

Minister's Column – October 25, 2019

This month we are hiring a new Membership Coordinator. While thinking about this, I remembered how often a UU has told me about someone, then added, "They are a UU without knowing it." Long ago we had a successful advertising campaign with a similar slogan. I understand the sentiment but I am certain that there is no such thing. There are millions of liberally religious people who might fit wonderfully within our congregations if only they knew of the possibility. But, some know of us and still don't join. To be a UU one has to identify with a UU congregation and trust in the power of that community.

There are many layers to involvement with a UU congregation. Some are Visitors, showing up to our events or gatherings on occasion. Then there are Friends, who keep themselves on our mailing lists, attend events regularly and even tell others that they are happy to "go to the Fellowship." Some of these are even Pledging Friends, who dedicate their time to teaching or greeting or serving. Pledging Friends are also those who make and fulfill a financial pledge. Finally, there are Members, who have signed the membership book. But the level of commitment and involvement of Members can vary greatly.

When Fellowship leaders talk about growth, they may talk about more parking spaces or available seating. That is useful thinking, but to become a UU one must claim the importance of a UU congregation. A religious community contains people with a shared religious vision and identity. What causes a person to become UU? What causes someone to identify with the people, the principles, the history and the hope of a congregation and the global network of UU congregations? Whether you are a visitor or member I am glad you are here. But what I hope is that you will identify. I want you to be a UU and know it.