

Unitarian Christian Church of America

Our Platform

May 2018

INTRODUCTION:

In today's world, especially within the Unitarian Christian Community, there is a desperate need for a Church to step forward and offer a new way in which anyone might choose to fulfill personal spiritual needs and desires.

The old ways of "church" are being rejected, and it is time for a new way to be brought forth to fill the vacuum. This is the reason for the advent of the Unitarian Christian Church of America (UCCA).

Provided below are the articles that make up the platform of our Unitarian Christian faith. We are a new church founded around our Unitarian predecessors' understandings of Christianity, now revived and revised to meet the needs of a 21st Century world, understandings that are informed by recent research and scholarship.

The Founding Platform of UCCA is made up of three Articles that are best understood as interconnected. It is hoped that these Articles will serve as the basis for teaching and living our Unitarian Christian faith. These Articles of Faith are presented not necessarily as universally applicable doctrines nor as dogmatic theology, but primarily as foundational "key points" and "themes" from which detailed teachings, sermons, and other discourse might be formed and presented to fulfill the personal spiritual needs of all who might seek to know a better way. The founders of UCCA perceive this offering as a Platform that our 21st Century Unitarian Christian Church can use as a firm foundation on which to build and by which to welcome "all who will" to come and join this faith initiative.

ARTICLE-1: THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR THE UCCA

The purpose of UCCA is to provide a single gathering place and source of support for those who profess to follow the teachings of Jesus and strive to live by his example as it is individually understood. It is intended to be a common gathering place for those who choose to become modern-day Unitarian Christians.

We welcome those who choose to share these Foundational Beliefs and choose to actively participate and mutually collaborate in living our Universal Principle. The explicit purpose is not to dictate what personal faith should be nor to stand in judgment of honest personal and individual differences. Indeed, the intention is to bind together in the love of One God, as one fellowship, living in truth, peace and love for all humankind and all creation.

ARTICLE-2: THE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE OF THE UCCA

The UCCA believes that of all the teachings to be found in the Christian Scriptures there is one that is fundamental to the Christian faith and, stated variously, attested to by almost all other faiths. As Christians, we find this principle central to the teachings of the Biblical Jesus, and we see it lived out in the example of his life.

In Mark 12:28-34 Jesus says: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”

Thus, today, the UCCA declares and proclaims: “There is only one God, creator and sustainer of all existence, giver of life to all that lives. As God’s creation, we are to love and honor our God with every ounce of our being. When we purport to behave in a manner consistent with that belief, it is manifested by the unconditional love we have for, and the compassion we demonstrate to, all humankind and all creation.

When we live our lives in a manner consistent with this proclamation, we will have fulfilled all the teachings of righteousness and will be living in the “Kingdom of God.” Moreover, we believe that the result will be greater peace and serenity in our individual lives and, when done by many, then there can be peace on earth.”

ARTICLE-3: THE FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS OF THE UCCA

Anything that is built, if it is to stand, must be built on a sound foundation. It is within this truth that UCCA has developed the foundational “Beliefs” which follow. Along with our “Statement of Purpose” and our “Universal Principle,” it constitutes the “Platform” that supports our faith and our Church. These Foundational Beliefs are stated here to serve as starting points, a beginning, for any individual to examine and hear our message of unity, of peace and of unconditional compassion for all humankind, and for our passionate concern for all creation. We present these Foundational beliefs not as conditions that must be met, but as a point of beginning and a call to assembly. Although it is not expected that every member of the UCCA fellowship will agree with every statement, nor embrace every Article of Belief with equal enthusiasm and commitment, we believe that the body of our Beliefs contain the elements needed for a new beginning, and that they provide the necessary sound foundation for our faith to build upon.

Our First Belief: *We believe in the reality of the one God, a singular entity beyond finite definition and without material form; the Creator and sustainer of all existence, eternal above time and infinite beyond being.*

Our Second Belief: *We believe in the teachings and example of Jesus as presented within the Bible and in other writings. Thus, we encourage others to let the lessons of the life and teachings of Jesus to speak to them personally, without fear of judgement of any kind or demands of conformity from others.*

Our Third Belief: *We believe that we are able to find inspiration, truths and guidance for our life, within the teachings in the Bible, intelligently selected and utilized. Moreover, we believe that individuals may choose to search within other texts, ancient and modern, for consistent inspiration and enlightenment.*

Our Fourth Belief: *We believe that it is natural for humans to seek spiritual and physical fellowship and communion with others. This “assembly” is commonly referred to as “Church:” a gathering place for all who find favor within our teachings and who would seek to know more. It should be a place where our individual spirituality and beliefs are challenged and encouraged and where we can share in those beliefs that we might have in common and to share our individual understandings.*

Our Fifth Belief: *We believe in the “free-will” of all humankind, and that each individual should be enabled to develop his/her own personal beliefs and relationship with God as individually perceived. We are all part of the Family of God; free in spirit, but united in duty; under one God for the love of all creation; dedicated to our faith and its service to all humanity.*

Our Sixth Belief: *We believe that it is each person’s choice as to how they relate to God, Jesus, Scriptures and Church. Our explicit purpose is not to dictate but, indeed, to facilitate; not to force a way onto anyone, but to walk with them on their spiritual journeys so that no one need travel alone.*

Our Seventh Belief: *We believe in a welcoming church, with open fellowship, communion and gatherings. However, although open, welcoming and compassionate behavior to all, we are steadfast in our intention to teach and exemplify our Unitarian Christian faith.*

Our Eighth Belief: *We believe that individual Churches/Fellowships, as autonomous bodies, have the freedom to choose their own “Rituals of the Church” and forms of worship. However, such autonomy is to be exercised with the understanding that the rituals are to be observed by individuals or by the assembly as vehicles to demonstrate faith or understanding toward a central premise/belief and not as a test or requirement of membership or participation, and not as an exercise in power or hegemony.*

Our Ninth Belief: *We believe that current Unitarian Christian understanding precludes us from teachings such as those of: repentance, salvation, grace, redemption, heaven, hell, justification, sanctification and the afterlife. These constructs, as traditionally taught, are too often used to judge, condemn and control others. However, we realize that these concepts can have modern, philosophical and spiritual meaning for many within fellowship. Thus, it is not our position to discourage an individual from the examination of these or other concepts, for their own personal fulfillment as long as they do not use these pursuits in any manner as a condition of UCCA fellowship or as a demand that others adopt identical beliefs.*

Our Tenth Belief: *We believe that we are a creedless faith, but a faith founded on very specific beliefs. We are “creedless” because the UCCA does not have a need to require our members to pledge allegiance to our church or any specific set of beliefs.*

We offer common ground for fellowship with all others who perceive themselves as able to live in harmony with the stated “Platform” of UCCA. We invite them to fellowship with us. It is not important that we fully agree on every point of faith; what matters is that we do not have to believe alone. Maybe most importantly, we believe that our faith will only grow stronger if we are united in love, mutual respect, and mission.