



Unitarian Universalists
of Coastal Georgia
A Welcoming Congregation

Welcoming Congregation: UUA's 2019 Welcoming Renewal Plan & UUCG

The Unitarian Universalist Association has a 2019 plan for updating current and future Welcoming Congregations to reflect the changing needs and concerns of LGBTQ+ people so that they feel fully welcomed, centered and embraced. Called "The Five Pillars of Welcoming Renewal," the plan provides the following five benchmarks against which a congregation, such as the Unitarian Universalists of Coastal Georgia, can measure its success before submitting its annual renewal status request form to remain "current" in the upcoming year.

The first of the five pillars, becoming a Welcoming Congregation, poses no obstacles for UUCG, for it received its official UUA Welcoming Congregation letter of acceptance in February, 2012.

The second pillar requires a congregation to incorporate at least two Welcoming Worship Services into its ordinary calendar of worship. UUCG's WC Team has offered a Gay Pride Welcoming Worship Service on the second Sunday of June in both 2017 and 2018, thanks to the Social Justice Team which offered its usual second Sunday service time. For 2019, the team has active tentative plans for an additional second service in November.

The third pillar requires recognizing Welcoming Days of Observance important to LGBTQ+ communities to bring affirmation and visibility after generations of invisibility and erasure. UUCG has observed this practice to a degree, for instance with the Gay Pride Month service in June, but needs to increase regular calendar notices to be reflected in services. A suggested list of possibilities is being compiled.

The fourth pillar focuses on experiencing a Welcoming Congregation Module made available by UUA OR choose to sponsor a UUA-approved local seminar for the congregation and community. UUCG possibilities for this have been suggested, for instance, the Genderbread Person with poster.

The fifth and final pillar emphasizes supporting a Welcoming Project by giving generously of our gifts and resources to local or national organizations or projects that lift LGBTQ+ communities. Currently, UUCG has offered a local LGBTQ+ group to meet at UUCG every third Thursday evening for over two years. For a list of other projects, UUCG can contact lgbtq@uua.org.

UUCG's Welcoming Renewal Team is presently forming and looking for members. Members include Mary Freeman, Lollie Bohannon, De-Leon Peacock, Barbara Sprouse, and Dorin Schumacher. Please join with us. **For more information, email maryglennfreema@gmail.com.**

***from Mary Freeman, UUCG Member
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