

UUCSV Public Statement Policy (Effective Date: August 21, 2022)

Purpose: UUCSV and the Board of Trustees value free expression and advocacy by its ministers, staff, members/friends, and affiliated organizations. The purpose of this policy is to clarify how these individuals and groups may make public statements on their own behalf and how and when they may make them on behalf of UUCSV as a congregation. This statement also explains when UUCSV as a whole may make statements or take positions that are authorized by the congregation or that are consistent with those of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Authority: Bylaws of UUCSV Article VIII Section 2: The Board of Trustees shall constitute the governing and policy-implementing body of the Congregation.

Policy:

1. For purposes of this policy, “statement” means any type of public position or expression to an audience outside of UUCSV. Examples of statements include, but are not limited to, speaking at public events or meetings, issuing press releases, writing, or signing petitions, writing or signing letters, displaying banners, or speaking to news or media representatives.
 - a. A statement “on behalf of UUCSV” means a statement attributed to UUCSV and no other individual or organization. As such, a statement “on behalf of UUCSV” would be reasonably understood to represent the view of the congregation as a whole.
2. Ministers, staff, UUCSV members/friends, and UUCSV affiliated organizations are always free to make statements on their own behalf, including statements in which they indicate they are affiliated with UUCSV.
 - a. To avoid confusion, the person or organizational representative should clarify or explain that they are speaking on behalf of themselves and/or that their statement, comment, or position should not be attributed to UUCSV.
 - b. Examples of ways individuals or groups may do this include:
 - i. “I’m Jane Doe and I’m a member of UUCSV, and I believe...”
 - ii. “The members of the social concerns committee from UUCSV wish to express concerns about...”
 - iii. “I’m John Doe. I attend UUCSV in Northumberland. The views I’m about to express are entirely my own and do not represent the views of UUCSV.”
3. Ministers, staff, UUCSV members/friends, and UUCSV affiliated organizations may make statements on behalf of UUCSV if:
 - a. The statement was approved by UUCSV in a congregational vote, OR
 - b. The UUCSV Board of Trustees and minister approve the statement and the statement is consistent with a current policy, position, or statement of the Unitarian Universalist Association, such as a Statement of Conscience or an Action of Immediate Witness.
4. The minister retains the discretion to approve the placement or display of physical statements such as banners, posters, signs, or flyers on church property. The minister

may delegate this authority. This limit does not apply to posting flyers or other materials in pre-authorized or designated areas on church property.

5. This policy does not affect an ordained minister's freedom of the pulpit.

Policy language adapted from Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, VA.