

YOUNG ADULT VOICES from the YA Survey

"What do UU YA's want from their religious communities?"

Help in adjusting to new communities, especially since YA's have a high rate of movement.

Acknowledgement that we exist.....and the spiritual sustenance and sense of community that everyone needs, regardless of age.

Fellowship and spiritual searching.....a way to link into our home communities, a way to hook into social activism, a place to be in an intergenerational atmosphere, a place to talk about our purpose in life.

Support, encouragement, acceptance. We need to feel welcomed by local congregations as adults. We need opportunities to gather with other YA's, as well as, opportunities to gather with the entire community.

Be more welcoming to YA's. Don't assume that a young person is a 'youth', that he/she has nothing to contribute (financially or otherwise) or that he/she is unreliable and won't come back anyway.

Social interaction, theological information, an invitation to participate in the life of the church.

Many YA UU's lose touch with the church, both because of the many places they tend to go and the many issues they are dealing with. But these are also THE REASONS they need the church, for support in their new beginnings, and often, homes, and to guide them in the decisions of careers and the direction of their lives.

A community that does not pressure YA's to conform to traditional social roles (such as marriage, parenting, heterosexuality etc). A space to be involved in the community overall, not only in specific age group related events, but to be fully members of a community.

Most of all I think that we need a place to come to after graduation. My church did not have a substantial YA program and I felt cut loose from a church that had watched me grow up, that meant a great deal to me.

Acknowledgement as adults, albeit young and often inexperienced. Expectation that we remain, and regret it if we leave. While many other religions also lose a large portion of their YA's, I know of no other religion that EXPECTS their YA's to leave.

Talk to us as adults, treat us as adults, expect the same out of us as you do other adults. Acknowledge and address some of our issues, but don't separate us off. If we are doing something stupid or incompetent, educate us. Don't just smile and excuse our failures as the foolishness of youth. Respect us enough to talk to us.

Sermons directed at transition, transience and life choices.

An approachable minister who recognizes the value of Young Adults being a part of the congregation while accepting that they are not always able to give the time that is sometimes expected.

It is essential that there is an opportunity to be recognized and valued within our congregations.

Support, love, friendship.....all the little things will fall in line if you have all three of those ;-)