

## **Top 10 reasons to check out the UCC**

### **10. What if church is like spinach ...?**

You know, like something that you hated as a kid, but you love as an adult because you eat it in ways that suit you much better. Guess what? A lot of people are having the same sort of experience with church . . . In the UCC, things are often quite different and worth checking out.

### **9. Variety...**

UCC churches tend to tailor themselves to fit the people they feel called to serve in their local community. The result: A wide variety of musical traditions, expressions and values that have integrity and purpose. From conservative to liberal, we are not short on variety.

### **8. No apologies...**

You are what you are...and so are we – we like ourselves just fine. Find a church where you will fit in, be nurtured and challenged to grow.

### **7. No waiting...**

You do not have to join to be active in many UCC churches. If you want to get involved, many of our churches will find a place to help fulfill your need to give – whether you decide to join.

### **6. No boxes**

God can blow the lid off any box, unfold it and turn it into a dance floor. We tend to be the "out of the box" people. Among our many firsts, we were the first mainline church to take a stand against slavery (1700), the first to ordain an African American person (1785), the first to ordain a woman (1853), the first in foreign missions (1810), and the first to ordain openly gay lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons (1972). We value education for all people. We founded Harvard and Yale, as well as many historically black colleges, six of which remain affiliated with the UCC to this day.

## **5. One God, One Faith, One Baptism for All**

When we baptize you into our community, we promise that we will never take it back – no matter what you discover about yourself or what others discover about you along life's journey. We believe that baptism places each of us into the "body of Christ" and lasts forever. Some are baptized as infants, others as adults. Some are sprinkled. Others are immersed. Some reclaim their baptism from a previous church life. For each of us, however, baptism is big enough, strong enough and cleansing enough to last forever. We believe that everyone – old, young, straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, physically or emotionally challenged, rich or poor, sure or unsure, lost or found, Democrat or Republican has a place in the body of Christ. Baptism is like a badge that says, "you're a full member of the church and no one can take that away from you."

## **4. Good News People**

We believe that No. 5 is good news!

## **3. "Party" Church**

God is having a party and we are all invited. At God's party our spiritual hungering is fed and our thirsting is satisfied. At God's party we get strength, stamina and community support that helps us through the tough times that come to everyone. Feeding our spiritual hunger helps reduce those, "I can't believe I'm so stupid" moments – but we'll never eliminate them all. That's why we need friends and companions and not judges (no offense to judges) for the journey.

## **2. Spiritual Guidance...**

It is not about commandments. It is about relationships – even with God. The most important relationship is our relationship with God. Second most important is our relationships with the rest of the human family. In balance, these relationships produce justice amid injustice, kindness in the face of meanness, and the humility of self-acceptance that comes as we sense the presence of a God who knows our inmost thoughts and loves us uncontrollably – just as we are. Spiritual journeys can be like the exercise equipment we buy and leave under the bed. Without coaches and workout partners, most of us do not stick with it. We are the "Journeys Wanted" people . . . bring yours.

## **1. We're waiting for you.**