

RESPECTFUL RELATIONS AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

Respectful Relations - In all matters regarding the relationships between and among the people of Greater Nashville Unitarian Universalist Congregation (“GNUUC” and/or “Congregation”), we turn first to our two Covenants and to our Mission Statement:

Our Congregational Covenant

We covenant together to make a welcoming community,
To walk together in the way of truth and love,
To seek the life of the spirit, as it is known by each person,
To support each other in thought, word, and deed,
As we work to build a better world.

Our Covenant with our Minister

I covenant with you to take exquisite risks,
To be strong, to be kind, and to speak true,
That we may deepen our connections to one another,
Practicing true compassion and forgiveness,
Building our courage to be vulnerable and powerful,
All in the service of love and justice.

Mission of Greater Nashville Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Our Mission is to be a visible center for worship and religious education, a force for social justice, and a diverse and welcoming community - distinguished by an emphasis on lifelong learning and works of the imagination, especially music, poetry, and the visual arts as sources of spiritual vitality.

Given that congregational polity is inherent to Unitarian Universalism, and having intentionally chosen to operate under the policy governance model set forth in *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership* (by Dan Hotchkiss), we are also guided by:

- the Policies of GNUUC as adopted by the Board, publicly accessible on our website <http://www.nashvilleuu.org/policy-handbook> and in the Policy Manual maintained by the Office Administrator; and
- the Bylaws of the Greater Nashville Unitarian Universalist Congregation, and
- our Letter of Agreement with our current minister.

Grievance Policy - Mindful of the need of small and growing congregations to maintain a safe and healthy environment in which to practice our Covenants and fulfill our Mission, we adopt this Grievance Policy to guide us when it becomes necessary to help members, friends, staff and ministers of the Congregation return to right relations with one another. Additionally, this Policy is intended to support healthy communications, transparency, and accountability among the Congregation and its leadership.

Our Grievance Policy (i) does not honor or respond to anonymous complaints, and (ii) includes the attached Flow Chart, which illustrates the process outlined below:

1. A grievance is reported to any member of the Healthy Congregations Team (HCT), a mission team of GNUUC.
 - a. The HCT will hear no anonymous grievances and reports all grievances to the Minister. (For grievances against the Minister, see 4.b below.)
 - b. The HCT member meets to listen to the person involved, either alone, or with another member of the HCT.
 - c. The HCT determines if the issue falls under one of these three categories:
 - i. Personal Preference
 - ii. Policy
 - iii. Performance
2. Personal Preference Complaints
 - a. If the grievance is resolved by way of an “active listening” conversation between the aggrieved and the HCT member, the process is complete and the resolution is reported to the Minister and to the Healthy Congregations Team.
 - b. If the aggrieved person is not satisfied, it is determined if the complaint is related to Policy or Performance.
3. Policy Complaints
 - a. Policy complaints are referred to the Board for resolution.
 - b. The Board may consult with the Healthy Congregations Team for development of policies related to the Mission of GNUUC.
4. Performance Complaints
 - a. Staff & Volunteers
 - i. If the complaint is against a paid staff member, the Minister develops a performance plan with the staff member and schedules a satisfaction review.
 - ii. If the complaint is against a volunteer, the Minister and a member of the HCT work with the congregant to address the concerns and, if necessary, helps the parties to reconcile by way of a personal covenant between them.
 - b. Minister - The Minister is held to account by way of their Letter of Agreement with the Congregation, The UUMA Guidelines for the Conduct of Ministry (including its Covenant and Code of Conduct), and the Ministerial Covenant with the Congregation.
 - i. If the grievance is against the Minister, and the aggrieved believes the Minister can engage in a fair process of resolution, the Minister, the HCT and the aggrieved will work together to resolve the concerns.
 - ii. If the grievance is against the Minister, and the aggrieved believes the Minister is unable to engage in a fair process of resolution, the Healthy Congregation Team will request the support of our UUA Regional Lead and the Minister will request the support of a UUMA Good Officer.

The attached flow-chart is a summary of the process outlined above, and is incorporated as a part of this Right Relations and Grievance Policy.

Respectful Relations Grievance Process

Updated 12/4/2016

