



## March 2021 Abiding Deeply

What does it mean to be  
called together spiritually  
to Abide Deeply?

Art Credit: Kyla Jack Farrell, by permission

### Definitions (from Lexico by Oxford)

#### first word // Abide VERB

1. accept or act in accordance with (a rule, decision, or recommendation)
2. be unable to tolerate (someone or something), e.g., abide no hatred!

#### second word // Deeply ADVERB

1. far down or in
2. intensely.

(from Merriam Webster):

Abide - transitive verb

1a: to bear patiently, to tolerate, such as cannot abide such bigots

1b: to endure without yielding, withstand, such as abide the onrush of the enemy

2: to wait for, await, such as "I will abide the coming of my lord."— Alfred Tennyson

3: to accept without objection, such as will abide your decision

### Abide Deeply (personal definition)

Stick with a situation that may be challenging at times while it also resonates with your deepest values.

*This packet writing was led by Tom and Anne Perry and called upon the entire packet writing team for input. Thanks to Rev. Margalie Belizaire, Diane Barone, Barbara de Leeuw, Mary Hammele, Mary Lyubomirsky, Jan Miller, Sue Roark-Calnek & Ira Srole.*

March 2021

Dear Friends,

This month's theme invites us to abide deeply. What does that mean? In its simplest form, abiding means sitting quietly with another person who is suffering - being there to listen. Just like our Soul Matters meetings, "No fixing, no saving, no advising, no setting each other straight." We are called to deep listening and/or to sharing the silence.

We've all been challenged this past year to abide with our fears and loneliness during a global pandemic. We've found ways to sit with each other over zoom or outside during warmer weather. We've been unwilling to abide police violence against Black people whether we masked up and attended demonstrations or found other ways to support the protestors with signage or sustenance. Most American voters decided they could not abide a delusional president, but that's a longer story. And, what made millions among us decide we could not abide staying in our homes during the holiday season but had to travel aboard an airplane?



While these are interesting questions, you are invited this month to consider why you abide in this First Unitarian Church of Rochester community. In the UU context, how do we abide deeply in understanding Unitarian Universalist theology. You may have had an introduction to this in UU 101 and/or Starting Point in addition to Sunday sermons. In the Resources section of this packet, you will find the Seven (soon to be Eight) Principles, the Six Sources and our congregation's Values, Mission and Ends. Given what we learn this month about UU theology, what is particular about our congregation that contributes to your abiding deeply in this community?

We will use the Theology chapter in Widening the Circle of Concern as the starting point for our exploration. It provides a foundation in UU theology. Were you uncomfortable with comments that UUs can believe anything? Absent a formal creed, we do have principles and limitations on belief. Was an invitation to build our own theology more accurately an opportunity to find sources that resonated with our underlying beliefs? If you connect to First Unitarian primarily because of "community", can you find deeper theological reasons for abiding deeply?

The main exercise that you are invited to engage in this month is a deep dive into our UU theology. You will probably not be surprised, but I think you will have some 'Aha!' moments.

Can we abide deeply in our church community if we don't have a good underlying understanding of our shared UU theology? In the context of diving deeply into UU theology, you are also invited to explore again our values, mission and ends. It is our hope that as a result of this experience, you are called to abide more deeply in our UU community.

Anne J. Perry  
For the Soul Matters Packet Writing Team  
First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY

## SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

*Select one of the exercises below to practice and come prepared to discuss the experience and your thoughts and feelings about it with your group.*

### **Option 1. Abiding Deeply with Unitarian Universalist Theology**

Begin by reading or listening to the Theology section in Widening the Circle of Concern. The audio version is about 35 minutes.

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening/theology>

It will likely lead you to a broader inquiry into:

1. Western dictionary definitions of “theology” are centered on monotheism, typically Christianity. What does theology mean for non-theists and/or pluralistic faith traditions?
2. Many UUs find it easy to say what they don’t believe and have difficulty summarizing what they do believe. Can these negative beliefs be restated in the affirmative?
3. It is often said that “UUs can believe anything.” What can be included in a common set of UU theological beliefs? What would be considered outside the boundaries of UU theology?
4. Universalists and Unitarians are both historically majority white associations. How does our history and theology need to be expanded or rewritten to make UUism a more liberatory faith?

Please turn to the resources section of this packet for connections to Theology Definition, Rejected Beliefs Turned into Affirmatives, Our Core Theological Beliefs, and Making UUism a More Liberatory Faith. You may be inspired to dig more deeply.

Come to your Soul Matters group prepared to discuss what you have learned and how your understanding of UU theology may have changed.

### **Option 2. Communitas**

From Edith Turner's wonderful book "Communitas: The Anthropology of Collective Joy" (2012): here are some excerpts, stitched together:

"Communitas is ... a group's pleasure in sharing common experiences with one's fellows ... It does not merge identities; the gifts of each and every person are alive to the fullest. It remains a spring of pure possibility, and it finds oneness, in surprise...It has agency, and seems to be searching. It has something magical about it. There appears to be innumerable trends of crisscrossing lines of meaning, flows of meaning ... It comes unexpectedly, like the winds, and it warms people toward their fellow human beings..."

Turner goes on to observe how rituals provide a sacred space, a momentary detachment from ordinary life as participants connect deeply with each other as they act out symbols of the values they share.

This month, consider the rituals that stitch together First Unitarian, such as Flower Communion, Memory Tree, Winter Solstice, Christmas Eve, Sunday services, chalice lighting, hymn-singing, soul matters meetings and/or any others you can think of. How do these connect you to Unitarian Universalist theology? How do you feel when participating in these rituals?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*These questions aren't "homework" that need to be covered entirely. Instead, simply pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The questions often lead not to answers, but more questions.*

1. A member shares, "My parents are Methodist church hoppers. When controversy occurred at the church where I grew up, my parents pulled us out of that community, and then later to another and later yet another. It was disruptive and painful for me to sever those relationships. So, when things became turbulent here at First Unitarian several years back, I dug my heels in. I was not going to lose my connections to all the people I've grown to care for so deeply here. I had faith that we would weather that storm together, and we have weathered that and more. I'm so grateful that I stayed." Have you ever had to decide whether or not to abide with a significant relationship or community after a painful experience? How did you decide, and what sort of strength or courage did you need to either sever the connection or abide?
2. If you came to First Unitarian from another faith tradition, what beliefs or practices drove you out of that tradition? Think of phrases like 'I don't believe in \_\_\_\_\_', 'I couldn't tolerate \_\_\_\_\_'. How can you rephrase those negatives into affirmatives? (See *resources section titled: "Rejected Beliefs turned into Affirmatives"*.)
3. If you are a long-time UU, was there a time when you heard 'UUs can believe anything'? If so, how has this month of abiding deeply with UU theology changed what you would say? (See *resources section titled: "Our Core of Theological Beliefs"*.)
4. If you have said 'I came to First Unitarian for the community', what would you now add after spending this month with UU theology?
5. Do our First Unitarian Values, Mission and Ends fit well within UU Theology?

## GROWING OUR SOULS

*These questions are the same each month and invite us to connect this work of spiritual deepening ...*

1. How will our discussion today cause you to be different in the world?
2. Within our church community, where can you help to make changes related to this topic?
3. How does this discussion relate to other activities in which you are engaged at church (e.g., religious education, Beloved Conversations, social justice, worship, music)?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### READINGS FOR CHALICE LIGHTING & CLOSING

#### Chalice Lighting:

We Unitarian Universalists don't drink from our chalice.  
Instead, we use it to hold the flame.  
The circle of the chalice helps keep the fire small.  
The flame doesn't blind us. It doesn't burn us.  
It gives us light, so we can see all the different things in the universe: even the invisible ones, because the Unitarian Universalist flame is a light of learning.  
The flaming chalice is a symbol of learning and of love. It's our symbol: the symbol of Unitarian Universalism.  
*A Symbol of Learning and Love* by Rev. Elizabeth Harding

#### Closing Words:

We are never complete. We are never finished. We are always yet to be. May we always allow others to be and help and enable each other to grow toward all that we are capable of becoming. Amen (*Anonymous*)

## QUOTATIONS

### FROM UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

**Hymn** (#101) "Abide with Me" in *Singing the Living Tradition*

music by William Henry Monk, verses 1-2 by Henry Francis Lyre, verse 3 by Rev. Erika Hewitt

<https://vimeo.com/491244654>

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.  
The darkness deepens still with me abide  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee  
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me."

### Unitarian Universalist Tradition

#### Unitarian Universalism's Seven Principles:

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.
8. Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Note: The 8<sup>th</sup> principle is proposed and has not been formally adopted by the UUA.

### Unitarian Universalism's Six Sources:

1. 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.
2. Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.
3. Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.
4. Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves.
5. 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.
6. Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

### **From First Unitarian Church of Rochester, NY (May 2018)**

- Values: Openness, Wonder, Belonging, Engagement
- Mission: Through spiritual connection in community, we
  - Listen deeply to others and ourselves
  - Open to wonder and transformation
  - Serve together with love and humility
- Ends:
  1. We are an inclusive spiritual community of belonging, welcoming all people to find their spiritual home with us:
    - a. Caring for each other in times of joy, sorrow and transition.
    - b. Giving generously of our time, talent and treasure to make our vision real.
  2. We cherish and respect our children and youth, supporting their spiritual journey, and preparing them to live a life aligned with our Unitarian Universalist principles.
  3. We engage in spiritual growth and development:
    - a. Providing inspiration, support and courage to explore our whole selves.
    - b. Recognizing our racial bias and confronting its impact on our relationships and behaviors.
    - c. Developing our ability to communicate openly and with loving kindness.
    - d. Strengthening our spiritual connections within our own community and beyond.
  4. We act in partnership with others to end racial, social and economic injustice within our own community, in greater Rochester and the world.

## **1. Theology Definition**

Excerpted from: ***Five Big Theological Questions for Everyone***, Victor Ashear, June 11, 2017 (page 1)

[https://sheridanuu.org/Presentations%20Folder/2017/2017AshearV\\_Five\\_Big\\_Theological\\_Qs.pdf](https://sheridanuu.org/Presentations%20Folder/2017/2017AshearV_Five_Big_Theological_Qs.pdf)

The word theology means literally the study of God, but it has come to mean more broadly the study of religious beliefs in general. "Theology is the study of religious faith, practice, and experience." For example, students of theology include Buddhism, a religion that makes no statement about God.



## 2. Rejected Beliefs turned into Affirmatives.

Excerpted from: *Five Big Theological Questions for Everyone*, Victor Ashear, June 11, 2017  
[https://sheridanuu.org/Presentations%20Folder/2017/2017AshearV\\_Five\\_Big\\_Theological\\_Qs.pdf](https://sheridanuu.org/Presentations%20Folder/2017/2017AshearV_Five_Big_Theological_Qs.pdf)

Page 1 I learned then that UUs are encouraged to undertake a “free and responsible search for truth and meaning” (as our fourth principle states) but I didn’t know how to do this. Theologically speaking, I could articulate pretty well what I didn’t believe but not what I did. ... Many who leave organized religions adopt a kind of smorgasbord of practices and beliefs that often don’t form a coherent whole.

Page 2 I took a class called “Building Your Own Theology.” The class was a survey of liberal traditions within Christianity, Judaism, as well as Existentialism, Agnosticism, etc. That class gave me permission to take the parts I liked best from each tradition, in other words to sample the “smorgasbord.” It was helpful to my journey and it broadened my spiritual understanding, but I still felt the lack of a coherent framework for what I believed. ... [when] I attended leadership school in 1996 that changed.

... Rev. Latham told us that all religious institutions and traditions serve one main purpose; they all offer a “saving way in human relating.” All the traditions seek to “offer the hope of restoring the power of wholeness in human relating.” The mission of any religious or spiritual community is to create the opportunities for “restoring wholeness.”

... The role of a religious or spiritual community is to direct its message of salvation to the “total range of human relating... (including) how humans should relate inwardly to themselves, outwardly to other humans, and inclusively to the rest of creation.”

... it is humbling to remember that no single person or group’s theology can rightly claim ultimate truth. Whether recognized or not, we all live with theological uncertainty. Whichever path of faith we choose to follow will bias us. While other theological traditions offer what they regard as ultimate theological truth, we UUs make no such assertions.

Page 3 here are the five big questions:

1. Who am I (spiritually or theologically speaking)? This is sometimes referred to as “ontology,” from the Greek meaning “being.”
2. How do I know (what I know)? This is referred to as “epistemology,” or the study of knowledge.
3. Who or what is in charge (of the universe)? This is called the question of “cosmology.”
4. What is my purpose in life (or How am I saved)? This is referred to as “soteriology,” meaning salvation.
5. What does my death mean? And this is termed “eschatology,” meaning last or farthest.

Pages 3-6 The author summarizes some traditional thinking about each question, some UU thoughts on each and his own views. It’s worth a careful read if these questions move you.

Page 6 concluding remarks ... Again, I want to emphasize that thinking about these questions is more useful than trying to answer with certainty.

Finally, I leave you with a thought I have shared before. Rev. Forrest Church said the ultimate measure of any theology rests in its ability to transform character and inspire people to lead to

more ethical lives, towards improving the wellbeing of others and our world. It is not beliefs that matter most, it is rather what you do with them.

Excerpted from: ***Widening the Circle of Concern Study/Action Guide***, Session 1: Theology  
[https://www.uua.org/files/2020-10/widening\\_study\\_action.pdf](https://www.uua.org/files/2020-10/widening_study_action.pdf)

Page 6 [Widening the Circle of Concern] raises the point that “Justice-seeking practices cannot be used as surrogates for deepening our spiritual lives” (p.10). The report notes that justice-seeking disconnected from spiritual practices and spiritual reflections may lead down the path of burnout. ... “In an age when so many struggle to find meaning, a community formed through a set of commonly held beliefs can form a stronger bond than one formed through antipathy towards rejected beliefs (p.14).”

- How can we as a community move away from an attitude that puts emphasis on rejected beliefs? How can we embrace a posture of working through honest and robust engagement? How can we move toward commonly held beliefs and practices based on our inherited tradition?
- What kinds of programming and activities could help members of our community to gain a rich and deep understanding of Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist theologies? In what ways could we intentionally and courageously make space for learning from people often marginalized in our communities?

### 3. Our Core of Theological Beliefs

Excerpted from: ***Quest for Meaning: The Challenge of Unitarian Universalist Theology*** by Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker (audio recording and transcript)  
<https://www.questformeaning.org/quest-article/challenge-unitarian-universalist-theology/>

Page 3 Our search for a theological center needs to be understood as a search for the solidarity and obligation that can carry us beyond this moral wasteland and energize our devoted action on behalf of the global community.

Page 4 This is one thing our faith is sure of: There is a spark of sacredness in every living being. When life faces life within the circle of communion, we can see the center that is “god” present in our solidarity.

Page 5-6 While we are open to many things, you can’t really believe anything and be a UU. There are limits. ... And there are theological options that are beyond the pale. For example (bullets added):

- You can hold a view that there is no God or that God exists. But you cannot hold the view that God is the all-powerful determiner of everything that happens, such that there is no exercise of human freedom. ... We hold that freedom is a real and essential characteristic of life.
- You can define salvation, healing and wholeness in many ways. But you cannot hold to the view that there will be an ultimate separation of the saved from the damned ... UUism is clear that all souls are of worth. ... We hold that salvation is universal.
- You can be devoted to a specific religious practice—Christian prayer, Buddhist meditation, or pagan ritual (to name a few). But you cannot hold the view that there is one religion that encompasses the exclusive, final truth for all times and places. Not even Unitarian Universalism.



- We are confident that revelation is not sealed. The sacred impulse towards justice, compassion and equity moves in many times and places, in myriad ways that call to us and teach us.
- Finally, you can see this world as tragically flawed, wondrously gifted, or both. But you cannot hold the view that salvation is to be found solely beyond this world—in some life after death or a world other than this world. ... We hold that this world, this life, these bodies are the dwelling place of the sacred.

Within these theological boundaries there is room for tremendous variety, diversity, and dissent. But there is also a defining focus: a devotion to the flourishing of life. Our sacred circle draws us together in passionate love for life.

We cherish our bodies, this earth, this time and place within our grasp. We are devoted to the intimate, intricate and unshakeable reality that all life is connected.

... We honor and respect the bonds that tie each to all, that weave us into an inescapable net of mutuality. We vow to care for the interdependent web and reverence our place within it.

... We desire all life to flourish, and therefore we resist those social evils and systemic injustices that benefit a few at the expense of many or that allow a privileged existence for some while others have their hearts and bodies broken by exploitation, prejudice, censure, or lack of access to the rights and resources needed for life.

We affirm a covenant among all beings that we honor with our heart, soul, mind and strength.

We will do everything in our power to assure that this covenant is not broken. And we seek to connect our circle with other circles of life, to expand into ever widening ripples of influence for good.

Excerpted from: ***The Theology of Unitarian Universalists*** by Ted Resnikoff for Blue Boat: Youth and Young Adults of Color

<https://www.uua.org/blueboat/ofcolor/the-theology-unitarian-universalists>

Page 1 To become a Unitarian Universalist, you make no doctrinal promises, but you are required to do much more. You are required to choose your own beliefs — you promise, that is, to use your reason and your experience and the dictates of your conscience to decide upon your own theology, and then you are asked to actually live by that theology.

Page 2 our contemporary churches are populated with Christians, atheists, humanists of various stripes, Jews, Buddhists, and even Wiccans. Whoever will, may come. Nevertheless, when we look at our history and the practice of our faith, certain theological themes dominate, and so I will argue that, yes, we do have in fact a theology of sorts, a theology that has been relatively clear and consistent through time.

Pages 2-4 **Unitarian Universalism has always emphasized freedom as a core value.** It follows that human beings have a choice. We are not predestined by God before our births, to be saved or unsaved. ... Yes, human beings have a propensity to do evil, but we also have the propensity to do great good. We have a choice.

**The term “Unitarian” indicates our belief that God is One.** ... If God is One, then the God of the Jews and the God of the Muslims and the God of the Christians is One. God is One.

**As Unitarian Universalists, we respect other religious traditions** — we don't think we have the market on the truth. Dr. Forrest Church of All Souls in New York ... said that truth is like light shining through the windows of a great cathedral, in different colors and shapes. The light comes from the same source. But it looks different, depending upon which window it shines

through. So, it is with the various religious traditions of our world. Truth is where you find it. There is no single scripture that holds all the truth.

... we believe in evolution — not only evolution of life forms, but evolution of thought and evolution of moral and ethical understanding. So, the truth that I embrace today may not be the truth I embrace tomorrow. Revelation is not static, but is ever unfolding.

**Unitarian Universalist theology is of this world, not of the next.** ... Unitarian Universalists do not emphasize an afterlife. For one reason, we simply don't know anything about it. No one as yet has come back to report. But we do know about suffering and injustice on this earth, and so we try to create the Kingdom of Heaven here and now, with real people. ... For Unitarian Universalists, the question is never "What do you believe?" but rather "What kind of person have you become? What are the fruits of your living?"

**The universalism in Universalist refers to universal salvation ...**

Page 4 **In summary, we Unitarian Universalists do have a theology:**

- We believe that human beings should be free to choose their beliefs according to the dictates of their own conscience.
- We believe in original goodness, with the understanding that sin is sometimes chosen, often because of pain or ignorance.
- We believe that God is One.
- We believe that revelation is ever unfolding.
- We believe that the Kingdom of God is to be created here on this earth.
- We believe that Jesus was a prophet of God, and that other prophets from God have risen in other faith traditions.
- We believe that love is more important than doctrine.
- We believe that God's mercy will reconcile all unto itself in the end.

## **5. Making UUism a more liberatory faith**

Excerpts from Widening the Circle of Concern

[https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/widening\\_the\\_circle-text\\_with\\_covers.pdf](https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/widening_the_circle-text_with_covers.pdf)

Page 18-19 **Take-Aways**

- Our faith traditions as Unitarians and Universalists require us to address equity, inclusion, and diversity issues.
- Faith and covenant are not dirty words.
- If freedom and individualism are our most important values, we have little to offer in these times.
- These times require a liberatory faith that invites us each into the spiritual work of empathy and healing.
- Justice making is not a substitute for a coherent theology, and faithful justice making requires a liberatory theology.
- An articulation of what is commonly believed among us need not result in a creedal test for membership or involvement in our communities.
- Too many Unitarian Universalists do not know what saving and liberatory truths can be found within their faith tradition.
- We need to put greater emphasis on what it means to be bound to one another in an interdependent web and in keeping with our covenantal tradition.

- A greater emphasis on the theological basis for our work for diversity, equity, and inclusion will help us to make decisions about the forms of this work most appropriate for our individual and shared faith lives.

## 6. A Final Word

The UUA Board has charged the Article II Study Commission with reviewing and updating Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association Bylaws, Principles and Purposes. Part of their charge is “What Brings Us Together: Love as a Common Theological Core” at the following link and excerpted below:

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/blog/love-common-theological-core>

We assert that our deepest common theological grounding and value is this: Love.

We find it peeking through the words of the currently existing Principles. We see it in our insistence on the worth and dignity of every person (and the calls by some that this insistence needs to extend to all other beings, as well). We see it in the call for demanding and

embodying justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. We hear it in our urging of acceptance of one another and our support for each person's spiritual growth. We discern an accountable love in our call for a responsible search for truth and meaning. Our affirmation of the right of conscience, and the right of every individual to participate in shaping those institutions that govern them, displays a deep respect and love for every person. We hold up the goal of a peaceful, free, and just world community as an expression of what love can and should bring into being. And we believe that our call to respect the interdependent web that we are a part of is an articulation of love for all that is and our own place and role in that web.

We see love called out as what demands that we be active in our justice work and justice-making.

We note that our hymnals contain many assertions of what we aspire to, and what love can do, and be; "Let us build a home where love can dwell," "Love will guide us," and "we are answering the call of love" among them.

We respond to the call of love because it is our common theological core. It is what can and does motivate us and illuminates our deepest commitments to each other.



## FROM SACRED TEXTS



## PODCASTS, SONGS, ARTICLES, FILMS, & BOOKS

### Music

[\*Deep and Abiding\*](#) song and lyrics by Dayon



### Videos

#### **Unitarian Universalist Covenant: What Do We Promise One Another?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmZLK2bEh6Q>

This beautiful animated video was created by Unitarian Universalist and graphic designer in Columbus, Ohio, Elliott Cennamo. Covenant has a long history in Judeo-Christian traditions. In Unitarian Universalism, we strive to be to be inclusive and transformative in our covenanting. As we grow our personal understanding, strengthen and deepen our community, and practice spiritual justice-making, "What do we promise one another?"

## **We Are Unitarian Universalists**

<https://www.uua.org/beliefs/who-we-are/video/use-video>

A video presentation from the UUA to show who we are, what we do, and why it matters.  
"Copyright Unitarian Universalist Association"

## **Some things you must not abide...**

from *The Bitter Southerner* after Charlottesville:



“Our silence is no longer acceptable. White people in the South who know better must call out our neighbors and family members who apologize for or justify the actions of murderers, the actions of the deluded, the actions of the cowards, the actions of the dangerous. When we hear the code words, the dog whistles, or even completely overt expressions of racism, people like us no longer have a choice.

We must respond. White faces have to look straight into the eyes of other white faces and say: I will not abide your hatred.”

This is from a Southern source but applies equally well to anywhere else in these United States. The Perpetual

Unpleasantness by Chuck Reece, Tim Turner, and Tom Lee

<https://bittersoutherner.com/from-the-southern-perspective/politics/the-perpetual-unpleasantness>

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“One of my favorite church songs when I was growing up (and one I still sing sometimes) was ‘Just As I Am.’ If you want to know why most UU churches aren’t growing, I’ll tell you. It’s because we don’t take people just as they are and [we] tell them that they have to give up some part of themselves in order to be accepted by us. That is the reason I will leave Unitarian Universalism. I refuse to pass and I’m tired of being asked to.”

Kim Hampton, church consultant and Earlham School of Religion (Quaker) graduate.

<https://eastofmidnight.wordpress.com/2010/12/23/i-refuse-to-pass-or-why-i-will-leave-unitarian-universalism/>