

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ACCOUNTABLE?

Selected Quotes (distributed by email before the third Town Hall)

White UUs hold themselves accountable to communities of color, to make sure whites do what they say they will do. In practice, that can mean **having a People of Color Caucus** within congregations, districts, etc., to discern and express needs and concerns to the rest of the community. Black UUs hold each other accountable and help each other see and dismantle signs of internalized racism. **We need an effective mechanism or structure to ensure this. Similarly for other oppressions.**

Source: [Background — The 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism \(8thprincipleuu.org\)](https://www.uua.org/8thprincipleuu.org)

Bolded text above indicates implication for congregational polity.

“Believing that congregational polity is primarily concerned with supporting and protecting individual voices and congregations is nothing less than **heresy. Yes, I just called it heresy.** And not in the cute renegade sort of way. I mean in the literal way—like apostasy—the renunciation or abandonment of a religious principle. Equating congregational polity with autonomy undermines our interconnectedness, erodes our covenant, and endangers our communities. **It is flat-out ahistorical, not to mention wrong.**”

Source: In a recorded workshop at GA 2015 by Rev. Sue Phillips who speaks, writes, and preaches widely about congregational polity. The UUA relies on her opinions of polity. She was UUA’s Regional Lead for New England. She led vision and strategy for the New England staff team as they served the 231 congregations in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. She was widely expected to become UUA president in the 2017 election. However, she dropped out after the race had started, leaving only 1 candidate.

<https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/congregational-polity-and-myth-congregational-autonomy>

“Covenant without consequences is not actually covenant. We have to be willing to say No in UU spaces. We have to be willing to say to each other **‘you are out of covenant right now. You are so out of covenant that you cannot be back in this community until you are willing to do the work of repair.** Universalism promises that there is always a path of return when you are ready. But we do not wallow in harm until you are ready to do the work. We will be here when you are ready to do the work. You cannot break this community over and over again out of, whatever it is, trauma fear, anger, loss, despair. I mean those are pastoral issues. **You can always come home but you got to come correct. That’s a covenant.**”

Source: Rev Dr Sofia Betancourt (President of UUA) in a panel discussion at GA in 6/22:

<https://vimeo.com/728450438/7b50aa71e6>

“Building on our existing principles and sources, the Commission’s proposal identifies core values that UUs hold in common. Their proposal strengthens the covenant among our member congregations and challenges us to live into our core values. Many UUs have expressed appreciation for both the process and the proposal itself.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/board/announcements/board-statement-proposed-revisions-article-ii>

“We must Dismantle White Supremacy”

“[Whitesupremacy](#) affects everyone. As Unitarian Universalists, we must fight white supremacy individually and together if we hold hope for Beloved Community. There is work to do in congregations and there is personal work to do.

“White supremacy is the idea that white people are better and more deserving of wealth, power, and privilege than people of color. White supremacy pervades our culture, institutions, and relationships. It is a self-

perpetuating system that continues to fuel colonialism, exploitation, oppressions, inequities, and brutalities that people of color experience."

Source: <https://www.uua.org/justice/dismantle-white-supremacy>