

# What Do Unitarian Universalists Believe?

An individual understanding by Laura Schlatter

We believe that spiritual and religious exploration can take many paths, and in that sense we are non-creedal. Yet, it is not correct to say that you can believe anything if you are Unitarian Universalist. Theologically, we range from humanists to theists, from those who believe in the prophetic nature of the life of Jesus the man, to those who look towards pagan traditions and understandings of the universe, who focus on the interconnectedness of humans and the natural world. We share the values imbedded in the Purposes and Principles (below) and covenant and affirm to promote those values. Many of us believe that there is a power beyond human reason and understanding; others believe that human reason must be the ultimate, and the only, salvation.

Our Unitarian roots teach us that there is only one God, if there is any; that Jesus, was a son of God as the rest of us are children of God but that he himself was not God. Our Universalist roots teach us that salvation is the destiny of all of us, that the Mystery, or God, is a kind and good power. Our Transcendentalist roots teach us that many different religious paths are valid and that our experience of the Holy can and should happen directly through our own individual experiences as well as through church and clergy. Transcendentalism also teaches us that God is transcendent and present in everything -- and therefore can be experienced closely and personally through nature.

Unitarian Universalism is a religious faith that encourages questions and questions answers. We accept mystery and ambiguity, resisting creeds and easy categorization. We embrace theological diversity.

We welcome you, as together, we strive to live lives of integrity, service, and joy.

## **The Seven Unitarian Universalist 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