

New Member Ceremony: UUCR
March 23, 2014

(MINISTER ON WIRELESS MIKE, STAGE RIGHT, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR AND BOARD OFFICER AT PULPIT; NEW MEMBERS WILL STAND IN FRONT, BETWEEN ALTAR AND CONGREGATION, WHEN CALLED TO COME FORWARD)

(Remind congregation to get out insert with new member ceremony)

Minister (from floor mike): The life of a religious community is filled with both small and great occasions. Because the core of this free, congregational faith, is it congregations and their members, among the most sacred events is the welcoming of new members. ... Will those wishing to become members of this congregation please come forward..... It is an honor to welcome you to membership in THE Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Reston.

This ceremony is a ceremony of covenanting. For one, membership is a covenant of challenge, because the membership process asks several commitments from members. Membership Signing the register of this church signifies that you are in sympathy with support the purposes and programs of this church, as outlined in its bylaws, and mission and covenant statements.

Membership is also a covenant of hope. Here in this congregation you can find acceptance, community, and friendship. If and when life gets tough, you can draw inspiration from this community. If expectations sour, you can find renewal here in the promise of what can be. If you grow cynical, you can be reminded how the historic deeds of women and men who have walked before you have made a

difference in the world. If you find yourself just plain frazzled, you can draw hope from the fun of being here in this church. Above all, you can draw from the deep well of love and respect that is the promise of this faith we share together.

Membership also asks us bring with it a promise to share this on-going process of life together. We seek to celebrate the best of who we are as a spiritual community. This congregation will be enhanced by the presence of each of you new members.

Membership Chair: In signing the membership book, you are committing to your own spiritual growth, and to the growth of others who share this path with you. Will you accept the challenge, the hope, and the promise that comes with your covenant with this congregation.

New members: We Will.

Membership Chair: We would like to receive each of you individually. As we read your name and something about you to help the congregation get to know you, please be welcomed through the right hand of fellowship extended by our minister and an officer of the board of trustees. Everyone, please note the bios of the new members on the lavender insert.

(WE CAN PROBABLY READ BIOS ONE AT A TIME, WHILE EACH PERSON WALKS FORWARD: TO SHAKE HAND OF MINISTER and ANOTHER OFFICER OF THE BOARD AND RECEIVE BOOK AND FLOWER. EACH NEW PERSON RETURN TO PLACE)

Board Officer (FROM PULPIT MIKE): Members of this congregation, it is now your turn. Would the members of this congregation please rise in body or in spirit and read the members covenant statement printed on the green insert, followed by the new members' response: **emphasize this is MEMBERS only**

Members: *We welcome you new members into this community. We promise to walk with you as you experience the challenges and hopes of membership in the shared ministry of this congregation.*

New Members: We will support members and friends of this congregation, through faith in our hearts and hands, through stewardship of our talents and resources.

President: Will everyone --- members and friends --- rise in body or spirit and read the covenant of this congregation:

Love is the spirit of this congregation, and our service to the world is love in action. We covenant to build a religious community that is guided by love, sustained by respectful relationships, and committed to action to make a better world. We celebrate this common purpose whenever we gather, and do our best to abide by this covenant.

Minister: (IF NO APPLAUSE, ENCOURAGE A WELCOMING OF NEW MEMBERS)