

*NOTE: This is a document written a while back by the late Jim McIntosh.*

Dear Members and Friends;

In last service we were introduced to the proposed "8<sup>th</sup> Principle." In my opinion that statement falls far short of expressing, in the true UU spirit, a basic principle.

The most glaring affront the statement presents is that, as stated, it is not a principle, but instead constitutes a statement of belief, in short, a CREED. Aside from that, it is poorly worded and written in a style wholly apart from that of the other principles.

The seven existing principles are intended to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. The principles describe the kind of person one already is, whether they think of themselves as UU or not. The principles do not list the things you must believe to be a UU. The principles do not constitute a series of boxes that you must check off in order to be a member of our faith community. I cannot imagine a prospective member being turned down because they appear to be a little short, for example, on the number four principle.

The existing principles do not attempt to set us apart from others seeking spirituality, instead they are general statements that one can ascribe to whether they are UU, Atheist or any of the hundreds of other religious communities. The proposed Number Eight implies that the items listed are solely our property and that you must "come around" to our way of thinking.

Are the concepts highlighted in the proposed statement worth directing our full strength to the effort; of course they are. Should we strive for a diverse culture; certainly. Is racism a scourge that drags all of us down; absolutely. The concepts are true but their adoption cannot be accomplished if we restrict the efforts to ourselves.

A principle is not a belief, instead it is a description of a belief. A creed is purely a statement of belief that members are required to adhere to. Wording a principle is not easy but I would suggest that those proposing an eighth principle rewrite it somewhat along the following lines;

**..building a diverse and loving community devoid of racism and all other forms of oppression"**

It was stated that individual congregations might seek to adopt the "principle" as worded. I do not know if we will to do that, but if we do, I will vote against it and I encourage others to do so as well.

Jim McIntosh