

## **UUFM Covenant of Right Relations and Conflict Resolution Process and Conflict Resolution Process**

Reverend Thea Nietfeld comments on this newly adopted statement, developed through a series of open congregational meetings and **approved by the UUFM Executive Board at the December 2009 meeting:**

Healthy congregations are often supported by covenants and processes for inevitable conflict. A covenant links principles with behavior as a statement of aspirations. A conflict resolution process reduces anxiety with planned steps toward resolution.

As you may have noticed from reports on the Old Sanctuary bulletin board since October, UUFM members have been thinking together about what causes congregational stress and conflict and how we want to treat each other when we have issue disagreements. The results of these open conversations were adopted by the Board at its December meeting.

### UUFM COVENANT OF RIGHT RELATIONS

- We value each person's worth and welcome people of all ages to participate in Fellowship life.
- We gather to support each other in our personal and community growth.
- Our congregational life provides opportunities to practice working together cooperatively and in friendship, keeping the greater good of the whole at heart. We approach each other with good will, allowing for mistakes and with an expectation that we will forgive each other.
- Recognizing that our different experiences and paths may lead to disagreement, we intend to practice respectful acceptance. Since we need to work together, we will patiently negotiate to reconcile conflicts and choose friendship over irreconcilable differences.
- Practicing right relations in our Fellowship encourages character growth and naturally extends caring qualities into other relationships.

### UUFM CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

- We encourage patient self-reflection in times of conflict for personal growth. Members are invited to apply reflection questions that are posted on the bulletin board. Individuals may choose to seek counseling from the minister.
- Members or groups in conflict are invited to first attempt to respectfully resolve issues with the original people or Committee involved.
- If it is not possible to respectfully solve the conflict among the original people/groups, they are encouraged to involve a mediator. Those involved could agree on and choose the minister, another member of the fellowship, the Conflict Resolution Promoter or Team, a consultant from UUA, or a community mediator.
- The UUFM Board will be the final decision-maker for conflicts unresolved by mediation or where mediation is not useful. If the Board is involved, any leader may contact the Prairie Star District Office for assistance.
- This process will supplement rather than displace other congregational decision-making processes and structures.