

## Being a Member of the First Unitarian Society of Westchester

According to our bylaws, the purpose of FUSW is to “unite to provide a living medium of spiritual exchange for the service of each other, our community and humanity.” Further, membership is open to every person who embraces the purposes of this Society . . . without discrimination on grounds of religion, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other inappropriate criteria of human worth. No assent to any formula of faith shall be required.”

## The Rights and Responsibilities of Membership at the First Unitarian Society of Westchester

Because we are a democratic community, members are collectively vested with responsibility for the congregation. Members may vote at any congregational meeting, be elected to the governing board, and participate in any activities of the congregation.

We are a covenanted congregation, and members have certain responsibilities to the congregation and to one another. They are best fulfilled by:

- *Regular attendance at worship.* Weekly worship cements the bonds of community, and keeps our attention directed to our highest values, while nurturing our spirits.
- *Voting at congregational meetings.* Responsible participation includes imagining the needs of the entire congregation, rather than focusing only on one's own needs or desires. Consider how issues affect all members of the congregation, as well as potential members and others in the world outside the congregation. To be eligible to vote in any corporate meeting, a member must have reached age sixteen and must have been a member for at least 30 days.
- *Making financial contributions.* Not only does this provide for the support of the congregation, but it also serves as a spiritual discipline. Many Unitarian Universalists aim for a modern tithe—that is, giving 5 percent of income to the congregation, and another 5 percent to other organizations and causes that represent their values. Each member is required to make an annual recordable contribution to the general operating fund of FUSW.
- *Contributing time and talent.* Congregations work because their members find ways to give of themselves, whether through singing, financial management, educating children, sharing their passion for social justice, organizing, cooking, greeting—the list of tasks goes on. Finding ways to give back that nurture your own soul helps to avoid resentment and supports your own growth.
- *Spiritual growth and development.* Working deliberately at your own spiritual development is a gift to the congregation and to the larger world.

## Being a Unitarian Universalist

- While Unitarian Universalists have no specific unifying beliefs, we do affirm and promote the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism. They are covenantal in nature and demonstrate our values. Additionally, we acknowledge six Sources from which we draw wisdom. The Principles and Sources can be easily found on the pages immediately preceding the hymns in either one of the hymnals we use during worship services, or online at [UUA.org](http://UUA.org).
- Within the Unitarian Universalist Association, of which the First Unitarian Society of Westchester (FUSW) is a member, there are opportunities for engagement on the denominational level. One of these is the General Assembly which takes place annually in June. For other opportunities and for more information about Unitarian Universalism, speak to the minister or the denominational liaison; you can also visit [uua.org](http://uua.org).