



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF SALEM
Disruptive Behavior Policy

Status	Board/Committee	Status Date
Approved	Board of Directors	June 1, 2017

Introduction

Acceptance of individuals and acknowledging the worth and dignity of each individual are among our prime values, as expressed in our Purposes and Principles. To maintain an atmosphere where such openness and acceptance can thrive also requires we maintain an atmosphere where individuals can be comfortable and secure. When any person's physical and or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly. This may ultimately require the expulsion of an offending person or persons.

Depending on the specifics, disruptive behavior in the church building or on church property may include (1) a threat or immediate danger to individuals or property, (2) disrupt congregational activities, or (3) offend members or visitors, interfering with their rights and comfort.

Immediate threat or danger to property or individuals

Behavior that is threatening or dangerous to individuals or property requires an immediate response. This initial response may be from the Minister, a member of the Safer Congregation Committee or any congregational leader. The response may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or suspending the meeting or activity until such time that it may be safely resumed. If further assistance is required, the County Sherriff may be called. Anytime any of these actions is undertaken, a report detailing the offense, and the action taken because of the offense, should

be submitted to the Minister, the Board Chair, or a member of the Safer Congregation Committee within 10 days of the incident.

Disrupting activities or offending members or visitors

Behavior that does not require an immediate response may be referred to the Safer Congregation Committee who will respond using their best judgment. Persons identified as disruptive will be dealt with as individuals. Utmost respect for diversity of culture, faith, and point of views will guide the process. The Safer Congregations Committee will not define “acceptable” behavior in advance, instead investigating and collecting needed information for each individual instance.

UUCS actions following disruptive behavior

While the exact response of the Safer Congregations Committee will vary with the specifics of the incident, and any previous disruptive behavior by the individual. Actions may include the following:

- 1) At least two members of the committee will meet with the offending person or persons to communicate the concern.
- 2) The offending individual will be excluded from specific congregation activities for a limited period of time. A letter outlining the reasons and conditions of return will be sent to the individual. This action may be appealed to the Board.
- 3) The offending individual is permanently excluded from church premises and all congregation activities. Before this is carried out, the committee will consult with the Board and the Minister. If it is agreed that the expulsion should take place, a letter will be written to the individual outlining the expulsion and/or cancellation of membership, following the procedure outlined in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem Bylaws, Article IV: Section 5, Cancellation of Membership:

The Board shall have the power to cancel the membership of any person whose conduct the Board deems to be detrimental to the congregation. Such person shall be given reasonable notice of the proposed action, the reason(s) for it, and an opportunity for a Board hearing prior to a vote by the Board to cancel membership. A motion for cancellation of membership

shall require an affirmative vote of three fourths (3/4ths) of the members of the Board to pass.