

Background to Anti-racism Resolution

For more than 15 years small groups within TUCW have been working to confront racism. It's now more important than ever that the work of anti-racism be a congregational effort. With that in mind, Rev. John formed the Racial Justice Council in September 2020 and a subcommittee was tasked with developing an anti-racism resolution. Included in the Resolution is an 8th Principle which has been adopted by a number of UU congregations. The Principle calls on UU's to "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."

Please visit <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/> for more information about the 8th Principle.

In the past year, TUCW has stepped up outreach through the John Street Bridge lunch program, and participated in programs on becoming anti-racist led by the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport (CCGB), Temple Israel and TEAM Westport. TUCWomen are very involved in Black Lives Matter work and their Revealing History program on racial injustice called on us to become more intentional in our anti-racism work.

Below is the Resolution we will begin discussing on April 11th and will vote on on June 13th.

Anti-Racism Resolution - The Unitarian Church in Westport

WHEREAS, we as Unitarian Universalists, according to our principles, strive for "justice, equity and compassion in human relations" and believe in the "inherent worth and dignity of every person" and "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part";

WHEREAS, racism and its effects, including the deep divisions in our world caused by inequitable and unjust distribution of power and resources, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action and the undertaking of personal and institutional commitments to end racism;

WHEREAS, recent events have called our attention to the injustices that Black communities and other people of color face in our country, and to inequities and divisions with deep roots in centuries of harm, events demonstrating that we have much work to do if we are to live up to our UU principles;

WHEREAS, we are called by our faith to work to better understand the depth and consequences of racism and to work towards becoming anti-racists within ourselves, TUCW and the wider community; WHEREAS, we acknowledge that we have all been born into a racist society and so no

one has been or is able to escape its effects unless and until it is fully eliminated;

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that racism was created by human beings and so as human beings it is within our ability and power to eradicate racism and we commit to continue to work within and outside our congregation until that goal is reached;

WHEREAS, the UUA is considering an 8th principle which will 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.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That we the members of TUCW condemn racism in its many forms and commit to becoming an intentionally and proactively anti-racist congregation, supporting the goals of the Black Lives Matter and other similar movements, as consistent with our Unitarian Universalist principles.
2. That we will carefully examine the effect that racism has on all our lives, our own conscious and unconscious racism as participants in a racist society regardless of our color and commit to hold ourselves and one another accountable to anti-racism.
3. That we will be mindful of intersectionality, the interconnected nature of racism and other systems of oppression based on class, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, culture, nationality, religion and language.
4. That we will be mindful of systems that restrict access to adequate housing, healthcare, education and other resources that increase vulnerability to environmental risks, including the exacerbation of climate change.
5. That we commit to teach our children in age-appropriate ways about racism and its effects, and will work with our youth groups to ensure greater participation in this effort;
6. That members of TUCW will encourage our ministers, particularly our senior minister, to offer sermons that guide us in better understanding racism and lead us in this very important work;
7. That we will offer and support programs that educate us about the many aspects of racism and lead to introspection and searching discussions among members of our congregation; programs may include but are not limited to multicultural artistic events, guest speakers, community conversations and participation in interfaith initiatives;
8. That we will advocate for justice and equity for all people of color on the local, state and federal level;
9. That we will, as a congregation, adopt the 8th Principle and advocate for its formal adoption by the UUA.
10. That all ministries and TUCW committees integrate anti-racism as a function of their mission.

11. That the Senior Minister and Racial Justice Council report annually to the congregation on progress in implementing this resolution.