

First Unitarian

FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PROVIDENCE
www.firstunitarianprov.org

Dear First Unitarian members and friends:

This past year the Prudential Committee adopted a revised *Policy and Procedure Manual for First Unitarian Church* that includes a safe congregation policy. The safe congregation policy -- formally known as the Safe and Civil Church Policy -- was recommended by former Interim Minister Rev. Charles Ortman and Past Prudential Committee President Cynthia Rosengard and developed by the Prudential Committee over the last three years.

The Safe and Civil Church Policy was created to assure everyone -- including friends, members, staff, visitors, and those associated with the church, on church property, or attending a church-sponsored event -- is entitled to a safe environment in which to explore and experience spiritual growth and to freely express their individual views and opinions. By adopting this policy, the Prudential Committee adopted guidelines for civil and appropriate behavior and a procedure to deal with conduct which is detrimental to the church and the greater church community.

In brief summary, the policy:

- defines individual behavior that will not be tolerated or condoned by the church, including abusive behavior, disruptive behavior, or sexual misconduct
- appoints a Rights Relation Team to inquire into knowledge of or complaints about unwarranted behavior
- sets up a reporting procedure for anyone wishing to file a complaint
- provides a procedural mechanism for making a determination of findings regarding allegations of such behavior
- identifies the appropriate response, remedy, and -- if necessary -- penalty arising from a finding of abusive or disruptive behavior

Each of us will need to review, understand, and be responsible for following and upholding this policy for it to be successful. More information will be provided to you in upcoming Sunday services, in the February newsletter, and on our church website. Thank you for your attention to this new safe congregation policy.

Yours truly,
Jay Glasson
President, Prudential Committee

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