



Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing

One Hundred & One Years of Faith, Hope, Love and Action, 1916 to 2017

UUCWC RACIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER - FALL 2017

As we begin our third year of RJI our focus will be in four main areas:

- Offering opportunities for education to deepen one's understanding of white supremacy, white privilege, individual and institutional racism and how it intersects with our criminal justice system
- Opportunities to build bridges with local organizations and congregations who are also doing racial justice work
- Opportunities for service and activism
- Creating a task force that will meet monthly to review a racial justice congregation praxis

This past year we have explored the concept of white supremacy and the continuum of racism. Many of us have been exposed to the concept of white supremacy as extreme groups who are explicitly racist in speech and behavior. We have been challenged this year to look at white supremacy in broader terms and the definitions below may be helpful.

White supremacy is a system or social order that keeps power and resources among mostly white elites; ideology that upholds whiteness as superior or "normal". It is not necessarily hatred of a group of people. It is embedded in our culture and we may not even see it unless we actively work to. The system is the foundation of the country and embedded in most institutions. White privilege is how white people benefit from the white supremacy system.

Part of our work in this area is to challenge ourselves to see racism on a continuum rather than a binary system. A helpful scale to explore racism on a continuum is on Page 3.

Educational Opportunities:

Beloved Conversations: Mediations on Race and Ethnicity begins September 22 and 23 with a retreat followed by eight seminar sessions meeting twice monthly. Daytime and evening seminar options are available. Please go the Adult Religious Education section of the UUCWC website for more information.

Two different one-day workshops at UUCWC facilitated by Center for Study of White American Culture.

Each workshop is limited to 21 spots and each is separate from the other so people can do one or both. The workshops are:

What White People Can Do About Racism, Fundamentals 1, Saturday, October 7

What White People Can Do About Racism, Fundamentals 2, Saturday, November 4

See <http://www.euroamerican.org> for more information and register for the October 7 workshop at

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eejbn1566efb1c87&oseq=&c=&ch=>

The full fee is \$95 payable at registration but a discounted rate of \$60 is also available. This discounted fee is being subsidized by the Council for Faith in Action. If you wish to take advantage of the discount, use promo code RJIRATE when registering. Full scholarships are also available. Please contact cfa@uucwc.org for more information.

Immigration Today: A Community Dialogue, Wednesday, September 27 from 6 pm to 8:30 pm, Sanctuary

An evening of presentations on U.S. immigration policy and its impact on our communities. Speakers will include Princeton Professor Doug Massey, Erika Nava from NJ Policy Perspective & Dina Mansour from the NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice. Attendees will be introduced to concrete actions to help immigrants in local communities.

Racial Justice Book Group facilitated by Dave Anderson, Lynne Molnar and Michelle Ruopp. Meets quarterly with the next gathering in November. Watch for more information in the weekly email and on the UUCWC Faith in Action Facebook page.

RJI Praxis Task Force

This will be facilitated by RJI co-chairs, Nathalie Edmond and Dan Tuft. The praxis is a tool given to Beloved Conversations facilitators and is 9 questions intended to help a congregation reflect on the ways its commitment to racial justice is reflected in different areas of church life.

A small task force is being formed that will meet monthly this church year, exploring one question a month. It will meet on Sunday afternoons starting on September 24. Regular updates will be given to the board and a summary of reflections and recommendations will be given to the congregation at the end of the church year. If you are interested in joining the task force contact Nathalie or Dan at racialjustice@uucwc.org.

Other Opportunities

Movie Night with Pizza and Discussion, Friday September 29, 6:30 pm. "Fruitvale Station" is a biographical drama based on the events leading to the death of Oscar Grant, a young black man who was killed in 2009 by a San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit police officer. Childcare will be provided on prior request; contact Nathalie to arrange this. Please RSVP to racialjustice@uucwc.org so sufficient pizza can be provided

Did you know that Standing Up for Racial Justice NJ's accountability partner is Black Lives Matter? We will have an opportunity to donate breakfast items on a quarterly basis for BLM Trenton's Books and Break event through SURJ. Watch for more information.

March for Racial Justice, Saturday September 30, Washington, DC. The vision of the march is to create a just and equitable future for communities of color, so that all may thrive. September 30 is the anniversary of the Elaine, AK, massacre in 1919 where it is estimated over 200 African Americans were killed along with five whites during the white hysteria of a pending insurrection of black sharecroppers. More info about the massacre can be found at <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/elaine-arkansas-riot-1919>.

Sister March in Trenton: Day of Service, Learning and Unity, Sunday October 1. For more information about the local march check out <https://www.centraljerseyjustice.com/>

Reading Suggestions

UUA Common Reads: "Centering: Navigating Race, Authenticity, and Power in Ministry" by Mitra Rahnema
"Daring Democracy: Igniting Power, Meaning, and Connection for America We Want" by Francis Moore Lappe and Adam Eichen

Other Reads: "Just Mercy" by Bryan Stevenson
"The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander
"Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City" by Matthew Desmond

Also check out the Journey Towards Wholeness Library table in the Crossings Room for many other thought provoking books.

Racial Justice Initiative Planning Meetings occur quarterly on Sundays after the second service. The last meeting was on August 6. Feel free to email racialjustice@uucwc.org if you would like minutes from this meeting or check out the Facebook group UUCWC Faith in Action. Everyone is welcomed at the meetings.

The UUCWC Faith in Action Facebook group is a forum for justice related issues and is where you will find information about events, action opportunities, commentary, links, etc.

RJI co-chairs Dan Tuft and Nathalie Edmond encourage you to email them at racialjustice@uucwc.org with ideas and/or questions.