

UUCLC Lending Library Collection development policy

Mission statement

1. To serve as a resource for deeper understanding of the Unitarian Universalist faith
2. To present our congregation with reading material from a variety of spiritual traditions

Acquisition of materials

The UUCLC Lending Library serves a Unitarian Universalist congregation of 114 people, consisting of active members, active non-members, visitors and friends (Unitarian Universalist Community of Lake County). Services are held at 10 a.m. each Sunday at the Kelseyville Senior Center, 5245 Third St. in Kelseyville, Calif. Lending library books are available for check-out during the social time that takes place following services. Check-out procedure is noted below.

The UUCLC is part of the Pacific Central District of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. Its chief tenets are its seven Unitarian Universalist Principles.

“Unitarian Universalism is a theologically diverse religion in which members support one another in our individual search for truth and meaning. We have historic roots in the Jewish and Christian traditions, but today individual Unitarian Universalists may identify with Atheism, Agnosticism, Buddhism, Humanism, Paganism, or with other philosophical or religious traditions” (UUA).

In keeping with its mission statement, the UUCLC Lending Library will be stocked with informative titles from the UUA imprints, Skinner House and Beacon Press. The library administrator will consider books from other publishers upon the basis of their compatibility

with the Seven Principles of the UUA.

Books will be ordered on an ongoing basis to reflect contemporary titles.

It is the intention of the UUCLC Lending Library to provide resources to its congregation that are not readily available elsewhere. As a matter of policy, it seeks to avoid duplicating resources of a more generalized nature that are available through the Lake County Library, given that the public library relies directly for support upon members of the larger community of which the UUCLC is a part.

Methodology/best practices at other UU congregations:

In drafting this policy, the administrator consulted practices by her library counterparts at other UU churches. The Norelma Walker Youth Library at the UU Church of Fremont is administered by a committee headed by chair Denise Sciandra, who relates, “Our library is housed in a room of a temporary building and due to space issues shares it with the kindergarten class. There are approximately 1,700 books in the collection that are kept on custom built shelves that I was able to help design. The books are catalogued with the Athena software which makes them accessible by author, title, and subject. We also do electronic check out and check in using Athena.”

Sciandra said she selects books with themes of LGBTQ, civil rights, women’s history, peace and the environment. Library holdings include several well-known children’s series including Harry Potter and A Series of Unfortunate Events (Sciandra). “Humor is an important element that I consider. We have a large selection of biographies many of which include civil rights and women’s history themes” (Sciandra). Sciandra said she orders winners of both the Jane Addams Peace Association’s children’s book award and the American Library Association’s Stonewall Award.

The Rogue Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ashland, Ore. has holdings that

are searchable via an online database but check-out is recorded in a paper notebook (RVUUF). Its librarian, June Holmes, stocks books in 28 non-fiction categories (Holmes). “By far the largest are books concerning UU, but some of the other popular topics are Buddhism, Meditation/Spirituality, Death/Grief, Biography, Gender Issues, to name a few.” As far as book selection is concerned, Holmes said she has been fortunate to have suggestions from members. “The leadership council requested a large number of books last year, and more recently a couple of other committees have requested specific purchases.” Holmes said she has also ordered videos and DVDs but most of the orders are for books.

Procedure:

The library coordinator will monitor new releases of Skinner House and Beacon Press titles. Additional sources for referrals or leads can include reviews in magazines such as (but not limited to) UU World, Tikkun, Utne Reader or Mother Jones; author, publisher or vendor publicity; notices of books by UU authors, suggestions by members of the local congregation, trends in the UUA (i.e. “Standing on the Side of Love,” its public advocacy campaign; and its selection of a common read) and happenings within the surrounding community that directly bear upon UU values (i.e. the Lake County Charter for Compassion).

Some possible considerations:

- “Does this fall within the areas of our collecting?” (Evans 94)
- Have patrons’ browsing and reading habits demonstrated an interest in this subject?
- Is this item already well-represented in the Lake County Library catalog?
- “How much do we already have on this subject?” (Evans 94)
- “Can the library afford to purchase this item?” (Evans 94)
- What is the primary purpose of this item? Does its use place it more appropriately

within the purview of another church department?

Purchases will be made either with a UUCLC bank card or through billing the congregation where available. The UUCLC treasurer will be notified prior to purchases being made against the UUCLC account.

The library administrator is responsible for monitoring that all purchases are within the resources allotted to the library for the fiscal year. Members of the congregation will be encouraged to sponsor the purchasing of books, particularly those books that they have recommended for inclusion.

Library donations:

The UUCLC Lending Library appreciates and encourages donations from its members. Donated materials will be evaluated for their compatibility with the library's acquisition policy, as well as their physical condition.

"The library reserves the right to decide which donations will be added to the library collection and which will be sold in the Friends of the Library book sales" (Lake County Library).

If a donor wishes acknowledgment for tax purposes, the library will issue a receipt; however, as the administrator understands from her reading of text regarding IRS regulations (Evans), the library cannot provide an "estimated value" for the donated books.

The receipt will include what Evans identifies as essential to meet IRS requirements: "[A]n acknowledgment letter must contain the library's name, the date of the contribution, and the location or place of the gift." Description of the books will identify them by type (e.g. trade or mass-market paperback or hardcover book).

Preparing books for use:

Once a book has been purchased or otherwise accepted, it will be cataloged and added to the lending library as follows:

The library administrator will add the book to a Google.docs spreadsheet that she is in the process of compiling.

(If and when the library grows to a size sufficient to benefit from an automated catalog, she will add each new book to that catalog and will equip it with whatever labeling is needed for it to be recognized and used in that system.)

Books will be equipped with a pocket in the inside front cover to hold a borrower's card.

Books are shelved by fiction and non-fiction on the library cart.

Some non-fiction books are further classified by subject and bear identifying labels on their spines. While some of these labels were commercially produced, many others were created in-house to reflect the library's unique character.

Checking out books

The procedure for checking out a book from the UUCLC Lending Library has been an evolving process during the months it has been in operation. As initially practiced, it involved the use of a binder with sheets in the binder corresponding to each title in the library. The sheets provided space for the borrower to write his or her name, e-mail address and the date the book was removed, as well as space for the borrower to record the date the book was returned. An alternative procedure was recommended by the president and amended by the administrator upon review of this document's first draft:

- Library cards will be placed in the library card pocket of each book. These cards contain the title of the book and author on the card, along with spaces for readers to check out the book.
- To take out a book, a person places their name and phone number and a return date four weeks from the check out date on the library card. This library card is then filed alphabetically by title in a small file card box called "Checked Out Books." Readers also write

themselves a reminder of the return date in the first available space in a grid printed on the now-vacated library card pocket.

- To return a book, a reader finds the library card in the “Checked Out Books” box and returns it to the library card pocket. The reader then places the book in the “Returned Books” area of the Library cart. Library staff will then return the book to its proper place on the cart (Cole-Lewis).

Use of items that are not for circulation

The UUCLC Lending Library stocks copies of UU World, which are to be read while on premises. The rationale for this policy is that members of the church receive their own copies of the magazine, plus the contents of the magazine can also be read online. Magazines are additionally more fragile than cloth- or paperbound books. The library administrator anticipates that library copies are to serve as a supplement, rather than a primary source of access to UU World.

Promotion of the library

The library administrator can promote the lending library through a variety of mediums: through its “Book of the Month,” distributed via social media, the church website and Google e-mail group; American Library Association promotions and tie-ins with speakers or topics featured during the weekly worship service. Trends in the UUA also offer an opportunity for promotion when relevant materials are present in the library.

Additional promotions include creation and printing of letter-fold brochures and other materials for the congregation’s welcome table as well as professionally-produced materials (i.e. bookmarks) through the American Library Association or the UUA. Any expenses toward promotional materials must be kept within the library’s allocated resources for the year, mindful that the budget’s primary purpose is for the purchasing of books.

Intellectual freedom and censorship

“The [Unitarian Universalist Community of Lake County’s governing board] subscribes in principle to the statements of policy on library philosophy as expressed in the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights, a copy of which is appended to and made a part of this policy” (ALA Workbook).

Censorship is an unfortunate element in American Unitarian history: “Boston’s elite saw censorship as part of their larger social reform agenda” (Walton).

On October 4, 1981, midway through the 11 a.m. service [at the First Unitarian Church in Baltimore], pernicious ideas were burned at the altar.

As reported by Frank P.L. Somerville, religion editor of the Baltimore Sun, “Centuries of Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and Hindu writings were ‘expurgated’ because of sections described as ‘sexist’” (Hentoff).

The UUCLC Lending Library administrator has experienced the unexplained disappearance of books from the church lending library. While the motivation could have been theft for personal gain, another motivation may have been attempted censorship.

The following policy shall be the formal procedure for “challenging” the inclusion of a book:

1. Any member of the church who wishes to challenge a book’s presence in the lending library is to fill out a written complaint using a standardized form that has been modeled after a sample form created by the ALA.

2. The library administrator will report the challenge to the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, either by using the online form or by printing a PDF of the Challenge Database Form, completing it and faxing it to the Office for Intellectual Freedom at (312) 280-4227.

“Challenges reported to the ALA by individuals are kept confidential. In these cases, ALA will release only the title of the book being challenged, the state and the type of institution (school, public library). The name of the institution and its town will not be disclosed. A list of most frequently challenged books is compiled from these challenges for each annual Banned Books Week” (ALA Reporting).

3. The matter will be referred for resolution to the UUCLC governing board.

Weeding of materials

From time to time, as space becomes limited and as materials age, it will be necessary and desirable to “weed” the UUCLC Lending Library. It is important that “weeding” be based upon a pre-established policy using guidelines that are based upon library best practices. “Weeding” should not be dictated by individual preferences of the lending library coordinator nor of any other individual.

Procedure:

1. The lending library coordinator will evaluate titles using criteria that has been compiled from weeding policies and “best practices” of school and public libraries. The following sample guidelines were compiled by the Alachua County, Fla. public schools:

1. Last date of circulation — If the material has not been in general use during the past three to five years (depending on the type of material).

2. Physical condition — If the condition is badly worn or excessively dirty, the item may be weeded, and a decision concerning replacement should be made.

3. Timeliness — This is one of the most frequent criteria: Reference may be to: (a) out-of-date materials, particularly in the sciences and technology. A rule of thumb is to reconsider almost anything more than three to five years of

age, (b) materials no longer in demand, or that no longer support the curriculum or current community needs (c) older editions no longer used, and (d) dated textbooks, where they are part of the collection.

4. Reliability — Viewpoints change and must be reflected in the collection.

5. Ephemera — Certain subject areas, from inspirational tones to how to make a million dollars, go out of fashion and use. This type of fad literature should be weeded, particularly when it is found that a title no longer circulates, is no longer timely, or the information seems unreliable.

6. Duplicates — Where there are duplicates and none seem to be circulating or used, a single copy may be all that is needed. At a later date (one to two years) the single copy should be reconsidered for weeding.

7. Reference works should be given special attention in order that all the above criteria be applicable in all of the special areas. Current information in this area is critical. (Alachua County Public Schools).

2. Any books that are decommissioned can be offered for sale as a fundraiser for the lending library or can be donated to the Friends of the Lake County Library. The books' condition should be considered as a factor when offering it for sale or donation. If a book is simply too worn, it may have to be discarded.

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POLICY APPROVED 1 MAY, 2011 BY THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE UUCLC

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SUPPLEMENTAL WEB RESOURCES

Beacon Press (UUA publishing imprint):

<http://www.uua.org/publications/beaconpress/index.shtml>

Books by UU Authors (UU World):

<http://www.uuworld.org/departments/booksbyuuauthors.shtml>

Challenge reporting form (ALA):

<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/banned/challengeslibrarymaterials/challengereporting/onlinechallengeform/index.cfm>

Common Read (of the UUA): <http://www.uua.org/publications/commonread/>

Lake County Charter for Compassion: <http://lakecountycompassion.blogspot.com/>

Lake County Library: <http://www.co.lake.ca.us/Page386.aspx>

Lake County Library online public access catalog:

<http://catalog.sonomalibrary.org/ipac20/ipac.jsp?profile=lake#focus>

Pacific Central District (of the UUA): <http://www.pcd-uua.org/>

Seven Principles (of the UUA): <http://www.uua.org/visitors/6798.shtml>

Skinner House (UUA publishing imprint): <http://www.uua.org/publications/skinnerhouse/>

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations: <http://www.uua.org/>

Unitarian Universalist Community of Lake County: <http://uuclc.org/>

UUCLC Lending Library: <http://uuclc.org/library-2/>

UUCLC Lending Library blog: <http://uuclc.org/category/uuclc-lending-library/>

UU World (quarterly magazine published by the UUA): <http://www.uuworld.org/>