



Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing

One Hundred & Two Years of Faith, Hope, Love and Action, 1916 to 2018

UUCWC RACIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2018

An 8th Unitarian Universalist Principle is Proposed

Nathalie Edmond, Co-Chair of the Racial Justice Initiative

I am writing this article from my multiple identities, values and commitments. Some of my identities- I am a UU, person of color, mother of bi-racial children, steering committee member of local chapter of Campaign to End the New Jim Crow, UUCWC board member, and co-chair of Racial Justice Initiative. I have been exploring UU history in relationship to its commitment to racial justice. It seems that UUs have always been on both sides of the fight for developing an anti-racist and multicultural community and have struggled to make consistent structural changes to support funding of anti-racism work which was highlighted in 2017 when it was revealed there were not inclusive hiring practices at the UUA and the language of white supremacist systems started to emerge.

This inconsistent support of racial justice work appears to be true in the history of UUCWC as well. Three years ago, UUCWC recommitted to racial justice initiative and this church year there has been a monthly meeting of a praxis group to explore and assess the ways the church is living/putting into practice their commitment to racial justice. The theme that keeps coming up in the meetings is how to institutionalize the racial justice lens so that it becomes part of the culture over time. This is also one of the board goals this year.

As a result of systemic issues related to the hiring practices at the UUA, Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) and Diverse & Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries (DRUMM) endorsed the proposed 8th principle and encouraged the UUA and local congregations to formally adopt it. **The wording of the 8th principle as proposed by people of color is:**

"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."

A recent recommendation from the praxis group is for UUCWC to endorse and adopt the proposed 8th principle, as written, while it is being reviewed at the denominational level. This principle invites us to be explicit in our commitment to dismantle racism, white supremacy, and other oppressions. This recommendation was brought forth to the December board meeting. It was supported by the board and approved to be voted on at the June 2018 congregational meeting. **There will be a variety of opportunities in the coming months to learn more about this topic as well as discuss whether we should proceed with adopting this principle.**

For more info about the 8th principle go to <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

White Supremacy Teach-In: This will be offered at 12:30 pm on Sunday, February 4 and again on Sunday March 4. This is a follow up to April 2017 teach-in and will cover different topics that the first one and is intended to support knowledge about the value of the proposed 8th principle.

To quote from Black Lives of UU, *"'White supremacy' is a provocative phrase, as it conjures up images of hoods and mobs. Yet in 2017, actual 'white supremacists' are not required in order to uphold white supremacist culture. Building a faith full of people who understand that key distinction is essential as we work toward a more just society in difficult political times.*

“Bus Stop” This short one act play will be offered in the middle hour on **Sunday January 14 and Sunday February 11.**

The play was written by UUCWC member Angela Jacobs and Renata Barnes, a racial justice activist from Hopewell, and is a conversation between a black mother and a white mother as they wait to pick up their children from the school bus.

Film Series, “Race the Power of an Illusion”:

What is this thing we call race? Where did the idea come from? This critically acclaimed television program, first broadcast in 2003, investigates race in society, science, and history. There are 3 parts to the series which will be screened as follows:

Friday, January 26, at 7: 00 pm: “The Difference Between Us”

Friday, February 23, at 7: 00 pm: “The Story We Tell”

Friday, March 16, at 7: 00 pm: “The House We Live In”

Discussion opportunities will follow each screening. Pizza and beverages will be provided and participants are requested to make a small donation towards the cost of the pizza. Please RSVP to racialjustice@uucwc.org if you want to attend so that there is sufficient pizza for all. Babysitting can be provided at no charge; please email racialjustice@uucwc.org no later than a week prior if you require this service.

“What White People Can do about Racism”, Saturday February 17, 9:30 to 3:30:

This workshop facilitated by The Center for Study of White American Culture is a follow-up to the workshop offered in the Fall but participation in the first one is not required to attend the second workshop which will address how white people can take action, the challenges in the work and experiences in organizing. Lunch will be provided. To register go to <https://goo.gl/fxRhoL>. The fee is \$90, \$80 for attendees at the first work shop, and is payable at registration. A discounted rate of \$60 is also available which 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 available. Please contact cfa@uucwc.org for more information.**

“Raising Anti-Racist White Children”, Saturday March 24, 9:30 to 3:30:

This workshop is also facilitated by The Center for Study of White American Culture and will provide parents with inspiration, resources, strategies and language in teaching children to be anti-racist. More information about registration and cost will follow.

The Racial Justice Initiative Praxis Group has been meeting monthly since September to evaluate where we are as a justice-rooted congregation. The praxis was developed by UU facilitators of the Beloved Conversations program. Various areas have been discussed such as our congregation’s effectiveness in giving public witness to our beliefs, theological reflection in the work, and pastoral care for activists in this work. The proposed UUCWC support of the 8th principle was initiated by the Praxis Group. At the end of the church year, a report will be given to the Board of Trustees with the conclusions that have been reached.

Racial Justice Initiative Planning Meetings occur quarterly on Sundays after the second service. 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.