and purpose in my life?

Share in your small group, or the whole group if less than 8.

**Leader:**

45 minutes

There has been a long history of the tension between individual freedom and authority within both Universalism and Unitarianism.

**Leader:**

Take out Handout 9 for reference, and review it with the participants.

With the full group hold a brief discussion of the merits of each of the authors' statements. (Allow about 15 minutes for this discussion)

**Leader:**

Have the participants discuss the following questions in their small group, or the whole group if you have not broken into small groups.

Allow 30 minutes for the discussion.

Issues:

- \* What does it mean to me to be a Unitarian Universalist?
- \* Why am I a Unitarian Universalist?
- \* How different can my beliefs be and still be UU?

**Leader:**

20 minutes

#### CASE STUDY

The Unitarian Universalist Association has taken a stand that congregations seeking a new minister must consider calling a gay, lesbian, bisexual, female, and/or person of color as well as straight, white, males. If there are any signs of prejudice, the Department of Ministry may withhold the services of the Settlement Office in the search process until the congregation in question participates in a program that confronts the issue of prejudice, titled, "Beyond Categorical Thinking".

We are an Association that affirms and promotes individual freedom of thought and the autonomy of congregations, yet we have agreed as an Association to put pressure on individual congregations to adhere to the Principles and Purposes; specifically to affirm and promote the inherent dignity and worth of every person.

This provided heated discussion on the General Assembly floor a few years ago. Keeping in mind the three papers you have read for this session, and the point each one made regarding institution and individual authority, discuss in the whole group the issues of autonomy within the UUA and the fine line between the individual and institutional authority involved.

How would you have voted on this issue? Why? If your congregation has gone through this process, how did it work? What were the issues and feelings generated by it.

If you discuss the issue from the standpoint of institutional needs or from individual autonomy, come to a place of agreement and or clarity about issues of disagreement.

#### Preparation for next session

5 minutes

Read the goals for the next session.

There are no assignments for next session. The group may choose to have a celebration with snacks to acknowledge the ending of the program. If so, make those plans.

#### Closing

10 minutes

Form a circle around the chalice. Invite sharing by the group of their feelings and thoughts from the evening discussion. Read the poem by Charles Olson from John Buehrens's paper.

Leader or someone else read:

These days  
whatever you have to say, leave  
the roots on, let them  
dangle

And the dirt

Just to make clear  
where they come from.

Remember Universalism Into Life

**SESSION EIGHT**

Remember Universalism Into Life

1. What is the essence of Universalism?
2. Faith and Meaning: Am I a Universalist?
3. How am I answering the questions posed by my life?
4. How Then Do I Remember Universalism into Life?

Goals:

- \* To determine Universalism's message for me and for the world
- \* To remember Universalism into life

Preparation:

- \* prepare the opening activity list on newsprint
- \* copies of Handout 10, the responsive reading

Materials:

- \* chalice, candle, matches
- \* pencils and paper for participants

Session Eight

Chalice Lighting

10 minutes

**Our Most Sacred Word**

Responsive Reading by The Rev. Raymond Hopkins delivered at  
General Assembly, Brunswick, ME, 1982

What has been emerging in Unitarian Universalism in this twentieth century is nothing less than a new synthesis, the coalescence of a new consensus;

A NEW WORLD FAITH, FORMULATED BY AND FITTED FOR THIS GREAT  
NEW WORLD-AGE THAT IS COMING TO BIRTH IN OUR TIME.

It is taking its place beside the big-three religious groups on  
this continent, the Catholics, Protestants and Jews,

WITH WHOM IT WORKS FOR WORTHY HUMAN GOALS AND CORDIALITY, BUT  
NONE OF WHOM IT FINDS THEOLOGICALLY COMPATIBLE, AND INTO NONE  
OF WHOSE CREEDAL CATEGORIES IT CAN BE FITTED.

It speaks to the needs and conditions of the modern, world-minded  
individual.

AND IT IS SPREADING AND WILL SPREAD ACROSS THE EARTH LIKE THE  
LIVING TIDE OF GREEN GRASS IN THE SPRING.

It has given a new and broader meaning to the old theological  
labels "Unitarian" and "Universalist."

UNITARIAN NOW STANDS NOT ONLY FOR THE ONENESS OF GOD, BUT FOR  
THE UNITARY VIEW OF ALL LIFE, THE MERGING OF THE SACRED AND  
SECULAR INTO A SINGLE SUBSTANCE, EVERY PARTICLE OF WHICH IS  
SACRED.

It affirms the unitary nature of the universe and everything in it  
as the single sacred reality whose physical and spiritual laws set  
the bounds of our being.

WITHIN WHOSE MEANING AND ULTIMATE PURPOSE, OUR LITTLE LIVES  
FIND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

It seeks the unitary dimension of experience, that depth within,  
which is universal to all people and therefore unitive.

IT CELEBRATES THE UNITARY CHARACTER OF THE HUMAN FAMILY,  
REJOICING THAT NO MATTER WHAT OUR RACE OR FAITH OR CONDITION,  
WE ARE ALL ONE PEOPLE, BELONGING TO THE SINGLE FAMILY OF  
HUMANITY.

Universalism has grown beyond the idea of universal salvation to  
embrace the concept of the universality of truth.

TRUTH IS NOT SECTARIAN, DIFFERENT FOR A CHRISTIAN, A BUDDHIST  
OR A JEW. TRUTH IS UNIVERSAL!

It is progressively discovered and formulated by individuals of  
all faiths, and, when substantiated, it is the same for all  
individuals everywhere.

WITH EACH PASSING YEAR, AND WITH THE CERTAINTY OF A SLOWLY  
EMERGING, SINGLE, SCIENTIFIC, WORLD CULTURE.

The universality of truth will grow more and more apparent, and  
its impact will be more and more realized within humanities  
religious life.

UNIVERSALISM HAS COME TO STAND FOR THE SEEKING OUT AND  
STRESSING OF THE GREAT UNIVERSALS WHICH CAN LEAD SORELY  
DIVIDED NATIONS INTO THE GREAT UNITIES.

It stands for the universal validity of the method of free inquiry  
and the right of every individual to share in the determination of  
their destinies.

IT DESIRES THE ONE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT OF COMPASSIONATE AND ALL-  
REDEEMING LOVE,

Which as the power to inspire, judge, encourage and ultimately to  
gather humanities separated and warring nations into one world  
fellowship of the free.

THUS HAVE THE LITTLE UNITARIAN AND UNIVERSALIST THEOLOGICAL  
HERESIES GROWN UP AND BEEN TRANSFORMED IN TIME,

Into the broad and philosophical foundation for Unitarian  
Universalism.

A NEW WORLD FAITH, WHICH IS INCLUSIVE IN SPIRIT,  
COMPREHENSIVE IN CHARACTER AND UNITING IN INFLUENCE.

**Leader:**

5 minutes

Post on newsprint the one or two word essence of universalism from  
several of the authors. Some are listed here.

Scott:	Confidence/optimism/hope
Kopke:	Liberating process
McKeeman:	Wholeness that gives hope
Spoerl:	Love
Raible:	Love
Reamon:	Ethical religion
Gilbert:	Ethics
Patton:	Universal perspective
Owen-Towle:	Love, courage
Buehrens:	Heritage, mission

**Leader:**

30 minutes

Read the session goals.

Discuss within the whole group your responses to the question:

What do you perceive as being the relevant/important/essential message of Universalism for yourself, your congregation, the UUA ... the world?

**Leader:**

40 minutes

Take out Handout 1 to review. In light of your work on the basic life questions, write your response to this question:

Are you able to use Universalism's message as you work to answer life's basic questions for yourself? How? Be specific.

Discuss these questions within the whole group:

What are the alive and growing edges of our Universalist heritage within Unitarian Universalism?

How can you bring Universalism's message to life in your congregation and the community at large?

**Leader:**

We have been engaged in relating life's basic questions to the Universalist tradition, the addresses from the New York State Convention, and to ourselves. Has that process helped connect you to the tradition, to your congregation, to the world and to your own growing edges? How?

**Leader:**

10 minutes

Complete the following sentence for use in the closing circle:

I am bringing, or hope to bring, Universalism (my faith) to life in the following actions or through the following institutions: ...

## Closure

Form into the closing circle. Read the following two paragraphs and invite each person to read their completed sentence about how they are bringing Universalism to life in their actions.

"In a sense we are performing a ritual much like our Jewish brothers and sisters perform at Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur. During that season, memory's power was recognized as the dominant force that moves a community forward to a better future; and that's why on both Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur, the people prayed with one voice, Zachrenu Lehayyim, which means, "Remember us into life."

This is the source of the name chosen for this program, "Remember Universalism Into Life." We close our program this evening and remember Universalism into our lives, and take from it the messages of love, hope and courage that have been so powerful throughout its history.

Then invite whatever other farewells they choose. Extinguish the candle.

Have your closing party if you have planned one.

Handout 1

SESSION ONE

Basic Life Questions:

1. Who am I?
2. What/whom can I trust?
3. Is there God?
4. How can I be in relationship to others?
5. Why am I here?
6. Where did I come from?
7. Where am I going?
8. What purpose does my living have?
9. What can I hope for?
10. What ought I to do?
11. What am I capable of doing?
12. Does everyone matter? In what sense?
13. Who cares about me?
14. Is there a plan?
15. Are both good and evil part of life?
16. How safe am I?
17. Does it make any difference that I live?
18. Why do bad things happen to good people?
19. Why do good things happen to bad people?
20. Is it safe to be truthful with myself? With others?
21. Is truth important in my scheme of things?
22. How did this world come to be?
23. What will happen to me after I die? What will happen to all life after death?
24. Can meaning be found in the universe? Do we create meaning in the Universe?

SESSION TWO

Universalist Statements of Faith throughout history

**1790 Philadelphia Convention**

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Section I. Of the Holy Scriptures

We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testament to contain a revelation of the perfection and will of God and the rule of faith and practice.

Section II. Of the Supreme Being

We believe in one God, infinite in all his perfection; and that these perfection are all modifications of infinite, adorable, incomprehensible and unchangeable love.

Section III. Of the Mediator

We believe that there is one Mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily; who, by giving himself as ransom for all, hath redeemed them to God by his blood; and who, by merit of his death and the efficacy of his spirit, will finally restore the whole human race to happiness.

Section IV. Of the Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to make known to sinners the truth of their salvation, through the medium of the holy scriptures, and to reconcile the hearts of the children of men to God, and thereby to dispose them to genuine holiness.

Section V. Of Good Works

We believe in the obligation of the moral law, as the rule of life; and we hold, that the love of God, manifested to man in a Redeemer, is the best means of producing obedience to that law, and promoting a holy, active and useful life.

### **1803 The Winchester Profession**

Article I. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

Article II. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

Article III. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men.

### **1899 The Five Principles of Universalism**

The conditions of fellowship shall be as follows:

I. The acceptance of the essential principles of the Universalist Faith, to wit:

1. The Universal Fatherhood of God;
2. The Spiritual authority and leadership of His Son, Jesus Christ;
3. The trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation from God;
4. The certainty of just retribution for sin;
5. The final harmony of all souls with God.

The Winchester Profession is commended as containing these principles, but neither this nor any other precise form of words is required as a condition of fellowship, provided always that the principles above stated be professed.

II. The acknowledgement of the authority of the General Convention and assent to its laws.

### **1935 Bond of Fellowship**

The bond of fellowship in this Convention shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to cooperate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.

To that end we avow our faith in God as Eternal and All-Conquering Love, in the spiritual leadership of Jesus, in the supreme worth of every human personality, in the authority of truth known or to be known, and in the power of men of good-will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God. Neither this nor any other statement shall be imposed as a creedal test, provided that the faith thus indicated be professed.

**1961 Purposes and Principles UUA**  
Original version

In accordance with these corporate purposes, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Association, dedicated to the principles of a free faith, unite in seeking:

- (1) To strengthen one another in a free and disciplined search for truth as the foundation of our religious fellowship;
- (2) To cherish and spread the universal truths taught by the great prophets and teachers of humanity in every age and tradition, immemorially summarized in the Judeo-Christian heritage as love to God and love to man;
- (3) To affirm, defend and promote the supreme worth of every human personality, the dignity of man, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships;
- (4) To implement our vision of one world by striving for a world community founded on ideals of brotherhood, justice and peace;
- (5) To serve the needs of member churches and fellowships, to organize new churches and fellowships, and to extend and strengthen liberal religion;
- (6) To encourage cooperation with men of goodwill in every land.

## 1985 Principles and Purposes UUA

### Section C-2.1 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;

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- \* Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- \* Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;
- \* Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- \* Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- \* Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.

### Section C-2.2 Purposes

The Unitarian Universalist Association shall devote its resources to and exercise its corporate powers for religious, educational and humanitarian purposes. The primary purpose of the Association is to serve the needs of its member congregations, organize new congregations, extend and strengthen Unitarian Universalist institutions and implement its principles.

## Handout 3

### SESSION THREE

1. What does Gordon McKeeman mean by basic universalism?
2. What is the message in Cynthia Grant-Tucker's paper?
3. What does Brian Kopke mean by the difference between updating statements and the process by which Universalism came into being and can continue to come into being?
4. From Dorothy Spoerl's paper what do you see as the difference between standing and moving as a religious faith?

## Handout 4

### SESSION THREE

#### **Leader:**

These writers offer us the options to modernize or update our history, to extract the essence and build on it in our lives, to capitalize on the process that made it relevant in the first place.

Brian Kopke -- The essential identity of Universalism is not the correcting or updating of the statements of faith, it is a process of always being open to new understanding. The statements of faith are landmarks pointing to the process that enabled them.

Gordon McKeeman -- There is an essential content that one can extrapolate from the various statements. Take this essence and incorporate it into your life now.

Dorothy Spoerl -- Extract the doctrines and statements and modernize them for today's relevance. The history can move with us.

Cynthia Grant-Tucker -- Test the history against the reality of broader history and look for the 'unwritten' texts. Seek for what was left out.

Christopher Raible -- Extract the essence for today's message.

Peter Lee Scott -- Look for that in our history that gives us hope and confidence for its time and for our own.

#### **Leader:**

Ask the participants to respond to the following questions.

1) Are you a person who attempts to determine the central message of what your church/religion stands for?

2) Are you a person who seeks to modernize and update the historical and theological traditions of Unitarian Universalism?

3) Are you a person who looks for a process to continuously renew the religious journey that is central to your life?

4) Are you a person for whom espoused beliefs and life actions must be congruent and reality checked?

5) Are you a person whose primary focus is on your own basic life questions?

6) Do you use more than one of these methods of religion making in your life?

Take a few minutes to reflect on the methods you utilize in the ongoing development of your Unitarian Universalist religious quest.

## Handout 5

### SESSION FOUR

#### Quotations on salvation

Hosea Ballou

There is nothing you can do to separate yourself from God.

#### Normative Definition of Salvation

The word itself means health or wholeness of human being; more than safety alone, it has in mind essential soundness or completeness -- the fullest and truest realization of a (person's) own powers and values. For the saved life means the human life dynamically transformed from within; this happens when (one) experiences in him/(her)self the same drive toward wholeness which moves throughout all levels of creation, and recognizes in this experience the forgiving, restoring, reconciling work of the creator.

*Handbook of Christian Theology,*  
Meridian Living Age Books, 1958, page 337.

Dorothy Spoerl

Page 14 We need to continue this concern for the evils of the system if we believe in the reality of the salvation of all souls through the improvement of society:

Ellsworth Reamon

Page 25 ...the doctrine of universal salvation This so-called doctrine was "...founded upon the belief that the ethical characteristic of God is such that it is His will to bring the entire human race into a holiness and happiness."

Gordon McKeeman

Page 45 J.B.S. Haldane, a British biologist..writes "The phenomena of life tend, in the case of any particular species of organism, to persist and reproduce themselves as a whole."

Page 47 We ought to feel able to feel more secure for our future with Julian of Norwich at our elbow; "But all shall be well and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well."

Christopher Raible

Page 73 Human morality comes, not from fear, but in response to love. If one knows that one is loved, the response is to become loving.

## Handout 6

### SESSION FIVE

#### Quotations on motivation and/or empowerment

Cynthia Grant-Tucker

Page 156 These journals also remind us of the prophetic nature of work carried out by the Universalist women, "prophetic" in that it was activated by discontent with the status quo and by a religious commitment to making the social systems work better.

Page 160 We need to reassess what we mean by empowering human achievement and use these criteria to appreciate women's history. Simply not to achieve what we set out to do doesn't mean that we haven't lived valuable lives that are worthy of recollection and emulation. Those who for all of their personal limitations held fast to their principles, who sometimes tripped up but pressed on with courage and dignity, these are the real successes we want to remember and use as our models.

Page 163 To have a place in the sun -- in a social system, in public and private memory, in human relationships -- to have this place in the sun is a basic human need and right and certainly a salient part of the liberal religious legacy.

Page 163 ...where there is a restless desire to make our relationships better, where there is commitment to progress as well as goodwill, there is surely cause to be hopeful.

Carolyn Owen-Towle

Last two paragraphs I am indebted to our Universalist tradition which affirms the everlasting, unfathomable, undeserved love of God. No one, however criminal, addicted, incorrigible or ruthless is beyond redemption. At the same time no one, but no one, completes a life without wrong doing or hurting another. Part of our job as Universalists is to make way for justice and redemption to take place, not only in our lives but among the marginalized and disenfranchised who need advocates; the convicted prisoner, the ostracized colleague, the wayward child.

I have talked about social, professional and familial ethics, in the light of our chosen faith of Universalism. In each it remains our eternal challenge to steer a course consistent with our highest values. It takes courage and love to begin and stay the course, to travel the path with the heart, to be Universalist.

Dorothy Spoerl

Page 8 From the 1935 Bond of Fellowship: We believe in the power of men (sic) of goodwill and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God.

Page 10 If we truly believe in the capacity of each of us to develop his (or her) potential in the directions of his (or her) own choice, it lays upon us, as individuals, grave responsibilities; not only are we responsible for ourselves and the choices we make, but we are also responsible to society. Responsible in the sense that we must work for the achievement of a society in which the environment and the education, the opportunities and the encouragements, are such that all (people) have the opportunity to develop that inner potential for good which is truly theirs and which can be, so often, blotted out by adverse conditions and circumstances.

Ellsworth Reamon

Page 27 We cannot "plea bargain" our way into heaven or into a world of decency and peace. We need to come to the realization that human beings are the most valuable commodity on earth and act accordingly. And finally, we need to understand that religion is not a matter of creeds, dogmas, ritual and noble sentiments ... playthings for the Sabbath...it needs to be a power for good finding daily expression in the lives of those who claim to be the children of God.

Christopher Raible

Page 72 If there is knowledge of happiness, i.e., assurance of salvation, of the ultimate reward in Heaven, then there will inevitably be holiness, i.e., moral behavior. Believers "ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works.

Pages 74 The old Universalist theological doctrine had ethical consequences. For Universalists, moral behavior could not be based on fear or guilt. We are all part of a divine plan, they taught. The nature of that plan is love. Our response to that knowledge that we are part of the plan is to be responsible, to express love in our own lives.... If we know that we are saved, we know that we are worth saving, we know that we are worth something, so we inevitably demonstrate that in the way we live our lives.

Page 76 They (Universalists) believed that the fate of each was tied up with the fate of all -- of all human beings.

Richard S. Gilbert

Page 86 The concept of a one world community, however appealing in the abstract, is far less so when it means equal treatment of one's immediate neighbors of every race, religion, class and nationality. In short, it is simply hard to love one's neighbor, near and far.

Pages 86-87 In those days the function of hell was as a deterrent to immoral behavior; Heaven's function was to encourage virtuous conduct. It was thought only these external restraints and incentives could produce goodness. The early Universalists had the temerity to suggest the model of a compassionate Jesus and

the vision of a Loving God were sufficient for the creation of character.

Page 89-90 In theological Universalism it was the love of God for humanity which was decisive for heavenly salvation. In ethical Universalism, it is we who are required to be the agents of an earthly salvation. God may for some become the symbol and motivation for action.

Mark & Donna Morrison-Reed

Page 97 There is something about a hostile environment that makes individuals band together, to reaffirm their values and themselves. And there is something about a tolerant community -- and believe me, despite the moral majority, ours is a comparatively tolerant community -- that leads individuals to relax, take it easy, not feel quite so anxious about getting to church each Sunday morning.

Page 102 Psychologist's call it self-love. Religion calls it God's love. Whatever we call it, it is the love from within that radiates outward to envelope our neighbors, whoever they are and wherever they be.

Peter Lee Scott

Page 142 It was also a confidence not just that all persons were to be saved, but that all could merit that salvation; all were capable of reaching holiness as a prelude to happiness, of becoming good persons as a necessary part of salvation.

Page 143 The story is told of Hosea Ballou, riding over the hills of New Hampshire as a circuit rider. One day he was accompanied by another itinerant preacher, a Baptist, and they argued theology as they traveled. At one point the Baptist minister said, "Brother Ballou, if I were a Universalist, and feared not the fires of Hell, I'd hit you over the head and steal your horse and saddle." Ballou looked over at him and replied, "My brother, if you were a Universalist the idea would never occur to you!"

Max Coots

Page 59-60 (from John Murray) "Give them, not hell, but hope and courage. Do not push them deeper into their theological despair, but preach the kindness and everlasting love of God."

Page 63 So, my theology, like any other, is characterized by my perception of that which I conclude is greater than myself alone, by my experiences of wonder and reverence, and what I imagine is the object of that wonder and reverence. The shape of my theology is determined by what I conceive to be the source and sustainer of life, and how I perceive my relationship to it in both its transcendent and immanent ways--that which has been called the first cause, the prime mover, the ultimate reality, the ground of being, the creator, and divine--in short, God."

SESSION SIX

Stories and statements of ethical Universalism

Peter Lee Scott

Page 143 The story is told of Hosea Ballou, riding over the hills of New Hampshire as a circuit rider. One day he was accompanied by another itinerant preacher, a Baptist, and they argued theology as they traveled. At one point the Baptist minister said, "Brother Ballou, if I were a Universalist, and feared not the fires of Hell, I'd hit you over the head and steal your horse and saddle. Ballou looked over at him and replied, "My brother, if you were a Universalist, the idea would never occur to you!"

Richard S. Gilbert

Page 84 There were two John Murrays in Boston at the turn of the 19th century, "Damnation Murray," and "Salvation Murray," to distinguish Calvinist from Universalist. The unpopularity of the latter, our John Murray, is evident in these words from his autobiography describing a Sunday morning sermon in Boston: 'At length, a large rugged stone, weight about a pound and a half, was forcibly thrown in at the window behind my back; it missed me. Had it sped, as it was aimed, it must have killed me.

'Lifting it up, and waving it in the view of the people, I observed, 'This argument is solid, and weighty, but it is neither rational, nor convincing ... Not all the stones in Boston, except they stop my breath, shall shut my mouth, or arrest my testimony.'

Page 87 We have the best theory that can be devised -- Universal benevolence -- justice, mercy, equality, peace, holiness, happiness, for all men (sic). What can be better? But of how much worth is the doctrine without its application? ... How can it be accomplished? Ah, that HOW is the difficult word...

Page 88 (Clarence) Skinner's, (late Dean of Crane School of Religion at Tufts University) appointment as Professor of Applied Christianity was not universally approved, as some believed him too radical in his politics and potentially a dangerous influence on students. He was a pacifist, and virtually ostracized on campus when it was taken over by the Navy in World War I.

Failing to find a church that embodied his demanding ethical universalism, he founded, and for 17 years led, the Community Church in Boston. He returned to become Vice-Dean and Dean at Crane, teaching until the end of World War II, which he also opposed.

Page 89 As a born Universalist I have inherited that (ethical Universalism) tradition. I can recall collecting dimes for the Clara Barton and Eliot P. Joslin camps for diabetic children. I can remember sending money to the Jordan Neighborhood House in Suffolk, Virginia, an historic attempt at black empowerment. In the summer of 1965 Joyce (my wife) and I worked at Jordan and came to know Annie B. Willis, daughter of its founder. In the summers of 1957 and 1958 I worked in a refugee camp in West Germany for the Universalist Service Committee, later serving as a board member of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

## Handout 8

### SESSION SIX

Synopsis of Dick Gilbert's thesis and a look at Carolyn Owen-Towle's points.

As a quick synopsis Dick Gilbert writes: "...the distinctive doctrine of the 19th century Universalist, Universal Salvation, (the final harmony of all souls with God), for many, ...is an anachronistic eschatology (the ultimate end of things) a charmingly irrelevant bit of 19th century nostalgia, a theology for the good old days.

"I suggest universal salvation, reinterpreted, is yet a distinctive doctrine for Unitarian Universalists in this time. I further submit that it is a most radical doctrine... The Universalist impulse -- to save humanity -- to include all people in the human family -- is alive and well, but it has changed its beat. ...

"...I suggest that once popular theological universalism had lost its appeal, a much more demanding ethical universalism came into being. ...

"This demanding, ethical Universalism grew out of theological Universalism. Hosea Ballou had written: 'There is one inevitable criterion of judgement touching religious faith in doctrinal matters: Can you reduce it to practice? If not, have none of it.'"

Carolyn Owen-Towle

...Heart and courage were the genesis and continue to be attributes which sustain Universalism's social witness.

I have talked about social, professional and familial ethics, in the light of our chosen faith of Universalism. In each it remains our eternal challenge to steer a course consistent with our highest values. It takes courage and love to begin and stay the course, to travel the path with the heart, to be Universalists.

SESSION SEVEN

Church/Individual background material

F. Forrest Church

pages 37 & 38 "Freedom of religion too easily translates into the emptiness of freedom from religion. Without strong and vigorous structures, vital worshiping communities, and a faith that sustains more than a self-satisfied few through times of crisis and hardship, our much vaunted freedom and openness remain spiritless abstractions. We must not forget that what we offer is an alternative religion, not an alternative to religion. It is religion modified and shaped by the principles of freedom and open process; it is a liberal religion, but a religion nonetheless....

"Are we liberals who happen to gather in churches, or are we churchmen and women who practice our religion according to liberal principles? ...

"While freedom is the watchword of our faith, each of these witnesses (Henry Whitney Bellows and Dr. Elbridge Gerry Brooks) reminds us that we take that freedom seriously. For one thing, we choose to be free together, with all that this entails, rather than remaining free alone. For another, free to dismiss the answers others have given to life's essential questions, we are not free to dismiss these questions themselves."

John Buehrens

Page 176 "Early Universalists knew that the mission of the church is two-fold: to preach a prophetic gospel, and to provide 'a community of acceptance -- especially to those who feel unacceptable, even to themselves.' (Paul Tillich) They also knew that, if hospitality is the most basic religious virtue, there is an obligation to share it."

Kenneth Patton

Page 108 But the future of a natural and human religion of universalism is an entirely different matter. It is a religion of human achievements and relationships in this world, here and now. It is entirely dependent on human character and achievement, on human behavior, and dependent on the environment of planet earth.

Pages 110 & 111 "In a sense, even denominationally, the future of universalism is a personal matter. Ultimately, each of us is responsible for the fullness of universal religious experience that is our own, our personal religion. ... Religion in any real sense, is what happens in the individual, in the personal idealism, dreams, hunger, sorrow, and aspiration of the person. Denominations are the dry, dead branches, the debris of living religion.

"What is the future of universal religion? You will answer that in the privacy of your own person. Each of us has a personal love affair with reality, with the universe.

Page 112 The theme of the future of Universalism is being played out not in religious societies, but in universities, in museums, in cultural agencies.

Peter Lee Scott

Pages 146 & 147 "Faith must always be translated into action to be meaningful. ... And yet despite its many faults, our Unitarian Universalist Association is probably still necessary to the existence of our faith -- secondary to our ideas, yes--but still quite needed. Needed to conserve those ideas, to transmit and share them, to protect them. ... It deserves our support; it must have our support to succeed, as well as occasionally our criticism. ... It is my observation, however, as a historian of our movement, that a strong denominational organization is crucial to our survival. I believe that without the organization, the institution, our Universalist Unitarian faith would be the treasure of only an occasional, isolated individual -- lonely and probably silent and afraid."

... In the 1700's "There were Universalists to be found in most denominations, but they had no denomination of their own, no way to be aware of one another, no way to give one another support."

Gordon McKeeman

Page 51 "In recent years, the Unitarians and Universalists have strongly emphasized individualism. We have, in fact, as far as possible, institutionalized individualism. But, as people come to us, and grow through the stage of individualism in religion, they increasingly want to know what lies beyond that."

Brian Kopke

Page 119 Ballou's writings and the preachers and laypersons who followed them led to the establishment of a wave of hope. The energies of that hope were harnessed to build churches and establish societies. That hope caused growing numbers of Universalist churches to see the need to band together in associations and State Conventions to promote Universalism.

SESSION EIGHT

**Our Most Sacred Word**

Responsive Reading by The Rev. Raymond Hopkins delivered at  
General Assembly, Brunswick, ME, 1982

What has been emerging in Unitarian Universalism in this twentieth century is nothing less than a new synthesis, the coalescence of a new consensus;

A NEW WORLD FAITH, FORMULATED BY AND FITTED FOR THIS GREAT  
NEW WORLD-AGE THAT IS COMING TO BIRTH IN OUR TIME.

It is taking its place beside the big-three religious groups on this continent, the Catholics, Protestants and Jews,

WITH WHOM IT WORKS FOR WORTHY HUMAN GOALS AND CORDIALITY, BUT  
NONE OF WHOM IT FINDS THEOLOGICALLY COMPATIBLE, AND INTO NONE  
OF WHOSE CREEDAL CATEGORIES IT CAN BE FITTED.

It speaks to the needs and conditions of the modern, world-minded individual.

AND IT IS SPREADING AND WILL SPREAD ACROSS THE EARTH LIKE THE  
LIVING TIDE OF GREEN GRASS IN THE SPRING.

It has given a new and broader meaning to the old theological labels "Unitarian" and "Universalist."

UNITARIAN NOW STANDS NOT ONLY FOR THE ONENESS OF GOD, BUT FOR  
THE UNITARY VIEW OF ALL LIFE, THE MERGING OF THE SACRED AND  
SECULAR INTO A SINGLE SUBSTANCE, EVERY PARTICLE OF WHICH IS  
SACRED.

If affirms the unitary nature of the universe and everything in it as the single sacred reality whose physical and spiritual laws set the bounds of our being.

WITHIN WHOSE MEANING AND ULTIMATE PURPOSE, OUR LITTLE LIVES  
FIND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

It seeks the unitary dimension of experience, that depth within, which is universal to all people and therefore unitive.

IT CELEBRATES THE UNITARY CHARACTER OF THE HUMAN FAMILY,  
REJOICING THAT NO MATTER WHAT OUR RACE OR FAITH OR CONDITION,  
WE ARE ALL ONE PEOPLE, BELONGING TO THE SINGLE FAMILY OF  
HUMANITY.

Universalism has grown beyond the idea of universal salvation to embrace the concept of the universality of truth.

TRUTH IS NOT SECTARIAN, DIFFERENT FOR A CHRISTIAN, A BUDDHIST OR A JEW. TRUTH IS UNIVERSAL!

It is progressively discovered and formulated by individuals of all faiths, and, when substantiated, it is the same for all individuals everywhere.

WITH EACH PASSING YEAR, AND WITH THE CERTAINTY OF A SLOWLY EMERGING, SINGLE, SCIENTIFIC, WORLD CULTURE.

The universality of truth will grow more and more apparent, and its impact will be more and more realized within humanities religious life.

UNIVERSALISM HAS COME TO STAND FOR THE SEEKING OUT AND STRESSING OF THE GREAT UNIVERSALS WHICH CAN LEAD SORELY DIVIDED NATIONS INTO THE GREAT UNITIES.

It stands for the universal validity of the method of free inquiry and the right of every individual to share in the determination of their destinies.

IT DESIRES THE ONE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT OF COMPASSIONATE AND ALL-REDEEMING LOVE,

Which as the power to inspire, judge, encourage and ultimately to gather humanities separated and warring nations into one world fellowship of the free.

THUS HAVE THE LITTLE UNITARIAN AND UNIVERSALIST THEOLOGICAL HERESIES GROWN UP AND BEEN TRANSFORMED IN TIME,

Into the broad and philosophical foundation for Unitarian Universalism.

A NEW WORLD FAITH, WHICH IS INCLUSIVE IN SPIRIT, COMPREHENSIVE IN CHARACTER AND UNITIING IN INFLUENCE.