

Policy Regarding Disruptive Behavior

Intention:

We, the members and friends of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Lake Norman, are a caring community where members minister to each other in love. We uphold democratic process when practiced with mutual care and regard.

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles, we affirm the belief that our congregation must maintain a safe atmosphere where such openness can exist. When any person's physical and/or emotional safety is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the removal of the offending person or persons.

In order for our church to espouse and affirm our stated principles and for spiritual growth to be fostered and promoted, respectful behavior on the part of all individuals is a prerequisite. We ground our responses to one another in compassion.

Definition

Therefore, it is important that our membership has a process of addressing concerns about disruptive behavior.

We define disruptive behavior as that which meets either of the following criteria:

- 1.) Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child, or
- 2.) The disruption of fellowship activities (not limited to the specific time of the activity)

Implementation:

In the event that a person(s) engages in the above-noted disruptive behavior the members or friends who are present are expected to take the following actions:

- 1.) If the minister is present, the minister will engage the following action plan:
 - a. Request the person to cease the disruptive behavior and find a suitable means and/or time to express themselves.
 - b. If the person's presence continues to be a disruption ask them to leave the activity.
 - c. If the person refuses to leave, contact the local Police Department.
 - d. If the event takes place during the service, so long as the congregation is deemed safe by the minister, the congregation will sing a hymn until the disruptive person leaves or is removed.
- 2.) If the minister is not present, then a board member will follow the above-noted process.
- 3.) If the behavior goes unaddressed, either because a leader is not witness to the event or did not choose to engage in the aforementioned action plan, members are encouraged to follow

the *Steps for Addressing Congregational Conflict*. You can find this on our website, or you may request a copy from the minister or a Board Member.

- 4.) In all cases, the Board President and Minister shall be notified in a timely fashion.
 - 5.) When appropriate, a follow-up letter summarizing the event and detailing what steps must be taken before returning to the activities involved will be sent by the board to the offending party or parties.
 - 6.) The Board will confirm with the offended party or parties that this process was followed.
- A UUFLKN activity includes but is not limited to a religious service; a Board or committee meeting; social group activities; RE classes; business operations.