

## **Unity Guidelines for Harmonious Functioning**

Purpose of these guidelines:

We come to Unity from many backgrounds, cultures and group experiences. In order to work together in a way that supports the quality of our community and our relationships the following guidelines are shared:

Emotional Support:

Affirmation of each other while holding the perception of each person as a spiritual being, a child of God, is at the core of our shared commitment to our community and ourselves.

- When divergent perceptions or conflict occurs, it can be an invitation to constructive reevaluation and transformation at both the personal and organizational level.
- Handling discontent or conflict in a positive responsible manner is important to both the transformation of conflict and the harmony and emotional safety of our community.

Prayer is our first method of support and the foundation of our community. Prayer invites us to see each other as the whole, radiant spiritual beings we truly are. It lifts our vision beyond our challenges to the divine solutions calling us forward.

Healthy emotional support is maintained by expressing appreciation, honestly sharing concerns with the responsible people, and addressing conflicts directly and responsibly. Reframing from being critical or judgmental of individuals and not spreading negative gossip is supportive of an emotional atmosphere of safety and support.

- When a person has a criticism or problem relating to someone's behavior or function, it is their responsibility to first take it perception into prayer. Secondly, if guided to do so by prayer, to share that criticism directly with the person involved.
- Triangulation is the sharing of negative feelings or thoughts with someone other than the person involved or responsible. Triangulation is destructive to relationships and can become disruptive to the community because it lessens the emotional safety of the community.

- Where there is concern or criticism that is directed toward an individual or area of church activity, addressing that concern with the responsible individual, or with a supervisor or minister can be a healthy caring response. Identifying problems or limitations with the responsible individuals is a helpful function of members.

### Conflict Resolution Support

Where individuals feel themselves in conflict with another individual who is a part of the community the individual can request support in resolving that conflict.

- Unity has very effective methods of assisting individuals to move beyond conflict to understanding and connection. Some of these are prayer, BePeace and HeartMath. By requesting support of a minister or director of the Heart Ministry that support can be made available to the requesting individual with the addition of objective prayerful presence if desired.

### Respect

We endeavor to view each other with and speak of each other with respect. The use of language or behavior that is disrespectful of or denigrating of an individual's gender, sexual preference, sexual identity or one's background whether political, cultural, ethnic or religious is not acceptable in our community.

- Should an individual feel such a situation has occurred to them or to another person it is requested that the matter be addressed directly with the individual whose behavior is in question.
- Should that communication not resolve the situation, or if the individual does not feel safe in addressing the situation directly, the matter can be brought to the awareness of a minister, or the director of the Heart Ministers.
- When brought to the minister or director of the Heart Ministers he or she will take appropriate action to clarify and bring constructive resolution of the situation. If the situation is not resolved the method of intervention set out in the ministries' Policy on Disruptive Behavior for a level 1 conflict can be utilized.

## Assisting as a third party in healthy resolution

### Organizational:

- When we as a third party become aware of someone feeling upset about a situation relating to UWC, uplifting the situation by praying with the person concerned or affected is our first and most effective response.
  - If the person who is upset feels a further step is necessary, encouraging them to address their concern directly with the individual or person responsible for that function in the ministry or with a minister provides a healthy pathway to resolution.
  - If that is too difficult a step for the concerned person, or they do not find resolution, requesting assistance in communicating through a minister or the director of the Heart Ministers creates the opportunity to facilitate communication and understanding through the use of our people who are trained in our communication skills.

### Individual:

- When we become aware of someone feeling upset about an individual who is a part of our community, uplifting the situation with prayer is our most effective response.
  - If the person who is upset feels a further step is necessary, encouraging them to address their concern directly with the individual involved creates a healthy pathway to resolution.
  - If that is too difficult a step for the concerned person, inviting our communication support by requesting that assistance through a minister or the director of Heart Ministers is appropriate.

We are grateful for the commitment of all in our spiritual community to utilize the spiritual practices that open us to spirit's wisdom and guidance as we create harmony and understanding in our relationships with each other and with Unity of Walnut Creek.