

Unitarian Universalist Military Bridge Builder Kit

Executive Summary

The Unitarian Universalist Bridge Builder Kit was developed with the support of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, and through a confluence of interest by Unitarian Universalist ministers, military chaplains, as well as civilian and military members of our congregations. The Bridge Builder Kit is a curriculum supplied by the CLF that is presented by you and your congregation.

This program was intended to serve the needs of congregations who seek to be more inviting and inclusive of military members and visitors. In developing this program, it became apparent that participants bring a variety of concerns and commitments. In its current form, the program has three objectives:

- Assist congregations, who so desire, in becoming more inviting and inclusive of military members, friends, and visitors;
- Assist congregations, who so desire, in understanding and reaching out to veterans of our local communities;
- And, fostering respectful moral discourse around the topics of peace and war.

We suggest a minimum of two months of preparation time; however, four months is not too long. This will allow you to advertise locally and familiarize yourself with the program content. Scheduling six hours for the Bridge Builder Kit will allow the content and discussion to unfold at a comfortable pace. We suggest following the program with a related worship service. The program may be scheduled for a single day, or over three different days (not including the worship service).

In determining who will facilitate this program, it is essential that one of the facilitators be able to provide both a pastoral presence to individuals and ministerial leadership that serves the congregation as a whole. It is also essential that one of the facilitators have military experience. Therefore we recommend that one of the co-facilitators be a minister or Director of Religious Education. The other co-facilitator should be a friend or member of the congregation who has served in the military or the spouse of a service-person. Because your audience is likely to bring a variety of commitments, it is important that the facilitators be able to honor various experiences and perspectives.

When you request this program from the CLF, you will be given on-line access to the program content and resources. Four books from the CLF loan library will be available to you. You will also be connected with a Unitarian Universalist military chaplain (or chaplain candidate) who is available to assist you in preparing for the program.

Be a Bridge Builder and open the doors of conversation that will be uplifting to veterans, educational for non-veterans, supportive for those who love a veteran, and affirming to all – across a diverse range of experiences and beliefs.