

Group Leadership

Purpose

This guidance defines the role, expectations, and eligibility criteria for individuals serving as group leaders within Foothills Unitarian Church. It reflects our values of covenantal community, shared ministry, and mission-centered leadership.

Group leaders are not just facilitators—they are ministers in partnership, co-creators of community, and stewards of our shared mission. This guidance ensures that all group leaders are spiritually grounded, ethically accountable, and relationally aligned with the church as a whole.

Group Leader Requirements

All group leaders must:

- Be **active members** of Foothills Unitarian Church
- **Attend an annual Group Leader Training**
- **Commit to the Group Leader Code of Ethics**
- **Abide by the Foothills Covenant of Right Relations**
- **Track attendance** at all group events and use event promotion and communication tools provided by Foothills
- **Stay true to the mission** of Foothills and never misuse the power of leadership
- **Reach out for support** when challenges arise
- **Model joy and humility**, remembering that leadership at Foothills is about learning to be human together
- **Hold a personal annual spiritual deepening intention**, shared with staff or lay leadership

Why Membership is Required

Foothills groups **are not separate from the church—they are the church** in action. Groups are how we embody our mission and bring our vision to life. Therefore, the people who lead our groups must also be those who have said yes to this mission, yes to this vision, and yes to this community through the act of becoming a member.

Group leaders are called to be:

- The **connective tissue** between their group and the broader life of Foothills
- **Mentors and inviters**, guiding others into deeper participation
- **Cultural stewards**, upholding and transmitting our values
- **Partners in ministry**, co-creating spaces of transformation and care

Requiring membership ensures that group leaders are equipped to:

- Articulate Unitarian Universalist values and Foothills' mission
 - Navigate our systems, relationships, and opportunities
 - Understand the full context of the congregation—not just one slice
 - Practice accountability and partnership with clarity and integrity
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Scope

This guidance applies to **all ongoing group leaders** at Foothills who operate with **autonomy** under a **Shared Ministry Covenant (SMC)**. These leaders steward groups that are:

- Recurring or open-ended in duration
- Mission-driven and community-integrated
- Not directly overseen by staff or a designated lay program leader on a weekly basis
- Responsible for shaping the group's spiritual direction, relational culture, and group dynamics

These **group leaders** are expected to meet the full list of requirements outlined in this guidance, including being active members of Foothills and participating in annual leader training.

Not included in this guidance:

This guidance **does not apply** to individuals serving as **program facilitators**, defined as those who:

- Implement a **staff-developed or staff-directed curriculum**
- Lead a **time-limited group or class**, typically within a seasonal offering
- Operate under **ongoing supervision or coaching** by a staff member or designated lay leader
- Do not shape the group's ongoing identity or mission alignment

Examples of Program Facilitators:

- Anchors of a single season of Journey Groups or *Anchor Groups*

While program facilitators are also expected to align with Foothills values and abide by our Covenant of Right Relations, they are **not required to be members** or complete annual group leader training.

Related Content

Bylaws and Board Policies

[Board Policy: Global Delegation of Authority](#)

Establishes the Executive Team's authority to create operational guidance, including eligibility and leadership requirements.

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