

**MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER
REVEREND SCOTT ALEXANDER**

We hope you will consider joining a covenant group here at UUFVB this year. Covenant groups provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment – a warm human circle -- where you can deepen and broaden your spiritual exploration and reflection...even as you are enriched by what others share from their own experience and journeys. As Unitarian Universalists, covenant groups provide a laboratory where we can both give shape to and live out our religious principles. Won't you join us?

Scott

**Benefits of Covenant Groups to
Individuals and the Congregation**

Encourage personal growth and spiritual exploration.

Focus on active listening and right relationship

Path for quick integration of new members into the Fellowship

Facilitate shared ministry in a rapidly growing congregation.

Locus for identification and training of new leaders.

Groups have the power to connect people and expand community.



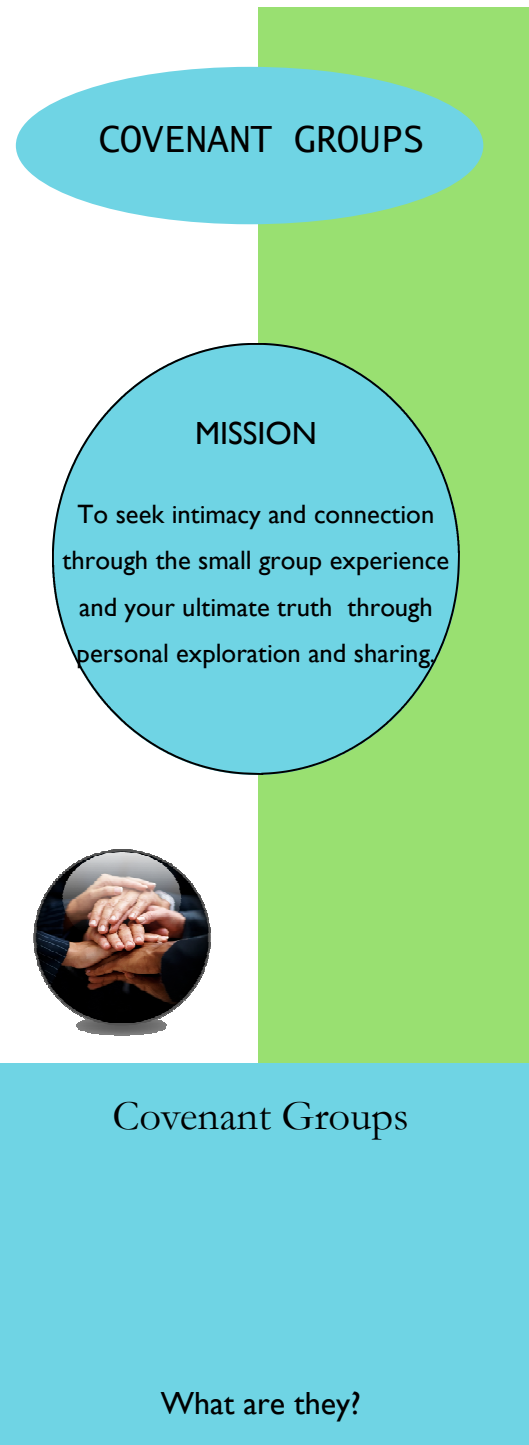
**What a typical covenant group
might look like:**

Covenant groups work best if they contain 8-10 members who have committed to meet together monthly for a period of either six or twelve months.

Eleven groups, 100 members are meeting at various times and differing days of the week and we have childcare for young parent's.

Groups are guided by a trained facilitator to explore diverse and significant topics.

Groups will meet either at the UUFVB or in members homes.



COVENANT GROUPS

How do you want to live your life?

Ever stopped to consider it? In a busy world, it can be hard to take the time to sit down and think with intent about how we want to live our lives. Intention requires creating a vision for ourselves, planning goals, and implementing those activities that move us toward the vision.

But, of course, life has a habit of happening in spite of our plans. So it is our *attitude* toward what happens that makes a difference in how our life rolls along through the years.

Covenant groups of 8-10 people can help us create that attitude, make those plans and feel better about ourselves, the people around us and our Fellowship.

Each group crafts its own covenant, or set of ground rules on how members interact. The covenant works to create a safe space for deep sharing and personal reflection and generally includes guidelines for confidentiality.



The aim is to celebrate and talk about our individuality, discover personal truths, find meaning in our lives, live our principles and make contributions to our Fellowship and our community.

WHAT WILL WE BE DOING?

Searching:

A desire for change and curiosity propel movement to search for questions and answers.

Discovering:

Discovery can occur as an "AHA" moment, or it may take a long time to sink in.

Assimilating:

Mold the new into the existing scheme of attitudes, values, beliefs and faith.

Sharing:

Once you have drawn the picture of your truth, this novel new word portrait of yourself demands to be shared..

SAMPLE TOPICS

The value of a covenant for any Group.

What path are we taking to find out how we want to live our lives. What is our "spiritual journey."

Attitude adjustment: considering alternative ways of looking at how we think of the world.

Unitarian Universalist Principles, our personal interpretations.

Compassion, anger, joy and many other intriguing topics.

TIME LINE

Sign up for these covenant groups officially began November 24, 2013 as Rev. Scott Alexander voiced his support of the concept from the pulpit.

Sign-up tables will be in the lobby outside the Sanctuary as well as in Fellowship Hall during coffee and conversation time.

You can pick up an information sheet and sign up form at these tables and leave your completed sheet on the table, or later in the office in the covenant group message box.

Co chairs for the Covenant group effort are:
Jen Sutton and Pete Kersey

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Our goal is to fill vacancies in existing groups and perhaps launch two new covenant groups beginning early January 2014,

The function of a facilitator is to keep the group on topic, follow the meeting agenda and facilitate discussion.