

UUSJ Board Meeting Report
Discussion of Strategic Planning Documents (via Zoom)
March 12, 2020

Present: Gary Magnuson (with Peterson proxy), Lavona Grow, David Shilton, Eleanor Piez, Suzan Chastain, Emily Koechlin, Jack Lebowitz, Martha Ades, Pat Behenna, Sean McCarthy, Bob Denniston, Pablo DeJesus, Evan Junker. (Quorum achieved.)

Purpose of the meeting was to review the draft work products from the Covenant Team (Larry Underwood and Gary Magnuson) and the Values Team (Suzan Chastain and David Shilton) as functions of the UUSJ Strategic Planning Process. Both reports were provided for review in advance of the discussion.

Gary Magnuson presented the Covenant Team Report. Discussion followed. A minor change was recommended and accepted by the authors. Vote to approve was unanimous.

Suzan Chastain presented the Values Grid. Discussion followed. Minor changes were recommended and accepted by the authors. Vote to approve was near-unanimous, excepting Sean McCarthy, who provided the following statement:

Dear Board Members,

I apologize for not having commented on the Values Grid a few weeks ago, when there was more time to consider comments and changes. Even though the Values Grid is an excellent summary (Thank you, David and Suzan), I did feel there were a few places where an additional word or two would clarify it. I think tonight's discussion and a couple changes we agreed did clarify the document.

The final point I wanted to raise tonight, before we ran out of time, was in the second Value: "We are faithful to our UU Principles". The last sentence of the grid cell "How is this lived out externally?" enumerates actions that UUSJ may take to advance UU Principles. However, it only mentions actions with respect to the Congress and UU congregations and members. I think it neglects actions to educate the public.

I would add the words "and the public" to this sentence so it reads:

"We identify and take action on specific, concrete issues that further UU Principles, such as advocating for or raising concerns about legislation, developing training materials for activism by

*UU congregations, or alerting all members **and the public** to important social justice events and issues." (Added words in bold).*

As a list of examples, one might argue these additional words are unnecessary. However, if that is our view, I would like some consensus that educating the public is another part of how we externally live this value.

Sean McCarthy

Draft minutes prepared by Bob Denniston

Attachments:

**Covenant Team Report
Values Grid**

UUSJ
Strategic Planning Process 2019-2020

Covenant Team Report

Larry Underwood

Gary Magnuson

March 2020

Attached is the final version of the UUSJ Strategic Planning Process Covenant approved by the UUSJ Board on March 12, 2020. The purpose of the Covenant is to provide guiding principles regarding the conduct of the UUSJ strategic planning process. It is much more than meeting ground rules.

The Covenant calls for agreement on actionable language to govern behavior during and in-between UUSJ Strategic Planning meetings, to guide our planning work to strategically position the UUSJ to accomplish its mission.

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UUSJ Strategic Planning Process Covenant

(3/12/2020)

We, the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice, seek to create an atmosphere of honesty, respect, trust, gratitude, forgiveness, acceptance and loyalty within our organization. Right relations are the foundation on which a safe and healthy justice seeking organization is based. To this end, we pledge to govern our actions by the spirit and letter of this covenant.

We therefore promise to:

Listen, actively and respectfully. Respect each other. Communicate directly to individuals. Use "I language" whenever possible. Trust the process. Participate but do not dominate.

How are you behaving (during and as a result of meetings):

- Be patient and positive, be respectful.
- No personal attacks.
- Engage in active listening.
- Be prompt when arriving and returning from breaks.
- Address differences of opinion directly to the individual involved.
- Avoid triangulation of communication.

How do we want people to engage for the overall process:

- Be inclusive.
- Step up, step back.
- Be present.
- Participate with an open mind and heart.
- Don't dominate.

Macro-process:

- Trust the process and others.
- Understand that change is challenging.
- Be prepared to contribute and read writing and reading materials prior to meetings.
- Follow through on commitments.

We therefore resolve to:

Approach each other and organizational processes in peace and love. Anticipate and accept that we will fall short of this covenant as individuals and a group. Help others abide by these covenants. Address the breaking of covenant in a loving and forgiving way. Acknowledge our shortcomings directly to those impacted and make amends.

Should we become concerned about the actions of others, we will raise such concerns directly with that individual. If necessary, a third party may be called upon to mediate the conversation.

The Board of Directors as a whole will serve as the arbiter of unresolved covenant disputes.

And then we begin again in love.

Values Grid (as of 3/12/20)

Adopted Values:

1. We are effective and responsive
2. We are faithful to our UU Principles
3. We respect others

Value	How is this lived out externally?	How is this lived out internally?	In what ways is this value “core” - a defining, encompassing and grounding value?
<p>1. We are effective and responsive</p> <p>We work with and listen to our partners within and outside the UU community to effectively amplify UU Principles in the public sphere. To be effective, our work must be of high quality, credible, trustworthy and responsive to the expressed needs of affected communities.</p>	<p>The high quality of our work gives credibility to our organization and adds force to our arguments. We believe that an authentic, values-based voice is the most effective voice in creating change. We foster and sustain partnerships because we know we are stronger and more effective with others who embrace a shared commitment to working for a better world. We strive to be viewed by the UU community and our partners as a resource to help amplify their voices.</p>	<p>We choose issues and develop positions in a thoughtful and careful manner to make a difference. We consider the impact of positions we take on the communities most affected by an issue through, for example, consultation and partnerships with representatives from those communities. We regularly evaluate the effectiveness and responsiveness of our actions, learn from our successes and our mistakes, and continuously strive to improve our effectiveness and responsiveness.</p>	<p>We cannot amplify and mobilize the voice of Unitarian Universalists if our work is not effective and credible. Nor can we truly represent UU Principles if we are not responsive to our partners and affected communities.</p>
<p>2. We are faithful to our UU Principles</p> <p>Our work is grounded in our UU Principles, including our principles of justice, equality, human dignity, human rights, social inclusion and respect for the earth.</p>	<p>Our work is designed to further our UU Principles in our communities, our country, and our world. We frame our work in terms of our Principles. We identify and take action on specific, concrete issues that further our UU Principles, such as advocating for or raising concerns about legislation, developing training materials for activism by UU congregations, or</p>	<p>Our UU Principles are our lens for viewing our community and the world. We use UU Principles to identify issues that are the focus of our work. UU Principles also provide a framework for how we approach issues. For example, in considering how to approach an environmental issue that furthers our 7th principle, we also consider how to do so in a way that furthers our first and second</p>	<p>UU Principles are our perspective for viewing ourselves, our communities, and the world. They guide our choice of the issues we work on as well as how we work on these issues.</p>

	<p>alerting all members to important social justice events and issues.</p>	<p>principles relating to the worth and dignity of every person and justice, equity and compassion in human relations. Consequently, we would consider the effect on marginalized communities of environmental policy options. Also, our Principles guide how we relate to each other, our partners within and outside the UU community and those whose interests may be affected by our policy advocacy</p>	
<p>3. We respect others</p> <p>We believe respect for individuals, communities, and cultures provides the foundation for constructive engagement with others.</p>	<p>We value and seek to understand the needs, beliefs, and feelings of others with whom we work, partner, and whose interests may be affected by our policy advocacy. We respect other cultures, viewpoints, and contributions, even when they are different than our own. We relate to others in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration.</p>	<p>We value the contributions and views of all individuals within our organization and church community, even when they differ from our own. We value diversity in all its forms and pro-actively strive to be inclusive and welcoming for everyone regardless of race, economic status, gender, ethnicity, or other differences. We listen to people when they speak, without judgment. We are careful about not making assumptions about others.</p>	<p>Respect is our underlying intention for engaging others within and outside of our organization. Respect is central for building constructive relationships and constructive relationships are key for achieving our objectives.</p>