

Conflict Management for the Congregation Unitarian Universalists of Transylvania County

A three-person Conflict Management Council shall be appointed by the Board. Council members will be trained in conflict management and compassionate communication, be seen as trusted and objective members by the congregation, and be free of other UUTC leadership roles. The first team should serve for two years and then people should begin to rotate off one person at a time.

The Conflict Management Council and the COM shall educate the congregation about conflict management in a healthy UU congregation through a focus on the UU principles and the UUTC Behavioral Covenant (to be written).

Transparency, listening and a timely reply are keys to preventing conflicts. Nearly all conflicts should be resolved by steps 1 and 2 listed below. If mediation is needed, it should be offered in a reasonable time frame and conducted by trained mediators who are not members of the congregation. The local Center for Dialogue has such trained mediators.

The following steps for managing conflict are recommended:

1. When a conflict arises, the conflict management council should take action immediately. The parties should be encouraged to meet together in dialogue and try to resolve their conflict by practicing conflict management and compassionate communication principles.
2. When step 1 is unsuccessful, both parties to the conflict should be asked to meet with a two member team of the Conflict Management Council to see if the conflict can be resolved. Confidentiality is critical.
3. If the above steps are unsuccessful, the Conflict Management Council should immediately get permission from both parties for a mediation by the Center for Dialogue.
4. If this fails and the threat to the congregation is considered grave, the Thomas Jefferson Conference should be asked for advice and counseling.