

Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing

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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

UUCWC ADOPTS 8TH PRINCIPLE REFLECTING COMMITMENT TO THE DISMANTLING OF RACISM

TITUSVILLE, N.J.—The Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing (UUCWC), a non-creedal religion bound by guiding Principles, adopted an 8th Principle at its 2018 annual meeting this summer. The 8th Principle states: “We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.” Adoption of the 8th Principle is an important step in UUCWC’s Racial Justice Initiative, a church wide project begun in 2015 to deepen its understanding of and longstanding commitment to dismantling racism both within and outside its church community. Over the course of three years, UUCWC members and friends have participated in reflection and study groups offered by UUCWC’s Religious Education Program and RJI. Focused training included Beloved Conversations, a curriculum for exploring the role of race and ethnicity in individual and congregational lives, developed by the Meadville Lombard Theological School. The RJI steering committee meets regularly to further the work of last year’s praxis group, which set action goals for the congregation that enable UUCWC to take concrete steps to implement its commitment to racial justice.

Unitarian Universalists (UUs) as a faith movement covenant to follow seven Principles and Purposes first adopted as bylaws by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), the umbrella association of UU churches, in 1985. The seven Principles and Purposes affirm and promote: the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth; a free and responsible search for truth and meaning; the right of conscience and use of the democratic process; the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; and respect for the interdependent web of all existence.

As a result of and in response to systemic issues related to inclusive hiring practices within the UUA that came to light in 2017, Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) and Diverse and Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries (DRUMM) proposed an 8th Principle for adoption by the UUA to explicitly hold UUs accountable for addressing racism and other oppressions. The UUA will consider adoption of the 8th Principle at the 2019 General Assembly to be held in Spokane, Washington in June 2019. UUCWC and other UU congregations have taken the early proactive step of

adopting the 8th Principle both to show support of the proposal and as a direct expression of their commitment to its terms.

Recent and ongoing actions reflecting UUCWC's commitment to the 8th Principle include the solicitation of bids from contractors and firms owned and managed by people of color in connection with the church's ongoing capital improvement campaign; encouragement to participate in racial justice training as a core component to the path for membership in UUCWC; a monthly "Living the 8th Principle" discussion group in which participants explore daily actions that can be taken to start to dismantle racism and white supremacy; and participation in The Greater Good Project, through which members and their families and friends can consider contributing money they would otherwise spend on holiday gifts to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee for their work on Migrant Justice. UUCWC also sponsored a nonviolent communications workshop in July, a day-long training on white fragility in September and hosted a talk and discussion group led by New Jersey's Showing Up for Racial Justice leader, Reverend Katie Mulligan, on November 26th.

UUCWC serves communities in Mercer, Bucks, and Hunterdon Counties. UUCWC is located at 268 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road in Hopewell Township, N.J. Sunday services are held at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. For information about UUCWC, visit www.uucwc.org or call (609) 737-0515.