

Young Adult Voices: Why I am a Unitarian Universalist

- “I’m a UU because of the open and kind hearts that surround me in the UU world. The sense of community, the sense of fellowship, the sense of FAMILY.” *Jim Rush*
- “I’m a Unitarian Universalist because the first time I ever went to High Street in Macon, GA, I found out that girls could be ministers and I didn’t have to wear my Easter dress all summer. I’m a Unitarian Universalist because in the late 80s early 90s my biracial siblings were NOT considered a deplorable concept by the Unitarian Universalist faith (they were by just about everybody else). I’m a Unitarian Universalist because I find it important to claim a faith realizes a social responsibility, not for the sake of an afterlife, but for the sake of all life - a faith that isn’t afraid to say that we’re shooting for ideals that may never happen, but is stilling willing to try, knowing that we’ll end up in a better place than where we started. And I’m a Unitarian Universalist because it’s in this faith that I can share my gifts and grow through other people sharing theirs.” *Katie Sadler*
- “I think one of the biggest reasons is I like being part of a spiritual community that believes in the **possibility** of goodness and hope; that we don’t sit around and curse the darkness, but rather light a candle to combat it. In some small way, the simplest gesture done within community can be very grand. When I hang out with the Young Adult Group, I feel like I am among like minded individuals who respect me for who I am, not a prettily-packaged version of what I should be. It is my spiritual home and my social scene.” *Lynn Padgette, Ashburn, VA*
- “I had done a lot of searching before I visited a UU church. I looked into feminist theology, I explored deism, I read about Buddhism and Hinduism, and I hung out with some pagans. I *knew* I wasn’t a Christian, yet I didn’t quite fit in anywhere else. But when I walked into my first UU church, I knew I was home. By the end of my first year I was a committee co-chair, I had run a coffee hour, I had participated in a service, I was organizing a young adult group, I had been on the church retreat and I was creating a marketing plan for the church. If it hadn’t been for those opportunities in my first congregation, I wouldn’t be where I am now working as a religious professional.” *Kim Mason, Alexandria, VA*
- “I am very new to UU, however, I know very good friends that are Unitarian. That’s why I joined; loving, caring, and accepting individuals are Unitarians.” *Donald Zeigler, Reading, PA*
- “Unitarian Universalism saved me from becoming a negative atheist – from denying any possibility of the spiritual, from thinking all organized religions are bad. In high school I never thought that I would be in a leadership position, but when I found the UU group, I realized that these people were worth leading. Most of my friends that I will keep in touch with after I graduate were in the UU group. My traditionally religious family is happy that I’m at least doing something with organized religion. I lead a meeting a semester where I get to bounce my latest idea off a bunch of good minds.

Overall, it's been a great experience, and I plan to stick with it and raise my kids as UU.”
Dave Denkenberger, Penn State University, State College, PA

“My spiritual community now would probably be the small campus group that we have here. It is a very comforting and familiar group – no matter what else is going on in my life or on campus. I am inspired by what the participants in my group have to say about everything and anything, from relationships and love to how to survive exam week. UUism is important to me because it is the religion that I was raised in - it fit my family very well: a culturally Jewish father and a mother raised in a Presbyterian church, and I came to adopt it as my religion. I think that UUism can be a faith, a religion, a spiritual community and a way of life, depending on what each individual needs. UUism is unique because it encourages growth and change – that is why it is especially important that youth and young adults be supported by the UUA and the community organizations/churches/meeting houses, and it accepts individuality. [As a young adult, it] has meant a lot to me to be able to reconcile my religion with my life choices, especially now when everything is changing and changing so fast. I am one of the only people I know that does not have trouble including religion/spirituality in his/her life, even as it is changing.” *Katrina Magdol, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA*