



The Theological Grounding of UU International Engagement

We Covenant to Affirm and Promote the Goal of World
Community with Peace, Liberty and Justice for All

Why Theological Reflection?

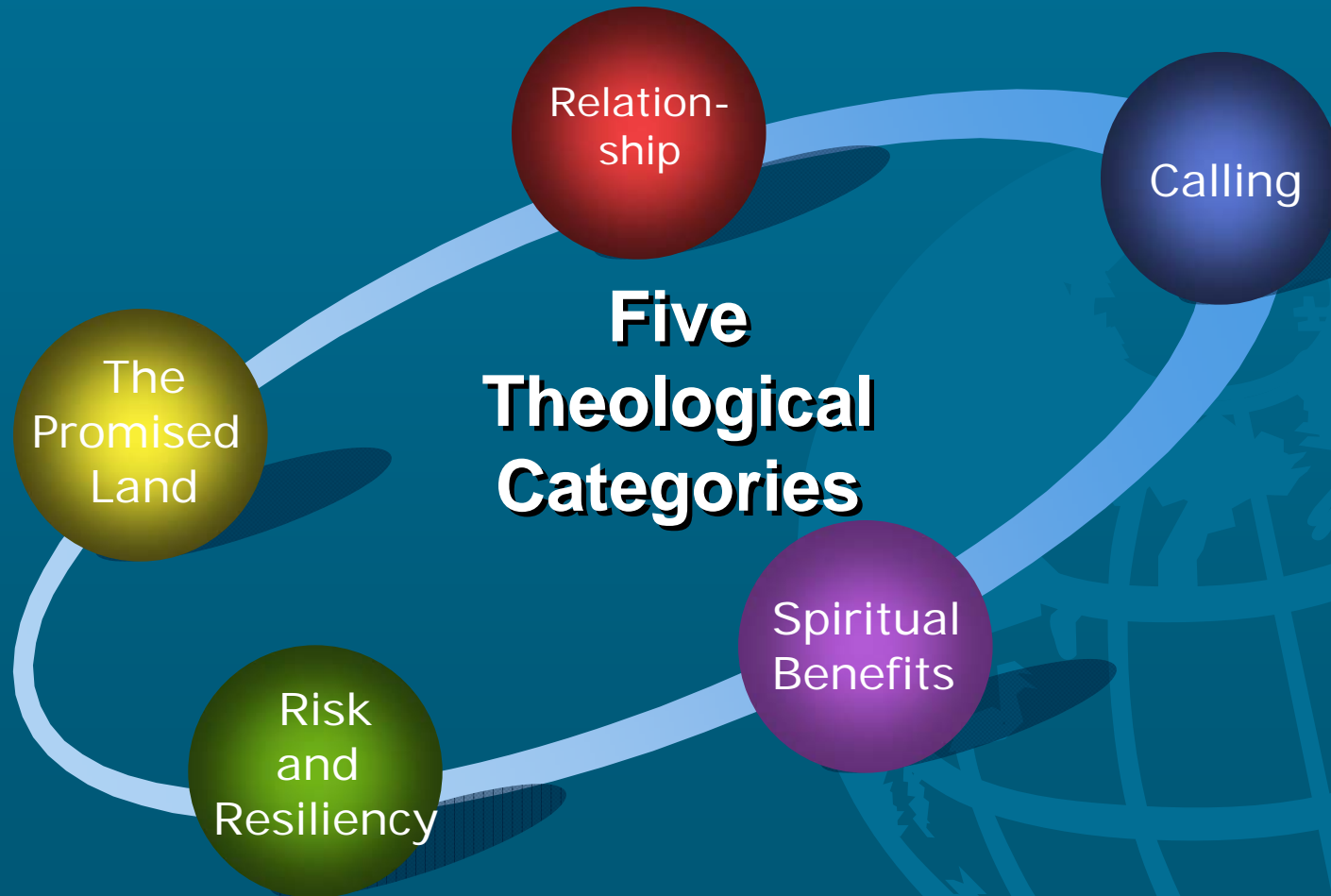
1. UU Congregations are Religious Communities

2. Our Theology informs our Choices

3. Through Reflection, we gain Strength and Grow

4. We become better Inter-religious Partners

Theological Reflection



Theological Reflection: The Process

In each of these 5 areas:

- Relationship,
- Calling,
- Spiritual Benefits,
- Risk/Resiliency, and
- The Promised Land

this presentation offers a spiritual quotation and questions for reflection.

Theological Reflection: Recommendations

Recommendations:

- Read the quotation aloud and pause to consider its meaning in **silence**.
 - What reactions do you have to it?
 - Are you familiar with it? If so, What baggage does it carry for you?
 - How is it related to International Engagement?
- Share your initial reactions with a partner or a small group. Or, for individual reflection, write your initial reactions in a journal.

Then....

Theological Reflection: Recommendations

Recommendations:

- Read aloud the discussion questions that follow the quotation and pause for **silent** reflection.
- Share your responses to the discussion questions with your partner or small group - or write them in your journal.
- If you are meeting in the context of a large group, take time for each small group to “report back” to the large group before moving on to the next quotation.

Let's Begin...

The image features a dark blue header bar at the top. Below it, a teal background contains a faint, stylized globe graphic. The text is centered and reads:

Theological
Reflection Area 1:
RELATIONSHIP

Theological Reflection: Relationships

Spiritual Quotation:

Genesis 4:9 *Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"*
"I don't know," he replied.
"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Read Aloud... Pause... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological Reflection: Relationships

Genesis 4:9 *Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"*

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

- How does your Unitarian Universalist faith inform your response to the question, “who is your sister, who is your brother?”
- Are you your brother or sister’s “keeper?” Why?
- What responsibility or relationship do Unitarian Universalists have to people they don’t know?
- How does this theological matter influence practical issues like “geographical proximity” or “nationality”?

Read Aloud... Pause... Reflect in Silence... Discuss



Theological
Reflection Area 2:
Calling

Theological Reflection: Calling

Spiritual Quotation:

*Isaiah 6:8: Then I heard the
voice of the Lord saying,
"Whom shall I send? And who
will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I.
Send me!"*

Read Aloud... Pause... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological Reflection: Calling

*Isaiah 6:8: Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"*

- What is a calling?
- How were you, individually, and how are our congregations, “called” to be internationally engaged?
- Does how we understand our calling make a difference in our international engagement?

Read Aloud... Pause.... Reflect in Silence... Discuss



Theological Reflection Area 3:

Spiritual Benefits

Theological Reflection: Spiritual Benefits

Spiritual Quotation:

Tao Te Ching 35: But if you accord with the Way all the people of the world will keep you in safety, health, community, and peace.

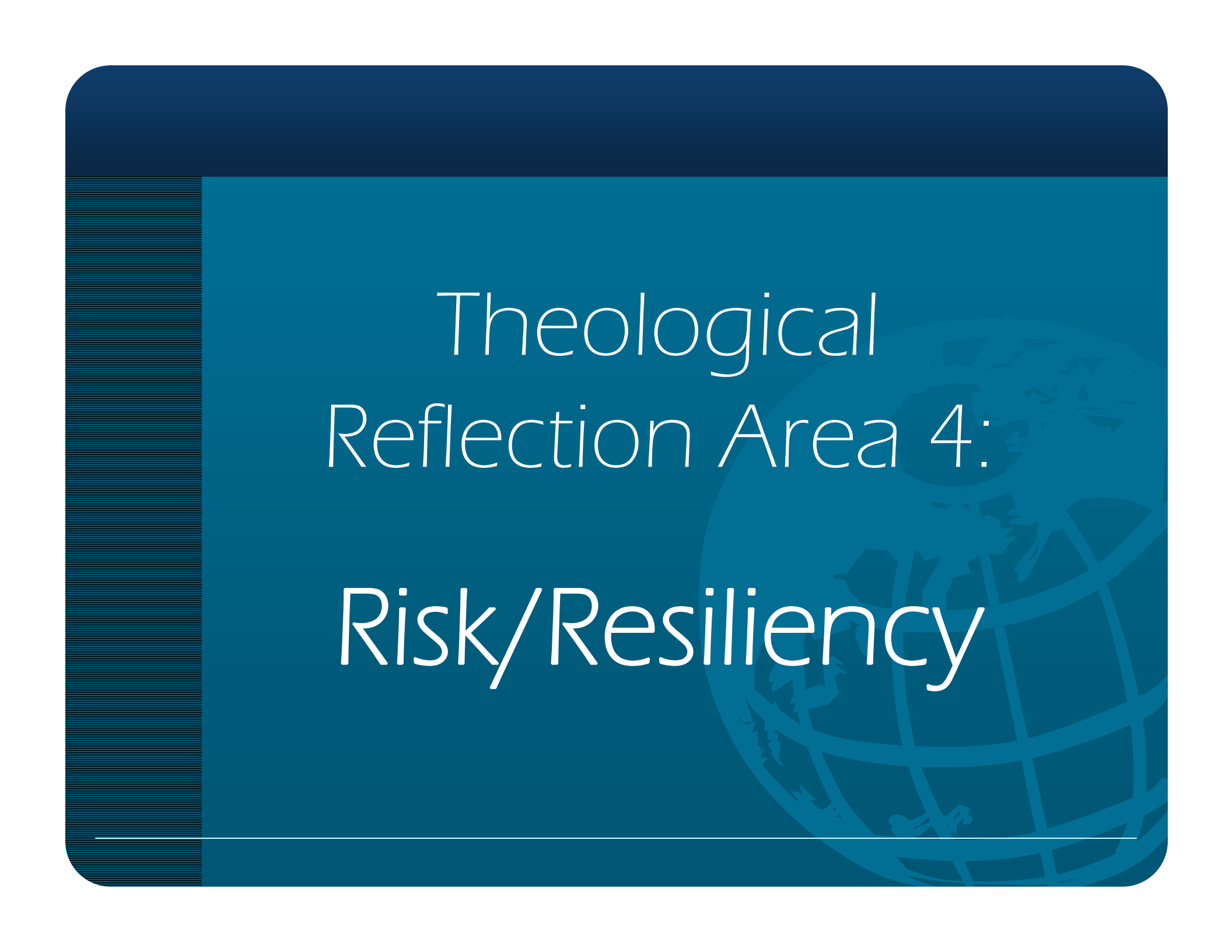
Read Aloud... Pause... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological Reflection: Spiritual Benefits

Tao Te Ching 35: But if you accord with the Way all the people of the world will keep you in safety, health, community, and peace.

- What do UU's know about "the Way" and this assurance of "safety, health, community and peace"?
- Can international engagement be a spiritual practice? How?
- What are the spiritual benefits of international engagement that you have known or have seen emerge in various contexts? (ie. safety, health, community, and peace)

Read Aloud... Pause.... Reflect in Silence... Discuss



Theological
Reflection Area 4:
Risk/Resiliency

Theological Reflection: Risk/Resiliency

Spiritual Quotation:

- 1. Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.*
- 2. When you lose, don't lose the lesson.*

from "Instructions for Life" - Anonymous

Read Aloud... Pause... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological Reflection: Risk/Resiliency

1. *Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.*
2. *When you lose, don't lose the lesson.*

from "Instructions for Life" - Anonymous

- Why is international engagement risky?
- How do UU's decide the level of risk to take in international engagement?
- What feeds or sustains the international engagement of a UU or a UU congregation?
- What is the theologically appropriate response if an initiative does not bear fruit?

Read Aloud... Pause.... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological
Reflection Area 5:

The Promised
Land



Theological Reflection: The Promised Land

Spiritual Quotation:

*Where is our paradise?
In aspirations sight,
Wherein we hope to see arise
Ten thousand years of right*

- E.H. Wilson

Read Aloud... Pause... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological Reflection: The Promised Land

*Where is our paradise? In aspirations sight,
Wherein we hope to see arise Ten thousand years of right
- E.H. Wilson*

- Where are we going?
- What does the “promised land” look like, and why does it matter?
- Which religious leaders have cast a vision of the promised land that is meaningful for you?
- What about those who don't get to the Promised Land?

Read Aloud... Pause.... Reflect in Silence... Discuss

Theological Reflection

Thank you for your time!

The UUA's Office of International Resources hopes that this presentation has been useful.

For information about other resources for international engagement, please contact us at international@uua.org.