

We are all religious, spiritual creatures, driven to find a pattern of meaning in our lives. If you have trouble finding meaning in creeds and commandments of traditional religion, a Unitarian Universalist congregation may be the place for you.



Here, your own life experience counts fully as much as that of any ancient people.



Here, the cumulative experience of the people called bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender is a sacred story that informs our spirituality.



Here, intuition and our inner creative capacities count; not just tradition, church hierarchy, and bible.



Here, reason and the findings of science count.



And here, prophetic voices, voices of wisdom and vision, from whatever source, count.



Bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender people belong here. Our religious movement belongs to a larger future, not to a constricting past. It doesn't belong to the outworn pronouncements of the bishops or the evangelists of the new right. Our movement has to do with the qualitative evolution of human consciousness.

If you seek a place to grow and to be affirmed, you're invited to visit a Unitarian Universalist congregation near you. To find one, check the Yellow Pages "church" listings under "U" or call the UUA in Boston at (617) 742-2100.

A publication of the *Unitarian Universalist Association's Office of Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Concerns*.

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Write for information about *Interweave*, a continental organization of Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns, and its publication, the *Interweave World*.

revised May 2001

Note: Unitarians and Universalists have their roots in the "Heresies" of the first centuries that questioned the ideas that Jesus was somehow more "divine" than anyone else. In North America, Universalists began denouncing the idea of "hell" in the 1770s. Unitarians appeared at about the same time in New England, as religious and social reformers. Among the best known were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Susan B. Anthony, William Ellery Channing, Julia Ward Howe, and in recent times, Albert Schweitzer. Unitarians and Universalists merged in 1961.

Unitarian Universalism



*A serious spiritual
alternative for the
bisexual, gay,
lesbian, and
transgender
community*

Unitarian Universalist spirituality does not grind out the standard line of prejudice, heterosexism, and homophobia. There is a reason.

The Unitarian Universalist approach to spirituality is fundamentally different from religion based on the idea of “creed” or a static “revelation.” We do not say that life’s ultimate truth has been revealed in some scripture. We say that together we must seek to understand the meaning of our lives. We gather in a sense of wonder before the mystery of life. In our search we have the voices and visions of every period and place in the record of human experience from which to draw. We have the accumulated wisdom of humankind, reason, intuition, the arts and sciences, and our own life experience. We have the combined religious traditions of the Unitarians and the Universalists, and the life-truth of our own people, we who call ourselves bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender. If you seek a place where minds are free and the issues of our lives and times are examined critically and hopefully, you belong in a Unitarian Universalist congregation!

Because we aren’t accountable to the Apostle Paul, to some central ecclesiastical authority, or to an ancient body of dogma, Unitarian Universalists think our own thoughts, always valuing the critical *questions* as much as the available answers. We are open to new knowledge and bold ideas. Ours is a tradition of strong and prophetic voices calling for a larger vision of life. It should not surprise anyone that, of major religious bodies, we have among our professional ministers by far the highest percentage of women—and of openly bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender ministers. It is not surprising that Unitarian Universalists have long called for the full inclusion of bisexual, gay, and lesbian people in church and society.

Here is the record. Meeting in our annual General Assemblies, Unitarian Universalists have:

- 1970 *Called for an end to discrimination against homosexual and bisexual people in the denomination and in society, especially with regard to legal regulations against private consensual sexual behavior.*
- 1973 *Established an Office of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Concerns.*
- 1980 *Called for the UUA to assist in the settlement of openly gay ministers.*
- 1984 *Recognized and encouraged ministers to perform Same-Gender Services of Union.*
- 1987 *Called for the UUA to support the recession of “sodomy” laws and to urge UUs not to do business with companies that discriminate.*
- 1996 *Added “Transgender” to office title to reflect work being done.*
- 1996 *Called for the UUA to support the legalization of “Same-Sex Marriage.”*
- 1997 *Called for the UUA to support Non-discriminatory Corporate and Other Business Policies.*

The UUA has implemented an affirmative action program to place bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender ministers in our churches. Its presidents have spoken out against anti-gay foster care policies and other forms of institutionalized homophobia. Is Unitarian Universalism totally free of homophobia? Of course not. But whenever Unitarian Universalists are called on to take a position on bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender issues, the sentiment is always overwhelming: the human family is one, and the fears and hatreds that divide us must be

overcome. Human loving and human sexuality are also sacred when shared between members of the same gender. The culture and history of bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender people is important to all of society.

Because we believe in the principles of “*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;*” “*the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;*” and “*respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part;*”^{*} this affirmation of bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender experience flows naturally from our tradition of freedom; of creativity; of respect for intuition and reason and life experience; as well as the wisdom of the past.

^{*} UUA Statement of Purposes and Principles—an evolving statement that reflects an evolving consciousness—in its most recent form, adopted in 1984 and amended in 1995.