



**First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio
Affinity Group Policy
Approved January 21, 2026**

The congregation affirms its commitment to affinity groups, to include their formation, meeting on campus, and providing resources that support their ministries. This commitment assures that affinity groups whose values align with Unitarian Universalism are granted secure, confidential, and respectful environments. The church will take proactive steps to ensure these groups are free from disruption, harassment, undue interference, or infringement upon their autonomy, internal agenda-setting, or identity-based membership boundaries.

Background:

Gathering around a shared identity is a powerful part of our Unitarian Universalist tradition. Examples include women gathering in consciousness-raising groups; youth leading vibrant circle worship; and People of Color UUs demanding our movement implement transformative shifts in our ministries. Identity-based space is a practice of Unitarian Universalist communities seeking to address the spiritual, communal, and justice needs of identity-based groups.

The purpose of gathering in affinity groups is to create a safe and brave space, defined as, but not limited to “an environment for courageous, uncomfortable, and transformative dialogue.”⁽¹⁾ Such spaces aim to ensure people can express their fears, pain and hopes without bystanders. This practice encourages affinity group members to re-enter mixed-identity space with greater self-awareness, less self-judgment, and confidence.

Identity-based space can be used to:

- Support processing and learning when people gather in cross-cultural community for workshops and trainings.
- Express strong emotions with less fear of retribution, which can occur when groups respond differently to shared experiences because of specific identity diversity within the larger group. (Responses include tension, conflict, and sadness.)
- Deepen spiritual growth around themes of history, ancestry, or cultural identity.
- Connect with a community that shares common experiences and history based on identity. (2)

The Board of Trustees adopted this policy to better enhance diversity within the community. The board affirms that affinity groups provide essential spaces for members to explore identities and experiences in a focused setting. Their safety and autonomy are paramount to their well-being and to our commitment to radical inclusion.

In the name of inclusivity it may seem important that every group or activity be open to everyone. However, requirements or expectations of assimilation are a form of discrimination. The board supports historically-marginalized groups maintaining their identities. We discourage actions that suggest to affinity groups, “You can be with us, if you become like us.” This position aligns with UU Shared Values..

This policy ensures the privileges of First UU affinity groups, including, but not limited to:

- The UU Parent Group
- The Young Adults group
- San Antonio Gente Engaged in Unitarian Universalism (SAGE-UU)
- Trans & Non-binary Support Group (TANG)
- The Retired UU Women’s Group
- The Crones Group

(1) Adrienne Maree Brown, *Emergent Strategy*

(2) The first two paragraphs of the Background material draw heavily from text by Taquiena Boston which was adapted from framing for the 2015 General Assembly.