

Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing

CHURCH SPONSORED GROUPS

Approved by the UU Lansing Board of Trustees 9/26/18

UU Lansing sponsors a variety of volunteer-directed groups organized for religious education, personal growth, musical or educational activities, designed to promote reflection, self-understanding, physical or mental health and social justice; build community, facilitate social connections among members and friends, and encourage the use and acquisition of skills. Shared activities enhance understanding, stimulate minds, build friendships, and contribute to the accomplishment of individual and group objectives.

I. CHURCH SPONSORED VOLUNTEER-DIRECTED GROUPS INCLUDE:

1. Adult Religious Education groups – time limited
2. Music groups – ongoing
3. Affinity groups – ongoing and time limited

A. Characteristics

1. Scheduled to meet on- or off-site¹
2. Volunteer-led
3. Open to any member or friend who wishes to participate
4. Activities are related to the group's stated purpose
5. Receipts for expenditures are submitted to the designated staff person for that activity

B. Access to Church Resources

1. Participants are recruited through information provided in the Atrium, public notices, or personal contact
2. As programs affiliated with the church, groups have access to the church facility, as scheduled with the Church Office and contingent on the scheduling of other church activities.
 - a) Group leaders will be provided with copies of relevant sections of

¹ Accessibility should be a factor in selecting off-sites for meetings. Groups that meet off-site should be aware that UU Lansing insurance does not include coverage for off-site accidents.

- the UU Lansing Building Use policy.
 - b) Groups are responsible for returning space to its usual configuration.
- 3. Groups will have access as available to the church's communication channels.
 - a) Groups may be advertised on the church website and in publications as appropriate. Specific events may be listed in the Weekly Digest e-mail.
 - b) When social media or email are used to advertise a group's activities, the message should be shared with the Connections Coordinator so that interested newcomers may be informed.

II. GROUP-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. **Definition**
Adult religious education involves time-limited reflective or skill-building classes taught by members or friends of UUCGL
2. **Organization and Maintenance**
 - a) Offerings are determined by an Adult Religious Education Committee and Chairperson appointed by the Board. The Chairperson of the Adult Religious Education Committee solicits ideas and request proposals from the congregation at least twice a year.
 - b) Offerings must fit within the parameters of UU Identity, Social Justice, or non-UU Religions/Culture/Spirituality, developed to further the following goals:
 - (1) Share Unitarian-Universalist faith traditions, as well as knowledge of other religious faiths;
 - (2) Provide a safe environment for spiritual growth and development;
 - (3) Foster a community that promotes exploration, joy and wonder;
 - (4) Support each person's search for truth and meaning.
 - c) Leaders may charge a reasonable fee to the participants to cover costs of books or materials. Occasionally leaders with special skills may charge a small amount per class. Arrangements will be

available for waiver of fees where appropriate.

B. MUSIC GROUPS

1. Definition

Music groups are common interest gatherings of Church members and friends who want to enjoy performing together and to contribute music to church services.

2. Organization and Maintenance

- a) The Music Director is staff liaison to music groups, responsible for facilitation, providing or designating organizational support, and record keeping.
- b) Music groups have one or more designated leaders who are UU Lansing members, and at least five active participants.
- c) Music groups have scheduled meetings.
- d) Music groups participate at Sunday services as scheduled by the Music Director
- e) Music groups are approved initially by the Music Director for a six-month period and annually thereafter.
- f) No fee may be charged for participation.

C. AFFINITY GROUPS

1. Definition

Affinity groups are common interest gatherings of church members and friends designed to build community and to facilitate social connections among participants.

2. Organization and Maintenance – All Affinity Groups

- a) The Membership Coordinator is staff liaison to affinity groups, responsible for staff support and record keeping.
- b) Affinity groups are approved initially for a six-month period and annually thereafter.
- c) Affinity groups have two designated leaders who are UU Lansing members, and at least five active participants.
- d) All Affinity Groups file an annual report with the Membership Coordinator, summarizing activities and attendance.

3. Organization and Maintenance – Ongoing Affinity Groups

- a) Ongoing social affinity groups have regularly scheduled weekly or monthly meetings. Membership is defined by attendance.

- b) Ongoing affinity groups meeting at the church are encouraged to hold or support an annual fund raiser to contribute to the operational budget of the church.

4. Organization and Maintenance - Enrolled Affinity Groups

- a) Group participation is generally time-limited and involves enrollment and contributions of food or payment of fees.
- b) Detailed protocols for participation and activities of enrolled affinity groups² (including provisions for audit of ongoing collection of fees when funds are collected) are on file with Membership Coordinator.

² As of 2018 this group included Circle Suppers, Yankee Springs Retreat, Investment Club.