

June 3, 2019

Dear UUMA Colleagues,

We, the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association, wish to offer an apology on behalf of the institution, for the harm we have done by failing to take appropriate action arising from sexual misconduct committed by our members. We regret our actions or inactions that have in any way ignored, minimized or not responded appropriately to their misconduct. While the great majority of our colleagues have conducted themselves with the utmost honesty and integrity, a few have not, and our institution did not always live up to its responsibility to take appropriate action.

We offer this apology because we recognize that there has been a collective and systemic failure on the part of generations of UUMA leaders to take appropriate action arising from such misconduct.

Our systemic failure has been brought about by misplaced values:

- We have valued the personhood of colleagues in ministry above the personhood of victims/survivors of sexual misconduct.
- We have valued a complacent peace above a just conflict.
- We have valued the health and stability of the institutions we serve above the health and stability of people who have been sexually abused.

As clergy, we are regularly moved to preach about atonement. We recognize that atonement is a process that is not embodied in or completed by an apology alone. An apology acknowledges that harm has been done, while atonement requires willingness to take responsibility for our role in the harm. We are sorry for our past inaction, and are committed to continue working for a transformation of the culture and values that allowed sexual misconduct to go unchecked.

Though the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association and its members have taken steps in every decade of our institution's existence to recognize, challenge, and punish sexual misconduct through policies and procedures, we acknowledge that the damage done to our faith and our collective ministry requires further healing. We must continue to expand awareness of sexual misconduct and the suffering it creates. We are committed to taking the steps necessary to move this important work forward, and to the vision of restored health through accountability.

To those who have been harmed by the actions and inactions of current or past members of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association, we deeply and honestly apologize for the failures

of our institution and commit ourselves to building a UUMA in which you will have faith that we will not repeat the sins of our past.

If you would like to speak to someone about this letter, learn how to file a complaint against a minister or find support resources, please visit: www.uuma.org/misconduct.

In faith,

Cheryl M. Walker, President

Wendy Williams, President-Designate

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