



## MINISTER'S COLUMN

FEBRUARY 2023

Dear CUF folks,

I've been having one of those "convergence" experiences in the past couple of weeks, where whatever seemingly diverse material I'm reading/hearing/watching has a common thread. As I did my preparation work for Right Relations training, as I researched the proposed new Article II of our UUA bylaws, as I reviewed CUF's affirmational covenant, and reflected on my own spiritual journey during our first Starting Point session, I kept bumping into love. Maybe it took me awhile to recognize it, since these weren't (primarily) pastoral or worship-related activities. But the message did get through: love is our animating spirit as Unitarian Universalists; it is the foundation for our relationships within and outside our congregations, and it is the source of hope from which we seek to make change in ourselves, communities, countries and beyond.

The proposed Article II, if adopted, would replace the current list of 7 principles with a set of inseparable values centered around Love: Interdependence, Pluralism, Justice, Transformation, Generosity, Equity.

*Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love.*

No matter how they are written and talked about, when our principles/values are not enacted from a place of love, we Unitarian Universalists harm our own – we break our covenant. Reflecting on Black History Month in the UU context, we can see the harm caused, the opportunities lost. Acknowledging and being accountable for those historic harms is imperative to our present and future generations.

I feel so much hope in the transformations that are happening in Unitarian Universalism today. And I see similar growth in our Fellowship – building a culture of covenant, tending our relationships, widening inclusion and access, remembering, as Cornel West put it, "that justice is what love looks like in public." This month, may we keep bumping in to love, together.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John" or similar, written in a cursive style.