

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Welcome to OUUC!

What can I expect on Sunday morning?

The Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation is a joyful and caring liberal religious community. We offer Sunday services that include moving, insightful sermons by our minister, guest speakers and lay-people of the church. Our music is extraordinary and inspiring. Following each service, all are invited to linger for coffee, tea, and conversation. Children are welcome, and after a story (part of the service), the children leave the sanctuary to take part in religious education programs.

When you arrive at the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation on Sunday morning, you'll be greeted by one of our members, who will help you find your way to the sanctuary, the welcome table, teachers of children's classes or fresh coffee. Attending our services or listening to readings and sermons online is a good way to learn about us and the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

Conversation over coffee after services is a great way to learn about who we are and what we talk about. Getting a name tag will

help people get to know you by name (we all wear them). Volunteering and working with our various committees is a great way to better understand and enjoy fellowship with the members of our community. You can learn about the opportunities by checking the displays in the Commons and by reading the weekly e-blast.

What should I and my children wear to this church?

People attending OUUC wear a wide range of clothing styles, from dressy to casual. Children can wear clothing appropriate for religious education classes that may include art or physical activities.

How many members do you have?

As of September 2019, the church had 305 official members (those who have signed the membership book). Many non-members attend worship services and participate in our groups and activities. All are welcome.



Mission Statement

We are a liberal religious community that opens minds, fills hearts and transforms lives.



Join Us for Worship Services
Sundays at 9:15 and 11:00 am.

We Welcome You!



Is the church accessible to the disabled?

Yes.

Are people of color welcome in this congregation? Are there bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgendered people in this congregation? Are they welcome?

This church affirms the active participation, interaction, and leadership of people of every racial identity, gender identity, and sexual orientation. In particular, we have been recognized for over a quarter century as a Welcoming Congregation to LGBTQ persons and communities. In December 2017, our congregation voted unanimously to renew our Welcoming Congregation program, to equip us in welcoming people in light of expanding understandings of gender identities.

Are there people in the congregation who are pagans, atheists, agnostics, Christians, Buddhists, Muslims?

The roots of Unitarian Universalism lie in Judaism and Christianity. We honor those traditions but are not bound by them. We seek truth and direction for our lives in the wisdom of other religions and secular heritages. We have church members from many faith backgrounds.

What do members of this church have in common?

Curiosity, independent thinking, openness to ideas, a need for community and a need to seek justice. Talk to us to find out more!

What goes on during the worship service?

OUUC offers a variety of worship experiences. Our minister conducts services most Sundays. Other services draw from the talents and wisdom of our congregation and the larger community. Generally, Worship services include the following elements: lighting the chalice, children's story, readings, music, sermon, offering, pastoral prayer and extinguishing the chalice.

I liked the sermon. Can I get a copy of it?

Audios of sermons by podcast are available on the church website.

What does the Flaming Chalice symbol mean?



Hans Deutsch, an Austrian artist, first brought together the chalice and the flame as a Unitarian symbol during his work with the Unitarian Service Committee during World War II. To Deutsch, the image had connotations of sacrifice and love. Unitarian Universalists today have many different interpretations of the image. To many, the cup represents religious community, while the flame represents ideas including the sacrificial flame or the flame of the spirit. Modern chalice designs often incorporate two overlapping circles which, for many people, represent our Unitarian and Universalist heritages. Other images include additional elements, some of which are

merely decorative and others which are very meaningful. OUUC's chalice was designed by OUUC member, Martha Guilfoyle.

Who is the minister?

Rev. Mary Gear began serving as our minister in August 2019. She earned her Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree from Starr King School for the Ministry. Before arriving in Olympia, she served at the UU Fellowship of McMinnville, OR and as the Acting Assistant Minister at First Unitarian-Portland.

Can I make an appointment with the minister?

Yes. You can call or email the minister directly to set up an appointment, minister@ouuc.org or by phone at ext 101.

How is the church governed?

The Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation operates under the principles of congregational polity. This means that we are independent, self-supporting, and governed by our own members. Our minister has overall responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the Congregation and for conduct of worship services and also serves as head of staff. We elect our Board of Trustees to oversee the business, property and affairs of the Congregation, operating through authorities provided in our OUUC Bylaws.

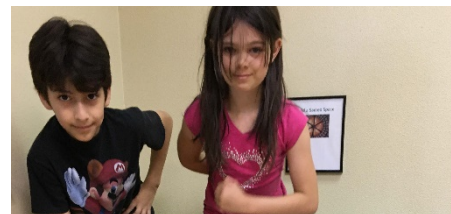
STEPS TO MEMBERSHIP

1. Attend Sunday services to get to know the OUUC community.
2. Attend the series of three membership classes. Classes help newcomers determine whether Unitarian Universalism is right for them. *UUs transferring from other UU congregations are encouraged to attend all three classes to learn about their new congregation. Please speak with the Community Life Coordinator.
3. Complete a Membership Intent form and a New Member Information form, distributed at class.
4. Make a pledge of ongoing financial support based on individual circumstances. Guidelines are available and discussion with the minister is welcomed.
5. Sign the OUUC Membership Book. New members are encouraged to participate in the Sunday service when new members are recognized and welcomed by the congregation.

What's the best way to meet people?

Read our guide called Congregational Connections. This guide lists all the groups and programs we offer. Look for an opportunity to get involved that matches your interests. For information about what is happening with each group please contact the person listed. Congregational Connections is available at the welcome table in the Commons or online at ouuc.org.

Attend worship services and join others for conversation and coffee after the service. Talk with someone helping out at the Welcome Kiosk in the Commons or someone wearing a "Welcome" stole.

**What about Religious Education?**

Religious Education for infants through adults is organized around four primary goals: Deepened Understanding of Unitarian Universalism, Religious Literacy for the World's Religions, Anti-Bias/Social Justice, and the Creation of Beloved Community. On Sundays during the school year, at the 9:15 am service we have Nursery Care and one single pre-5th class. During the 11:00 am service we have Nursery Care, Preschool - Kindergarten, 1st-5th grades, and Middle School. High School Youth Group meets at other times. Please check the current calendar for meeting times.



Connect - Find Out More

Can I get a name tag?

Newcomers are offered a stick-on name tag at the visitor's table in the Commons. Those wishing to have a permanent name tag that is kept on the name tag display rack can fill out a card at the table.

How do I get on your email announcement list?

You can sign up for weekly email announcements by filling out the Welcome card at the kiosk in the Commons. You can also sign up on the website.

What's up with the phone system? How do I talk to a real person?

Incoming calls are answered by an auto-attendant and are routed to the individual staff member. Callers may leave a voice mail for staff who may be busy or unavailable. Information including services times, directions, and emergency contact numbers are available on a recorded message.

Where can I find out more about OUUC?

Check out ouuc.org for information on programs, upcoming events, justice initiatives, Religious Education classes, volunteer opportunities and more!



*Do you like what you see at OUUC?
Would you like to offer your support?*

There are many ways to give. Your generous gifts of time, talent and treasure enable us to fulfill our mission.

*Support OUUC financially:
<http://ouuc.org/giving/>*

Find out more at OUUC.org

Check out the church website and find:

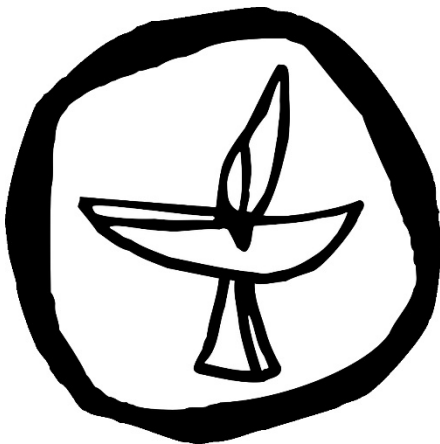
The Calendar of events

The OUUC Blog – latest news, articles and resources

Information on our music program and how to join the choir

Publications like the weekly email blast and our magazine, The Commons

The latest on Social Justice initiatives, Religious Education and more.....



FAST FACTS

1872

First established – a continuing liberal religious presence in Olympia since 1952.

Sharing the Plate

Half of each Sunday offering is given to a local non-profit organization serving society's well-being.