

Assessment Team Report

An Assessment of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland congregation's progress to our goal of being an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural congregation.

Submitted to the Board of Trustees in December 2018 (First Edition)

Released to the Congregation on February 10, 2019 (Second Edition)

Dear fellow Congregants,

The Board gratefully endorses and acknowledges receiving the following congregational assessment from the Assessment Team formed by the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team and thanks the Assessment Team for fulfilling its charge.

This is a substantial report that deserves careful attention and response. Following an initial discussion of the report at the January 2019 Board retreat, we commit to keeping the congregation updated as we work through and respond to the recommendations found herein. We expect we will not be able to respond to all the recommendations at once, but commit to review and respond on an ongoing basis.

On behalf of the congregation, we offer our humble thanks to the people who dedicated so much time and labor to this assessment, which serves us all:

Anthony Elias
Donna Fujioka
Heather MacLeod
Dennis Rowcliffe
Linda Propert Sanford
Sherry Weston-Vigil
Dan Wright

In faith,
The Board of Trustees

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Invitation

An Invitation to the Assessment of Anti-Racism in the First Unitarian Church of Oakland (2018).

For a long time our congregation has been heading in the direction of becoming a multicultural anti-racist congregation. Progress is slow and hard to perceive. How are we doing? Where are we in our progress toward that vision, and what are our next steps?

The attached document is an attempt to answer these questions. The Assessment Team met with over 100 congregants, the ministers and many of the church's committees to gather their opinions, experiences and information. We used two different rubrics to measure the responses we received: 1. The ***Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Congregation*** from the Jubilee Anti-Racism Training by Crossroads Ministries; and 2. The newly developed ***Racial Justice in UU Congregations*** rubric by Julica Hermann de la Fuente.

We invite you to dip into specific sections that may interest you. For example, about 15 years ago, Rev. Mary Foran and the heads of committees did an assessment of the congregation's anti-racism work. You can see this in Appendix C and form your own sense of how far we've come since we held our first Jubilee Anti-racism weekend workshop in 2003/2004.

This report is divided into areas of church life. If you are interested in a particular committee or team, you can find it in the Table of Contents.

If you are interested in an analysis of where we stand relative to the ***Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Congregation***, you can find this in Section 2, beginning on page 31.

The analysis of where we stand on the ***Racial Justice in UU Congregations*** rubric is also in Section 2, beginning on page 33.

Suggestions from the congregation and committees are in the section for each committee. Recommendations of the assessment team are there too, and are also collected in a single summary in Section 3, beginning on page 43.

The ministers' comments can be found on page 15.

Writing this was harder than we imagined, and coordinating our perspectives and writing styles was a challenge. We are grateful to the many people who generously provided their time and their thoughts, and we take full responsibility for any omissions, factual misstatements or lapses in clarity or generosity in this report. We hope that assessing our progress in anti-racism will become a regular part of our congregation's practice. We found the meetings with committees illuminating and rewarding, and we are grateful for the love, care and labor that so many put into the functioning of our congregation.

Attn: If you want a printed copy, you may request it from the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Team by emailing jtw@uuoakland.org

Executive Summary

A summary of the Assessment of Anti-Racism in the First Unitarian Church of Oakland (2018).

Our vision statement is a public pronouncement of our commitment to building an “intentionally multigenerational, multiracial, multicultural, anti-oppressive” institution. Our Black Lives Matter sign and candle also announce our commitment.

Many congregants, people of the global majority and white people alike, long for our congregation to be more multicultural and racially diverse. Sometimes this desire leads us to forget to acknowledge and celebrate the diversity we do have. It can also lead us to focus on superficial appearances rather than on deep structural changes needed to decenter whiteness and avoid reproducing racial oppression within our congregation.

Racial microaggressions occur, often during unstructured times such as coffee hour, but sometimes in worship and other structured situations. Congregants of color mentioned experiencing them, and white congregants are largely unaware of them.

Congregants are proud of our justice work, including our involvement with the organizations led by people of color, and our efforts to learn what it means to develop accountable relationships with oppressed communities. Learning to understand our justice work in spiritual terms is a next step.

Committees and work groups have some good ideas about how they can further the anti-racism work of the congregation. However, most committees have no more than three to four members, which limits what can be accomplished.

Intentional inclusiveness efforts frequently occur in committees and work groups, although sometimes committees still fail to reach out to include people of color. White committee members are reluctant to overburden the few people of color in the congregation or tokenize them by asking them to represent all people of color.

Anti-racism trainings have become a regular part of church life. In addition to the Jubilee Anti-Racism workshops and Beloved Conversations, the children’s summer Chalice Camp has a biennial focus on systemic racism. First Sundays for Anti-Oppression provide opportunities for anti-racism education as well.

We are beginning to create and use new structures, policies and practices to decenter whiteness and ensure full participation of people of color in institutional life. These include:

- The inclusive and non-elitist capital campaign process of 2015-2017;
- The inclusive method of choosing a Ministerial Search team in 2018, resulting in a team with 4/7 people of color members and 2/7 young adults.
- The People of Color caucus group, which is valued by its participants and may be a resource for developing accountability structures in the future.

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Introduction

As charged by the Board of Trustees, the Assessment Team submits this report on our congregation's progress with our anti-racism, multicultural, and anti-oppressive work.

A glossary of terms in Appendix A gives definitions for the terms accountability, anti-racism, caucus, intersectionality, microaggressions, and multiculturalism.

Our Charge

In September 2017—at the request of the Journey Toward Wholeness (JTW) Transformation Team—our Board of Trustees charged a team of members to assess our congregation's progress to our goal of being an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural congregation. JTW proposed that nine members be on the Assessment Team—three JTW members and six other members—and the Board approved this team.

The Board charged the Assessment Team to collect a list of specific benchmarks from sources used to assess such progress; convene forums and conversations to gather member opinions about our progress with respect to those benchmarks; gather congregational responses, including perspectives, concerns, and suggestions of different populations within the congregation; gather resources that might help our congregation take the next steps to move us forward toward our goal; develop recommendations for approval of the next steps our congregation may take to move us forward toward our goal; and report to JTW and the Board the results of the congregational inquiry, the recommendations of next steps and the resources to help us achieve those steps.

The team's goals were to build resilience around these conversations, strengthen the systems we already have in place, and move us forward toward being a more anti-racist, anti-oppressive congregation. Another goal was to develop a report in time for the Ministerial Search Committee's use.

Collecting Congregational Views

We collected the views of members about our progress and the next steps that the congregation could take in several ways. JTW sponsored three congregational forums to ask about these issues. Members of the Assessment Team attended stewardship salons held in the fall of 2017 and asked about them. We conducted one-on-one interviews with certain members; we received emails from others. We also invited many committees and teams at church to assess how their leadership group was addressing anti-racism concerns.

More than 100 people answered our questions and spoke of their hopes and concerns. Of the 105 participants we identified, we believe that 22 of them identify as people of the global majority: Eight African-American, nine Asian American, one Latino/x/@ and three others. We heard from 83 white members, of whom almost half had taken anti-racism training, mostly at church. We received the views of persons of varied ages: 15 who were young adults under age 35, 56 members between 35 and 65 years of age, and 34 elders who were age 65 or older. Seventy-seven participants were women, 28 men, and one non-binary person.

This report does not name individual participants; we decided that individual anonymity would encourage a more frank assessment of the congregation's gifts and shortcomings. The different types of inquiries also proved to be useful in this way; we noticed that People of Color seemed to be more candid about the shortcomings of our work when interviewed individually than when interviewed in a group setting. We

listened to all views expressed and recorded them without judgment because we believed it was important for our members to be heard.

What We Did Not Cover

There are several aspects of congregational life for which we did not collect significant input during the planned information gathering activities. Due to time and other limitations, we did not perform follow-up interviews to fill in the gaps or examine them in our assessment. These include the Staff and Administration, Young Adults Group, Stewardship, Building and Grounds, and Committee on Shared Ministry; Intersectionality; and the (currently non-existing) Operations Team, Personnel, and Finance Committees. This does not imply that we are unaware of the importance of these groups; on the contrary, we hope that the people involved in these aspects of ministry may perform their own self-assessments, and that future 'all-church' assessments may include these. We want to acknowledge that the ministers did address some of these in their comments.

How We Summarized Our Findings

The first major section of the report sets out congregational views, group self-assessments where they exist, and suggestions from members. We chose to organize it, however, by various aspects of church life identified in or suggested by the comments. There are specific group-led aspects of the church, including adult faith development, our justice work, JTW itself, our Board of Trustees (including governance and finances), pastoral care, welcome and membership, children's religious education, and worship/music; for these aspects of church life, we have included the relevant committee's own assessment of their anti-racism, multicultural, anti-oppression work; or how their work is affected by these principles. We also created subsections for comments about clergy and our means of communication, and a 'church in general' subsection for comments and suggestions that did not directly pertain to any other specific subsection. For these subsections, which do not pertain to any specific team, there is no self-assessment.

Each subsection on an aspect of church life was drafted by one or more members of our team who are identified as the primary authors of that section (see the credits at end of this Introduction). Each of these sections was reviewed by all members of the team, so the report reflects a consensus view.

We also include two other parts in the body of our report, to fulfill our charge from the Board of Trustees; and four appendices.

Section 2 is the assessment itself. We reflect on what we have learned, and present an analysis, based primarily on the rubric 'Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Congregation', © Crossroads Ministries, which was used in Unitarian Universalist Jubilee trainings. This is the source of the assessment comments regarding certain behaviors and attitudes being consistent with Stage 3, 4, or 5 (of the Continuum). Our assessment was also informed by the rubric 'Racial Justice in UU Congregations', created by Julica Hermann de la Fuente. The Racial Justice rubric may be found in Appendix D; the Continuum is copyrighted and is not included here, but is available to each reader by request; send requests via email to assessmentteam@uuoakland.org or jtw@uuoakland.org.

In Section 3 we offer our recommendations for next steps for our congregation to take to further our mission and vision—recommendations that were inspired by what we have learned during our year-long journey listening and reflecting with the congregation. Finally, in the Appendices we include copies of resources that we have collected and used in our work that might be of use to committees, teams and members as we take those next steps.

Appendix A is a glossary of the terms accountability, anti-racism, caucus, intersectionality, microaggressions and multiculturalism.

Appendix B is a list of recommended resources. In order to respect copyrights, the resources themselves are not included in this document, but may be shared as separate documents during Church-sanctioned meetings or events. Most of the resources are freely available online.

Acknowledgements

We want to acknowledge the work of many others upon whose work we are building. This congregation has a long history of standing at the forefront of social justice; but in this particular work of anti-racism, a major milestone came in the 1990s as this congregation responded to the Unitarian Universalist Association's call for the need of all UU congregations to embark on a Journey Toward Wholeness. A major part of our 1999 Ministerial Search Committee charge was for a minister committed to lead us in that effort. In 2002 a Journey Toward Wholeness Exploration Committee was formed; the congregation conducted our first Jubilee anti-racism workshop in 2003; and the Exploration Committee undertook our first assessment of the state of the Church with respect to anti-racism in 2004. That Committee shortly afterward became our Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team (JTW). Some further details of the Team's history and work are contained in the JTW Section of this Report.

Principal authors for each section were: Introduction, Linda Propert Sanford; Adult Faith Development, Heather MacLeod; Board of Trustees, Dennis Rowcliffe; JTW, Dennis Rowcliffe; Pastoral Associates, Dennis Rowcliffe; Professional Ministry, Dennis Rowcliffe; Justice Council, Heather MacLeod; Environmental Justice Associates, Heather MacLeod; Children's Religious Education, Linda Propert Sanford and Heather MacLeod; Communication, Dan Wright; Welcome and Membership, Heather MacLeod; Worship and Music, Heather MacLeod; Worship Associates, Heather MacLeod; Chancel Choir, Heather MacLeod; Church in General, Dan Wright; Assessment Team Analysis and Recommendations, all. Donna Fujioka, Anthony Elias, and Sherry Weston-Vigil reviewed all or most sections and provided constructive comments in meetings and via email. And JTW member Noemi de Guzman, on short notice, provided a set of detailed edits and wrote a new paragraph we incorporated.

Conclusion

It has been an honor to be entrusted with our members' views on the state of our antiracism work. We are mindful that our Board of Trustees implemented recommendations of the 2015 Transition Team faithfully. We hope that our 2018 report will be of use to the Board of Trustees, to the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team and to the congregation as a whole as we decide together on the next steps to move our church forward on the journey we are on.

Respectfully submitted,

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10 December 2018

We gratefully acknowledge the early assistance of team members Em Kianka and Brianna Keefe-Oates, whose lives took them away from our work before its completion.

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Section 1: Results of Forums, Conversations and Group Self-Assessments

Adult Faith Development

Congregational Views

The first offering of Beloved Conversations anti-racism training was flawed, but subsequent classes have been seen in a more positive light. White congregants report that this class has changed their thinking—seeing that racism hurts them, seeing that their sense of well-being and safety differs from that experienced by People of Color. One class was inspired to continue meeting after the formal class ended and did so for a year as “Conversations Beyond,” which all who had taken Beloved Conversations were welcome to join. That group met once a month for about a year before recently ending.

A four-session class on The New Jim Crow book was offered a few years ago and well attended. Congregants expressed a desire to have systemic/institutional racism covered by Adult Faith Development programs.

Adult Faith Development Committee Self-Assessment

The Adult Faith Development Team has become the institutional location for the anti-racism programs such as Beloved Conversations and Jubilee. This year the Adult Faith Development Team sponsored the Beloved Conversations curriculum for the first time, which was previously offered by the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team. This is part of infusing our anti-racism work into the whole congregation, instead of locating it all in Journey Towards Wholeness. The shift from JTW to another church team is an important and positive development. Adult Faith Development plans to sponsor Beloved Conversations and Jubilee (or other systemic approach) in alternating years. This year they are sponsoring a day-long “Dismantling White Supremacy” training in March 2019. Sponsoring anti-racism trainings is an indicator from Stage 4 of the Jubilee anti-racism continuum.

In the orientations for prospective members, each member is invited to share their spiritual journey, thus celebrating the diversity of people’s lives and experiences. The team also shows awareness of intentionally inviting People of Color (Stage 3) to share their spiritual journeys in the Many Paths faith sharing events. The team itself is currently all white.

Some members of the Adult Faith Development Team are beginning to envision a core curriculum for all adult congregants, addressing “authentic UU practice”, including anti-racism. The curriculum would be similar to the Our Whole Lives sexuality classes, where understandings are revisited at different developmental levels. In this way, the Adult Faith Development Team is envisioning ways of “restructuring their program, based on their anti-racist analysis,” an indicator from Stage 5 of the Jubilee continuum. This is not to say that the team is in any particular stage, but to acknowledge that this kind of visioning is a necessary precursor to doing the work of restructuring.

Congregational and Adult Faith Development Suggestions

More actively encourage adults to take advantage of our anti-racism curriculum.

Develop a core curriculum in which anti-racism is taught as an “authentic UU practice”.

Expand Adult Faith Development programs to offer more education on systemic/institutional racism.

Assessment Team Recommendations

We encourage the Adult Faith Development Team to continue to develop their idea of a core curriculum in which anti-racism is taught as an “authentic UU practice,” over time, at successive developmental levels.

Board of Trustees

Introduction

The church's Board of Trustees is composed of up to 11 elected lay members of the church serving three-year terms in an annual rotation by which they lose and try to add three or four people per year. They aim to serve the congregation by establishing broad policies for the governance of the church and acting as guardian of its organizational, spiritual, and financial health. Its members are elected annually in March. After a period of transition in the late 1990s, for several years the Board served almost solely in a policy-making role, while the church's day-to-day operations and budget were guided by a small Executive Team. That stopped working well and the Board took on an operational management role again, but it is now working on restoring itself to having solely a policy-making responsibility. While the parish minister is not a voting member of the Board, she has typically sat at the table with Board members and has been welcomed to speak as often as any elected member.

For the last 15+ years the Board has met on the fourth Tuesday of each month, at the church, and they have also met at half- to full-day retreats every few months, away from the church. Other than when they hold part of a meeting in executive session, Board meetings are open for in-person attendance by anyone interested. A few years ago Board meetings were often attended by about six non-Board members; recently, however, the non-Trustee attendance has been just one or two. Except if/when called on by Board members to contribute to specific discussions, audience members are expected not to talk during Board meetings. In recent years the Board's agendas and meeting minutes have been made available on the church website and via email.

Congregational Views

Some of the congregational comments received during Assessment interviews and on survey forms reflected knowledge and awareness of the Board's duties and tendencies; others indicated confusion and uncertainty on these same matters.

More than one commenter expressed the concern that the church/Board favors the input and views of those who have the most money to contribute, and that conversations about class are a cutting edge (just beginning, or in early stages) for our church.

A couple of members expressed concern about the Board membership being too white and the Board's practices depending too heavily on standard "white" structures of leadership, such as majority rule and Robert's Rules of Order, and called for the use of other approaches (Editor's note: the Board only uses select elements of Robert's Rules of Order in its meetings). While some suggested more inclusion of People of Color (POC) on the Board, other suggestions also surfaced. Here's one such viewpoint: "What I am NOT proposing is that every one of our congregants who appears to come from a wide variety of cultural heritages be specifically invited to join the leadership structure. I remember, too clearly, when that was the accepted pattern. It felt so crude and even a kind of racist behavior."

"I am longing for a system that goes far beyond the classic "white" traditional tools of leadership, so every one of us can learn the less hierarchical and more collaborative tools of leadership, and for any of us who are ready for leadership, leadership becomes more inviting."

A few commenters noted the importance of the requirement that Trustees have anti-racism training, two by saying how church leadership has benefitted from having people capable of using an anti-racist lens and analysis involved and anti-racism points of view invoked.

Two more comments, the first, a suggestion: that we ask: “How does the budget reflect our vision?” *and* “I’m concerned that the Board is not continually addressing the issue of racism as they relate to all matters of church life and business. So there’s a mental commitment and an enjoyment of that but the actual work is limited.”

Board of Trustees Self-Assessment

The Assessment Team’s interview with the Board came at a low ebb in the Board’s membership in late May 2018, after some members had rotated off, the annual meeting had passed without the departing Trustees being replaced, and a nominating committee was working on finding five more candidates, which they managed to do a couple months later. Others just couldn’t attend that meeting due to other commitments. Only four Trustees, two of whom were about to step off the Board, were present. The following commentary is in large part based on what they said but has some information filled in by report authors with knowledge of the Board’s activities and the changes that have occurred.

Main Purposes

The Board sees itself as providing organizational glue and logistical hands in that they are presently involved in both policy making for and operational management of the church. The Board sets and follows policy to act on the stated vision, mission, and ends statements that the church has set for itself. The Board also carries fiduciary responsibility for maintaining the church’s financial balance and solvency.

Furtherance of Church’s Anti-racism/Multicultural Intentions

For several years starting around 2010/11, the Board implemented two practices in an attempt to maintain an equitable power balance, to better understand each other’s cultural backgrounds, and thereby to engage with greater flexibility and empathy for each other’s viewpoints. One of those practices was a 10- to 15-minute multicultural exercise (essentially, usually a discussion of specific aspects of cultural backgrounds and assumptions that helps bring out differences, variations and commonalities). The other is process monitoring, generally conducted by a person in attendance who is not on the Board, with Board members sometimes adding their own comments.

The multicultural (MC) exercise was largely self-generated by the Board members in turn for each meeting, and as such it went well on most occasions for several Board terms. There were exceptions; times it was not handled well, and these increased in frequency over time. The orientation and training it called for was renewed once, but then not carried forward from term to term. In time the quality of those exercises diminished and the newer Board members did not understand how it was meant to work or how to create it themselves. In the fall of 2017 the Board discontinued the practice. Instead, they read the book “Serving with Grace” together and discussed it during the rest of that term. The Journey Towards Wholeness (JTW) Team has recently purchased some good resource materials that will support the MC exercise, and generated others, and began a conversation with the Board about restarting the use of the MC exercise, this time with predetermined questions and topics to discuss. That is as yet unresolved.

JTW has taken on the responsibility of providing a process monitor for (most) Board meetings, and after giving comments that person often asks the Board members to contribute their own PM comments. In the last few years the Board’s process has been noticeably more inclusive and equitable than it was earlier; in large part this can be attributed to more awareness of the need to adopt inclusionary practices and use more balanced deliberative processes.

For example, the Board has implemented measures to equalize speaking time and limit dominance by any one or two members. When they are ready to discuss an issue before them, every Trustee is given a chance to speak in consecutive order (or say “pass”) and by this means they go deliberately through the entire group before someone can speak for a second time.

The Board also, through its own efforts and those of its nominating committees, makes some effort to broaden its membership in respect to life/work experiences, gender, family status, race and ethnicity. In the same vein, most of the Trustees have either taken some anti-racism training before they are elected or make good faith efforts to obtain such training during the first year of their term, as called for in the Board of Trustees job description. But this stipulation is not always honored; sometimes by lack of effort on the Trustee’s part, sometimes because the scheduling doesn’t work out. Scheduling training is a challenge; the Jubilee II training in particular has always called for dedication of a full weekend, which imposes on some people’s work schedules.

In respect to decision-making processes, some concern has been expressed that the Board and larger church-wide gatherings may depend too heavily on Eurocentric approaches such as Robert’s Rules of Order and majority rule. Does this represent the church’s decision-making model? One long-term church member who is not on the current Board but has served on the Board a few times and on other committees made the following comments: “What I’ve observed is that the use of Robert’s Rules of Order and majority rule is very rare. I can’t remember when I’ve been on a committee that didn’t use consensus, and although the Board does memorialize decisions with votes, it’s most common for those votes to be unanimous after discussions that involve deep listening, compromise, and creative solutions.

“The exception to this has been congregational meetings, and larger gatherings like region-wide or continent-wide assemblies. I have definitely seen heavy reliance on Robert’s Rules in those settings. What I would want everyone to know is that the heart of the work of the congregation and denomination doesn’t happen in those settings; it happens in the smaller groups of committees, task forces, or just groups of friends who decide to make something happen. And those groups each create their own decision-making culture.

“So, I would not want our examination and evaluation of decision-making processes to start and end with altering our congregational meetings’ rules of order.”

The Board members we spoke to observed that they may limit the participation of persons (including People of Color) with inflexible employment schedules or who lack access to child care by holding their monthly meetings only on weeknights (fourth Tuesdays), and simply by the fact of being an overwhelmingly white group.

At one time, roughly five years ago, the Board included three or four People of Color or mixed-race heritage during overlapping terms. The present Board includes one person of color and one of mixed-racial heritage; others are all white, of European heritage.

Congregational Suggestions

The following are some of the most meaningful and well stated comments selected from a few pages of comments on the Board / church governance / financial management topics.

“What if the minister opted not to know who big donors were? To keep from being influenced / allowing them a pass because of their donations to the church?”

“I suggest creating structures for employees of color to feel safe to honestly address the concerns of institutional racism without income/contract being affected.”

“Make sure that all choices that are made get filtered through the lens of countering oppression.”

“If many of our congregants were invited to periodic high quality leadership development trainings where we were all exposed to the multicultural and collaborative processes, more people from a variety of backgrounds and ethnic heritages might feel more welcome into our leadership structure, as well as more welcome into our congregational life.”

“Maybe we need to hire another Faith in Action minister so we’re more focused on our work with diverse communities. We do have a pretty active justice council, but its work does not seem to be well known in the church. Maybe we need a report on all the justice initiatives we’re taking.”

“This assessment is great, but it’s also some of the pieces of European culture that we get stuck in – reports, naming, blaming, listing. I would like JTW, the People of Color caucus and the Board to do something remarkable around helping the congregation see how things are connected. How does the Board see us as an entire community?”

Towards improving accessibility, a Board member mentioned a plan being made to install a conference line they could use to enable people who are not able to be present to dial in and listen to Board meetings live. That same Trustee suggested that the Board would consider holding some of its meetings on Sundays after church.

Assessment Team Analysis

In respect to both the Continuum and the Racial Justice rubric, the Board of Trustees meets most of the criteria for being multiculturally aware and a multicultural (MC) institution (Stage 3 on the Continuum), including having some awareness of maintaining white power and privilege in certain aspects of how it conducts itself as the primary leadership body in the church. In fact the Board also shows signs of trending toward meeting the Continuum’s criteria for being an anti-racist (AR) institution going through an identity change (Stage 4), including by sponsoring anti-racism training programs, funding racial and social justice groups within the church, and by using process monitoring and the (presently suspended) multicultural exercise.

Some Trustees are developing an analysis of systemic racism and are beginning to use this to inform the Board’s responses to other social oppressions and vice-versa. For example, in discussions, they use a process of intentional inclusiveness, making sure that every trustee is asked for their comments on every issue. They are also more intentional than past boards in communicating with the congregation, publishing agendas in advance of meetings, and publishing minutes afterwards. Additionally, the Board used a new, intentionally inclusive process for selecting the 2018-19 Ministerial Search Committee. This process resulted in a Ministerial Search Committee with a majority of People of Color members. Relative to the Racial Justice rubric, the Board is trending towards becoming anti-racist in that racial justice work is included in the budget and occasionally openly discussed at Board meetings by those Trustees intent on doing so. However, the potential AR/MC concerns that could apply to topics the Board discusses are sometimes overlooked or skipped, perhaps due to lack of awareness.

Socially responsible investing by the church (or its members) is not discussed often; the church itself has lacked institutional funds (in the form of an endowment) to invest until quite recently. Nor does the church

yet do much channeling of money into movement building beyond the congregation, though there are signs that individual members are willing to do so.

Assessment Team Recommendations

While the Board has higher visibility and practices greater transparency than it used to, the congregation seems generally uninformed about what the Board is doing. Some folks have an idea of what the Board governs, but few know how it works and what the current issues may be. We recommend that the Board find more ways to publicize or draw attention to its work and follow through on its own suggestion to hold some meetings at times when more people are around (such as early Sunday afternoons).

We recommend that the Board incorporate the stipulation about Board members needing to take anti-racism training course(s) either before being elected or by the end of their first year in office, which is now only in the Board Trustee job description, into the church bylaws.

The Assessment Team strongly recommends that the Board reintroduce the multicultural exercise into some of its meetings, this time with predetermined topics and questions. Perhaps the quarterly retreats, in that they have more flexible time frames, would be suitable for this. Understanding the cultures, traditions, family backgrounds and educational experiences of other members could lift up minority experiences and help members understand each other's perspectives better.

The Assessment Team recommends that the Board engage in practices that support the use of an anti-racist lens during Board meetings. For example, the Board could institute a regular practice of reviewing the agenda and asking which marginalized groups might be affected by their decisions. They might ask whose voices are missing from decisions, and find ways to consult and include those voices.

For all of the church's purchasing, the Board could initiate an inquiry into which companies and causes are being supported and make more deliberate choices, where possible, to be consistent with its own goals, based on what is revealed. As the church gains financially by means of donations to its endowment funds, the Board could look closely at socially responsible investing practices.

Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team

Introduction

JTW's mission: "The Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Team of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland works with the congregation, including the leadership, through organizing, monitoring, and training to help the church become a fully anti-racist/anti-oppressive multicultural institution."

The Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Team (JTW) came into being around 2003, as part of the denominational Journey Towards Wholeness program, which was connected to the Jubilee anti-racism training workshops. In the early 2000s, the membership of JTW at one point reached 12. That was before JTW adopted the guideline of maintaining a POC/white person membership balance. The team currently has four members and is exploring ways to involve more people while still maintaining a 50% People of Color membership.

After developing the team's goals and mission (above), the group focused on education for many years, building a core of church leaders who have had exposure to using an anti-racist lens. Now JTW is shifting its role away from coordinating education and towards providing caucusing opportunities and supporting each committee by infusing anti-racism efforts throughout the congregation.

Congregational Views

In general, the congregation sees it as a positive step that we have a "small core of people highly committed to moving the congregation forward." To some it means that we are more "advanced" than other UU congregations.

The anti-racism training programs such as Jubilee and Beloved Conversations that JTW have sponsored have been valuable to congregants. Some think that every congregant and staff member should participate in these trainings.

The First Sundays for anti-oppression are seen as "helpful." "There's not enough going on, but there's something happening." The efforts to cultivate caucus groups for white people and People of Color make a difference for participants, particularly for People of Color. In speaking of caucus groups, one congregant said: "I don't believe we can move forward without (leadership among People of Color.) We need a stronger capacity to develop leaders of color." It was also pointed out that even at First Sundays, white culture is sometimes reflected in the rushed sense of time.

JTW Self-Assessment

One of JTW's main accomplishments in the past three years is the "First Sundays for Anti-oppression" program, designed to keep the anti-racism/multiculturalism focus of the church in the forefront of the congregation's consciousness. (Stage 4 – conducts anti-racism trainings) The original schedule for these after-church gatherings alternated educational events and caucus group meetings, but the People of Color caucus expressed a desire to meet more often, so for the past few months we have met in caucuses. Attendance has fluctuated from about 10 to 25 attendees. This has been institutionalized to the extent that when there are conflicting activities (Children and Family Ministries picnic, All-Church Retreat) the leaders of those activities invite JTW to provide a multicultural activity for that event.

The JTW Team planned and organized four Beloved Conversations classes and one Jubilee weekend in the past four years. (Stage 4 – conducts anti-racism trainings) In January 2018 this work was taken over by the Adult Faith Development Team, which JTW took as a sign of success at integrating its work into the fabric of the church. JTW continues to collaborate with Adult Faith Development for anti-racism trainings. JTW has also provided education during worship, recruiting a local muralist to speak during a church service about his recently completed mural in West Oakland honoring the Black Panthers.

JTW is in the beginning stages of implementing "intentional institutional restructuring" (Stage 5) and "implementing structures, policies and practices with shared decision making and other forms of power sharing" (Stage 5). These structures include racial identity caucuses, policies include the policy of requiring Board members to participate in anti-racism trainings (though this has not always happened), and practices include process monitoring at Board of Trustees meetings and some other meetings (e.g., Assessment Team and Ministerial Search Committee). JTW has provided training so that others can provide process monitoring, but the number of trained process monitors with recent experience is still small. JTW is also working with the Board to revive the practice of having a multicultural exercise at some Board meetings.

Members of the JTW Team consulted with leaders of the recent capital campaign to create a process that included all church members equally as the congregation raised \$800,000 to renovate the sanctuary. The contributions of all were valued equally, no matter how large or small the gift.

This assessment of the church's status as an anti-racist/multicultural institution is intended to provide information about how the congregation might "ensure full participation of People of Color, including ... worldview, cultures, and lifestyles." (Stage 5)

JTW has worked with other congregations (consulting with the Starr King congregation in Hayward about supporting a minister of color) and the larger denomination (sponsoring the APIC/DRUUMM gathering at First Unitarian Oakland in 2017, and the APIC gathering there in 2018).

In 2015, JTW led the efforts to discuss, plan, and communicate with the congregation about responding to the recent police killings of black people in the U.S. The church had initially responded by hanging two small banners (saying "Black Lives Matter, Brown Lives Matter, All Lives Matter," and "We Can't Breathe"). In summer of 2015 those were replaced with a large Black Lives Matter sign.

Congregational and JTW Suggestions

1. Engage outside consultants to advise/train JTW (and allies) about next steps to restructure the institution to ensure "full participation of People of Color in a manner compatible with POC's own cultures and lifestyles."
2. Evaluate the effect and effectiveness of process monitoring.
3. Work with the Board to find a manageable and productive way to conduct a multicultural exercise at Board meetings – and propose that other committees and covenant groups also do a multicultural exercise.
4. Find a new minister who is committed to this work at a very profound level.
5. Sustain the level of anti-racism multicultural activities we have, so we are not going backward.
6. Have a multiracial covenant group.
7. Begin to learn about and teach about intersections of racism and homo- and transphobia, of racism and classism, of racism and anti-Jewish oppression.
8. Everyone at church should take anti-racism training, including staff.
9. Increase awareness of the microaggressions that People of Color deal with at church.
10. Address the question of how to support leadership among People of Color, and what leadership looks like for People of Color.
11. Address the question of how racism and anti-racism reflects in our interpersonal experiences within the congregation, such as during coffee hour.
12. Review the church's purchasing and contracting policies to ensure consistency with our mission and ends
13. Find more ways to help connect the church to the immediate church neighborhood and West Oakland, through shared meals, collaborative outreach and community support efforts, game nights, prayer circles
14. Work with the Community Connections Team to reach out to groups that use our church building and invite them to come to worship and become part of our community.

Assessment Team Recommendations

1. Expand the JTW team, either by adding new members or engaging "allies" on a limited basis to help with parts of the work without committing to full membership and monthly meetings.
2. Support church committees in finding ways to develop and maintain tight bonds among church members and their families.
3. Bring our congregation and its leaders to experience our anti-racism work as spiritual work. We may want to begin by working with the Worship Team and Justice Council.

4. Do a better job of publicizing First Sundays (including specific personal invitations)
5. Evaluate First Sunday activities in order to improve them.

Pastoral Associates

Introduction

Pastoral Associates are lay members of the church who aim to give comfort and help to fellow congregants who are housebound, have a new baby, are near the end of life, and with a variety of other expected or unexpected situations. Far from trying to do all the work themselves, the PAs often strive to connect those who need help to others in the church who can provide it; most often by recruiting via the church email listserv. They also provide a confidential listening presence by phone or in person.

The ongoing members are middle-aged to elder white people, two men and five women. They meet regularly with the lead minister during the church year.

Congregational Views

Church members volunteered no critique of the work that pastoral associates do. We heard no critique of the PAs' services on any basis let alone through a racial justice lens. The nature of the PAs' engagement is support and from all indications the PAs have responded to requests and suggestions with a wholehearted sense of equanimity.

Pastoral Associates Self-Assessment

The PA committee reports that it has not found or made much occasion to bring racism and multiculturalism into its routine meeting discussions, and realizes that may be a shortcoming. They did mention that they have a practice of intentionally asking people what they need, rather than assume they know what the congregant needs. This allows them to hear and serve the diverse needs of congregants without imposing assumptions from their own culture. For the last few years they included one person of color, a young adult minister-in-training who has been working as a chaplain, but that person has recently left the group and moved away.

The committee expressed split perspectives on the matters of recruiting People of Color to join them and on how soon the group should offer/provide its services after someone starts attending services at the church. A departing member suggested that the committee could actively recruit a Person of Color to join them, and another member agreed. Another member commented that the church asks a lot of its POC members, and expressed a concern that this puts extra pressure on them. A team member wondered whether the idea of the group becoming intentionally racially mixed is appropriate; i.e., whether the PA group is the right one to "make waves." He also said he was unclear on what accountability might mean in the context of being a PA, if seen through the lens of anti-racism and multiculturalism.

As to when to begin providing its services to new congregants and members, a member who favors making this happen quite early on said the group has discussed it as an issue, and some are not in favor of the PAs offering support to "new" attendees until some time has passed in their tenure.

Pastoral Associate Suggestions

Plug people in to the availability of pastoral services soon after they show up at church.

Deliberately recruit People of Color, disabled people, and economically disenfranchised people to join the group, so as to include a wider array of perspectives and connections.

Plan ways to provide pastoral support to those who work on social justice issues.

Assessment Team Analysis

With some uncertainty about how soon to offer help to people who are new to the church, the group offers and is fully willing to provide its support services to all members and longer-term congregants who may not yet have joined the church. But there's some uncertainty as to whether all members of the team could support People of Color with insights into the racial biases and injustices that likely would, in part, underlie their need for pastoral care, whether or not the requesting person outwardly acknowledges that concern. That is the realm in which a Person of Color on the team might affect the dynamic of pastoral services' planning efforts, assisted by white allies in the group. The group's budding awareness of their limitations in this area, their broad awareness of and consideration of class issues, and the fact that some members intend to stretch their boundaries are signs that they are trending toward identity change (Stage 4 -- increasing commitment to dismantle racism and eliminate inherent white advantage). However, limited awareness of these boundaries and their hesitance in moving forward are Stage 3 "symbolic change" indicators.

Assessment Team Recommendations

We suggest that when the Pastoral Associates assess their work that they continue to consider not only who they are serving, but who they are missing.

We encourage the Pastoral Associates to work with the ministers, social justice team and JTW to think about how we can support all who come through our doors, given our limited resources. This includes people who have only come to a service once or twice, people who come in off the street seeking assistance on Sundays, and people who sleep on our doorstep. How do we respond together, with care and compassion?

Expanding pastoral support services would bring some new challenges to the group, including requests for more services and a greater workload overall. Providing such a level of service would call for the group to decide how to respond to a new set of requests and to expand in some fashion. Recruiting new members, including People of Color and white people, could boost the team's overall potential. Some people from our congregation may have good advice to offer as the team expands its scope. Putting such advice put to good use would be a step toward accountability. We recommend that the PAs consider taking these measures.

Professional Ministry

Introduction

The two current professional ministers at the First Unitarian Church of Oakland have both been engaged at the church for several years. Rev. Jacqueline Duhart's first engagement with the church occurred in 2010; she was originally a part-time associate minister here. She became the congregation's Faith in Action minister (leading the social justice efforts) in 2012. Pastor Jacqueline was called to serve as the full-time Parish Minister in 2016. For the past three years she has served in a hybrid position as our Interim/Developmental Minister. This year we are in search to call our next settled minister for August 2019. Pastor Jacqueline will retire in June 2019.

Rev. Sheri Prud'homme, who is the Associate Minister for Faith Development in Oakland, was a member of the congregation since the early 1990s. Rev. Sheri went through ministerial training and education, served in Religious Education positions in other UU churches, and was hired as the part-time Director of Children and Family Ministries in 2015. She has been in her current half-time position since 2016.

Both ministers are highly regarded by the congregation and both are strongly supportive of the church's mission and vision including its striving towards being an anti-oppressive and multicultural institution. This support is particularly evident in their sermons and in some of their commentary during the meetings that they attend.

Congregational Comments

The surveys and discussions held to gather input for this assessment did not ask directly about the church's professional ministers but the questions were open-ended so some people chose to mention the value the ministers bring to this endeavor, both directly and indirectly. One person commented that having anti-oppression and multiculturalism as stated goals in the church's vision statement has motivated a number of people to do this work, including the ministers.

One comment pointed out the importance of the ministerial search in progress in seeking to replace Pastor Jacqueline in respect to the AR/MC mission: "Though it's unfortunate to be so dependent on one central figure, we do need to find a new minister who is committed to this work at a very profound level." Others commented more generally on the ministers and their ways of engaging the congregation, as follows: "Pastor Jacqueline's spirit and joy are strong, as well as her determination and the way she challenges us." "Pastor Jacqueline is warm and welcoming to all kinds of people, not stuffy. There are (many) ways she acts differently than white culture, ways that many of us don't even perceive," and "Reverend Jacqueline has been a wonderful representative of Black, queer and female for me and for my children. My daughter believes that she could be a Minister if she wanted to with such excellent role models. Reverend Sheri has also been wonderful and a positive role model."

More than one member brought up issues that challenge the congregation; i.e. "People of Color in the church have to deal with microaggressions from white people in the church. Our church is essentially a white space; even though we have a black minister, that's not sufficient." And a couple of others referred to how some (not all) congregants reacted negatively when a visiting Afro-Hispanic Orisha priestess led a very long and unusual worship service in early 2018.

Two survey respondents emphasized the importance of Rev. Jacqueline's former capacity by suggesting that the church call or hire a new Faith in Action minister (in addition to calling a new Parish Minister).

Ministers' Views

A representative from the Assessment Team interviewed Pastor Jacqueline and Rev. Sheri together in late 2018. They identified the following issues from their own observations and insights.

- We should focus on true intersectionality, clarify the mission and celebrate what IS here as well as focus on what is missing. With this said, our welcoming effort needs to be strengthened. From the mid-'80s to today we have been centered around diversity evolution. Early on, some people didn't think diversity was important. Those people have left and now we are growing Beloved Community.
- Improvement in the welcoming and retention of visitors partly depends on having better volunteerism. Volunteerism in the church needs strengthening and reorganizing. Too many different things are going on and we need to simplify and collaborate, so it is possible to support all activities. "Do we need two book clubs at the same time?" Can longer-term members with perspective and influence help make this happen?
- It is hard for new people to get connected. Develop and follow a protocol to help new people get in the door and find what they came for.

- We are conflict avoidant and may need a communications class/curriculum on communication and mediation.
- The church has lots of diversity that is not specifically racial or ethnic and we need to do a better job of enabling the congregation to serve those already recognizable populations. For example, parents of older trans children could mentor the parents of younger trans children, or those who transition later in age.
- If we are to “walk the talk” in the (arguably) more advanced place we occupy than many other UU congregations do, we must address the issues that interfere with or limit our capacity.
- Our success at renting out meeting spaces also imposes a limitation, in that it is often difficult to find space in the building for all activities on certain days. As a result, the ability to have other activities is restricted. Could groups cooperatively find other meeting spaces outside the church? When meetings are canceled could we make sure to quickly cancel the space reservations, too?
- The spiritual diversity in the church is not held up and appreciated enough. Doing so would involve more activities and more reflection in church worship.
- If this old building eventually requires expensive repair, upgrade, etc., what will have to “wait ‘til later?”

The Assessment Team decided to let the Professional Ministry section stand as is, with just the information provided above, in that it says plenty and, given the experience and expertise of the people whose views are represented here, the team declined to attempt to evaluate or recommend anything further in this area of church life.

Justice Council

Congregational Comments

It is important to many congregants that this church puts anti-racism, anti-oppression and multiculturalism front and center. Together we do things that no one of us can do alone, affecting policy as well as participating in marches and supporting individuals and families through mentoring and accompaniment of immigrants. Structurally, the Justice Council collaboratively decides our focus, as opposed to 20 years ago, when each individual’s priorities were in competition.

Many people value our collaborations with the Ella Baker Center (a racial justice organization led by People of Color) and Boost West Oakland (a tutoring project at a local school) and our new project of “accompanying” immigrant families. Some people voiced a desire for more such collaborations, with congregations of People of Color and community organizations, as well as with other UU congregations.

One person felt that we intellectualize rather than act. Another noted that while many people recognize oppression and racism, we haven’t yet moved to “some place beyond naming all the wrongs,” to a “holy curiosity”, to “living into a new way of being.” A couple people wanted us to strengthen the social ties within the congregation, to create an authentically multicultural beloved community that models justice in our relationships. A couple people also noted the irony of doing this assessment in a fairly critical rationalized “white culture” way, although they appreciated that it was being done.

Finally, congregants voiced a desire for a spiritual connection to justice work, rather than doing social justice work as “service projects” or “jobs.” Pastor Jacqueline’s role in justice work has been invaluable, and some expressed the desire for a new “faith in action” minister.

Congregational Suggestions

1. Help congregants make spiritual connection to justice work.
2. Collaborate with nearby religious communities of color, as well as other UU congregations.
3. Provide Adult Faith Development classes and worship services on healing from the hurts of our childhood religions and on prayer, so that we can collaborate with Christian congregations in a respectful and spiritual way that is not informed by any negative feelings our congregants may have about Christianity.

Justice Council Self-Assessment

The Justice Council has committed to “struggle to dismantle racism in the wider community and building clear lines of accountability to racial oppressed communities.” (Stage 5) Our partnership with the Ella Baker Center has gone on for at least 10 years (since before 2009) and is being renewed with the work to change practices of the Alameda County Sheriff. Additionally, an accompaniment team is working to learn how to support an immigrant family in an accountable way. At the same time, the team remains all white. Although JTW has been invited to collaborate with Justice Council, there hasn’t been other outreach specifically to People of Color.

The majority of the congregation is not involved in social justice efforts, although significant numbers (20 – 30 people) attend marches and protests a couple times a year.

The cutting edge for the Justice Council is to help congregants see and experience justice work as spiritual work. We are not yet “using our institutional capital to proclaim our yearning for racial justice and equity as a natural outgrowth of our religious values.” (anti-racist congregation stage of UU rubric)

Suggestions “by and for” Justice Council

1. Bringing spiritual growth dimension to activism, including a model from the UUA
2. In each worship services add brief update on justice work done that week
3. Discuss issue of recruiting People of Color to Council and getting input to People of Color
4. Participate in worship more often, lifting up spiritual aspect of justice

Assessment Team Recommendations

The Justice Council has worked for over a decade to establish accountable relationships with organizations of People of Color. We request that they share, in worship and other ways, what they have learned about what it means to be accountable in our relationships with the Ella Baker Center, Lafayette School Mentoring Project, and accompaniment teams.

We encourage the Justice Council, working with JTW and ministers, to consider ways of developing accountability to People of Color within the congregation.

We encourage the Justice Council to consider more ways that justice work might be structured as a community activity rather than a committee activity, so that it is spiritually affirming and community building. The worship service that the Justice Council led at the Richmond Detention Center in Spring 2018, involving the children in worship, was a model of this approach. Additionally, their work with Children’s worship has been a model of collaboration.

Environmental Justice Associates

Environmental Justice Associates Self-Assessment

In some ways, the Environmental Justice Associates exemplify identity change. When the group began, it was the Green Team, focused on increasing energy efficiency in our own building, educating the congregation and participating in political actions to influence policy. Several years ago, the Green Team, in conjunction with a consultant from the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team, sponsored an educational workshop on environmental justice. (Stage 4 - presents anti-racism trainings) As a result of this workshop, the team changed their name and their focus to Environmental Justice. They are “beginning to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities” (Stage 4) in their relationships with organizations led by People of Color, such as the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, Idle No More, and the Local Clean Energy Alliance. Most of these connections are through one member of the committee who attends meetings of many groups.

Despite this identity change, the committee has been all-white for the past five years.

Although they have not “carried out intentional inclusiveness”(Stage 3) by recruiting People of Color to the Environmental Justice Associates, they have intentionally asked People of Color to speak in their worship services for the past few years, in an attempt to lift up the struggle against environmental racism and center voices of People of Color.

Suggestions “by and for” Environmental Justice Associates

1. Forge stronger connections with the groups we currently work with
2. Find a congregation of People of Color that is working on environmental issues and work together
3. Connect with and invite People of Color in climate movement who are looking for a spiritual home – publicize our EJA worship services in Oakland Post?

Assessment Team Recommendations

Continue to ally with People of Color organizations that are doing environmental justice work, deepening relationships.

Consider more ways to structure some EJA work as a community activity, allowing for involvement of people of all ages.

Consider working with Chalice Camp to create a weeklong environmental justice curriculum for the young people in the summer.

Children And Family Ministries

Congregational Views

Congregants report mostly positive responses about our Children and Family Ministries program. Our programs for youth and children are seen as further ahead than the adults in our congregation on our anti-racism, multicultural mission. Chalice Camp—with its semi-annual focus on racial justice—and Our Whole Lives training—with its intentional pool of racially and sexually diverse advisors—are singled out for particular praise.

Some congregants notice that some children formed cliques and were not welcoming to new kids, especially children of color and young boys. For example, one parent of color reported that when their child first attended Children's Chapel, the white children would not hold hands with their child of color.

Children and Family Ministries Self-Assessment

The Children and Family Ministries team has the most multicultural constituency, as young people are the most racially diverse group in our church. The leadership team itself is currently all white, though People of Color lead Spirit Play and the nursery. People of Color are specifically asked to mentor and volunteer to lead classes when there are children of color in the class. ("intentional inclusiveness efforts" Stage 3)

The children's religious education program is worship-based, focusing on building community rather than presenting curricula. This structure is different from a schooling structure based on adult power and priorities, and allows young people to participate as worship leaders, rather than consumers of curricula. There is also more room for play and freedom of choice in the way children's RE is structured. The specific needs of children of color are included, not because they are children of color, but because the program is designed to address the needs of each young person. This may be an example of a new kind of inclusive structure. (Stage 5)

In 2017, the Children and Family Ministries program received an award from the UUA for their one-week summer program, Chalice Camp, which uses a racial justice curriculum every other year. The curriculum teaches how systemic racism was created and perpetuated. (Stage 4, "sponsors anti-racism training programs.") This curriculum is also used in other congregations across the country, so that in this way "anti-racist multicultural diversity" has become an "institutionalized asset." (Stage 5) While many white parents used to express concern about the multicultural curriculum, now few do, indicating that the parents may have a "new consciousness of white power and privilege" (Stage 4)

Children and Family Ministries collaborates with the Social Justice Ministries four times per year (Spirit in Action Sunday). In worship, young people learn about justice issues in their Sunday worship, including learning about the Ella Baker Center's campaign to audit the sheriff. Every week in children's worship, a Black Lives Matter candle is lit, which can be seen as either an "official policy pronouncement regarding multicultural diversity" (Stage 3) or as part of "developing an institutional identity as an anti-racist institution" (Stage 4).

Assessment Team Recommendations

So that parents have a common anti-racism language and understanding as their children, offer anti-racism trainings for parents at times and in ways that parents can attend such as during youth retreats. Also offer anti-racism trainings that deal specifically with how to support young people in their developing understandings about racism and oppression.

Consider addressing anti-racism and identity issues which are more specific to parents and their children.

Communication

Congregational Views

There were two comments along the lines of this one: "The church doesn't appear to be as diverse racially as its vision statement seems to commit to, and as the website photos show."

Congregational Suggestions

Several comments suggest that we should use more of the “new” ways to communicate: blogs, MeetUp, “as many media options as possible”.

Two comments suggested we need to put descriptions of our justice work on the website.

One person suggested that we “Have a document like a brochure or hand-out and something on our website that connects anti-racism with the Seven Principles.”

Assessment Team Analysis of the Committee on Shared Ministry Communications Assessment

The Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM) conducted an assessment of Church communications early in 2018. The Assessment Team has reviewed that report.

The report has recommendations which, if implemented, will undoubtedly improve the utility of existing church communications channels. It spent significant effort to encourage improving communication to young people, but did not make any recommendations intended to improve communications with any other specific group or constituency.

In the CoSM report’s review of responses, there was no information on the identities of respondents, other than some responses that were identified as being made young adults. Our analysis therefore will be somewhat limited.

However, its review of responses made one thing clear: although people found all of the impersonal communications useful (email, website, flyers, welcome packets), all heartfelt responses were reserved for personal communications. A congregant taking a personal interest during coffee hour; a phone call; spoken announcements during services. More than one respondent expressed disappointment that they had not had the opportunity to attend the 10-minute after-service personal orientation.

Assessment Team Analysis

The Church communicates with congregants mainly through

- Announcements during Services
- Tabling during coffee hour
- Infrequently, forums after church
- Annual meeting of the congregation
- Chalice Chatter email weekly newsletter
- Occasional email blasts about specific events
- Church website
- Unofficial listserv
- Mailings about pledges

Committee, Worship planning, Board and many other activities rely heavily on email for communication between meetings.

Much work and planning happens without wide distribution of information, but rather through personal relationships.

Church use of announcements and tabling on Sunday, and in-person forums, allow for much transparency; but the primary modes of committee work can be exclusionary; the first to those with less access to or

proficiency with computers and web technology; and the second to those who are new or do not have relationships with influencers.

Assessment Team Recommendations

1. More effort and emphasis should be put on personal modes of communication than impersonal ones: in-person dyad and group conversation and phone calls should be preferred over written forms of communication when possible. When conducting activities which may mainly lean on written forms of communication, ways can be found to incorporate personal means of communication as well. It does not have to be a strictly 'either/or' choice when written forms of communication are used.
2. More effort and emphasis should be placed on supporting the existing small-group ministries (e.g. covenant groups, young adults group, caucus groups, First Sundays, poetry group) and creating others, to create more opportunities for personal communication outside of committees, worship and coffee hour.
3. Groups should find mutually agreed-upon communication channels that work for everyone.
4. When possible, groups should avoid making important decisions through email, to allow appropriate listening and speaking opportunities to occur during decision-making.
5. Our relationships are guided by our covenant. Communication should be personal and respectful when holding each other accountable for our commitments.

Welcome and Membership

Congregational Views

Congregants expressed satisfaction with the new member process, which consists of a ceremony and welcoming from the entire congregation. The brief tour of church for newcomers allows people to meet other new people and connect. Although some people have put considerable time into welcome, our systems of connection and leadership seem to follow the old UU pattern of "You are warmly welcome here if you are willing to accept our established methods of connection and leadership....and become like those of us here already."

People of color face microaggressions in coffee hour and are sometimes ignored. Low numbers of People of Color in the congregation makes some visitors of color decide this is not the church for them, and makes some members who are People of Color feel less engaged. People of Color also report feeling cautious about "rocking the boat" since they are in the minority. Having a People of Color caucus group has been welcoming for some People of Color.

In terms of building connections in the community, our congregation has a lot of busy people who don't, for the most part, socialize with each other outside of church. Although covenant groups play an important role in making connections, many people are not in covenant groups. Some members expressed a desire for us to connect more in social ways so that we get to know each other more deeply in relaxed, recreational ways.

Pastor Jacqueline plays a key role in welcoming old and new members alike. Having stories in worship services and using language that is accessible is more welcoming to some.

Community Connections Team Self-Assessment

The Community Connections team is small (3-4 members) and is relatively new. For this reason, much of their concern is with instituting basic structures of welcoming and inclusion. There is a little discussion of

viewing the welcoming ministry through an anti-racism lens. Recent successes include a brochure “Making Connections” which provides information for newcomers on how to get involved, and a database which automatically sends email to newcomers based on their interests. They also have provided a three – session course, Embracing Journeys, which provides time for people to talk about their own journey, thus giving new members the message that they are welcome in the fullness and diversity of their experiences.

Finding volunteers is a big challenge for Community Connections, as they need five to seven volunteers every week. Despite this need, they have not yet actively reached out to People of Color, (Stage 3 – “intentional inclusiveness”). It should be easier for people with computer access to sign up to volunteer, as there is a new space on the church website which combines all the welcoming functions.

On a small scale, Community Connections “sponsors anti-racism training sessions” (Stage 4*). (They sponsored a training.) Pastor Jacqueline and Rev. Sheri (the ministers) trained greeters in interrupting microaggressions during coffee hour. They are also hoping to give newcomers a page of internet resources about racism that a church member is compiling, covering basic topics about racism that members should know, such as white privilege, implicit bias and microaggressions.

Suggestions and Ideas from and for Community Connections

1. Invite members of People of Color caucus and Beloved Conversations classes to be involved in welcoming.
2. Have members of Community Connections take part in Jubilee and Beloved Conversations.
3. Consider having a multicultural/anti-racism exercise at the start of committee meetings.
4. Consider providing the training on interrupting microaggressions to the congregation, as part of educating the entire congregation that we ARE all either part of the welcoming solution or part of the unwelcoming problem.
5. Consider asking covenant groups to embark on a year of exploring multicultural welcome, and then asking them to take an active part of welcoming new members.
6. Find ways to invite people who don’t have computers to sign up for welcoming functions.

Assessment Team Recommendations

1. Attend periodic leadership development trainings on multi-cultural and collaborative processes.
2. Find ways to extend more personal invitations to small group settings (e.g. RE classes, covenant groups, retreats, committees) to help people get acquainted.
3. Encourage all members to welcome others during community events.
4. Attend training to help people identify and avoid microaggressions (Beloved Conversations or other relevant training).

Worship and Music

Congregational Views

Worship has changed over the past three decades– congregants saying Amen, more God-language, more clapping and moving during music, more People of Color in the pulpit. “This used to be really white quiet sitting-still church,” said one long-time member. Choir music has changed from largely classical music (in 1987) to a variety of cultures and styles.

Worship and music-related themes that were mentioned repeatedly included: how our worship has changed in the past 30 years, differing levels of comfort with Christian theological language, diversity of

theology, worship style (including length of time of services), and the presence of justice issues in worship (speaking to justice issues as theological/spiritual issues).

In terms of being welcoming to those who may come from a Christian background, many congregants react negatively to Christian language and symbols. Others feel that changing the words of Christian songs to fit a humanist perspective violates other cultures. Some parishioners want more visibility for all world religions; others felt that we are already inclusive of many traditions. Some felt there was too much Judeo –Christian influence and others felt there was not enough.

The Day of the Dead service and Chinese New Year services were appreciated, as were participatory worship and personal stories in worship in general. Personal stories were appreciated more than “intellectual” sermons. “Hearing someone’s story – their church story – builds connections.” Readings are not diverse enough - one congregant had never heard a reading by an Asian person in worship.

One congregant said, “We say we value multiculturalism, but then don't make room for it.” This was related to the length of time for services. A tension exists between the expectation and desire of some in the congregation that the service be consistently held to an hour, and different cultural styles that are more relaxed about time. Those who have complained when services run longer than an hour have put our senior pastor in the position of working hard every week to ensure that the many people she engages in worship are limiting their time so the service can end in one hour. But recently some services have run 10 or 15 minutes longer and have been well accepted by the congregation.

In worship, Pastor Jacqueline has taken the primary role of lifting up our social justice work. All of us need to be better at explaining what it means to be justice-centered, and articulating the UU spiritual underpinnings of justice work. “We need to show that this (anti-racism/anti-oppression) work is Unitarian Universalist, as opposed to political, that this is how we live our UUism in the world,” said one congregant. Lighting the Black Lives matter candle provides visibility for anti-racism work, though one person was ambivalent about it, hoping we could promote “reconciliation between People of Color and the police.”

Congregational Suggestions

Provide opportunities for congregants to heal from the hurts of their previous religious traditions may help congregants be more open to Christian worship and music.

We could explore how to help prepare the congregation for a truly different experience, how to be accepting of the entirety of music from other cultures, discuss why it would be important to include those different cultural experiences.

More embodied practice in worship.

More POC in pulpit, personal stories about experiences of POC including the micro-aggressions they experience in UU churches.

“We’ve got to create the diverse outlook in an authentic honest way that honors communities of color – – doing African American programming, Asian programming, Latino programming, which reflects the congregation we hope to have in future.”

Assessment Team Recommendations

Frequent and consistent expression in worship of why our antiracism work is part of our religious life. Like the Tulsa church, we need to have somebody stand up and say, “This is why this work is important to me.”

Use a wider variety of cultural sources for readings and music, paying attention to context.

Frequently doing an “acknowledgement of place” in worship and other community activities, acknowledging that this land is Native land.

Worship Associates

Introduction

At the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, Worship Associates (WAs) are lay church members who provide substantial support to ministers by helping plan, arrange, and conduct worship services. They contribute both transitional and meaningful pieces to worship, both as stand-alone reflections and as lead-ins to the Embracing Meditation and the collection of the offering each Sunday.

Worship Associates Self-Assessment

The eight WAs who were present for the assessment interview are five young adults and three older adults; three men, four women and one non-binary gender person, six white people; one person of color and one person with mixed heritage. They serve one- to two-year terms, receive initial training, and meet with the lead ministers by phone or in person during planning of the services in which they participate.

The Worship Associates tend to be one of the most racially diverse groups in the church, with (in 2018) two out of eight members present identifying as People of Color. Although they did not speak of being intentionally inclusive of People of Color in recruiting worship associates (Stage 3), it appears from the percentage of People of Color involved that inclusiveness is being practiced. Worship associates are sometimes recruited and sometimes self-selected by applying when open calls are made for applicants. (The ministers provide input which may be the level at which this inclusiveness is practiced.) The Worship Associates also intentionally include multicultural images in the slides they show during the service.

Every Sunday we light a Black Lives Matter Candle, which is an “official policy pronouncement regarding multicultural diversity” (Stage 3) and an affirmation of our “commitment to dismantle racism” (Stage 4). The Worship Associates noted that because the words are not scripted, planning what to say when lighting the candle is an opportunity for Worship Associates to grapple with expressing that commitment in their own words. Although anti-racism and multiculturalism used to be limited to “theme” Sundays such as MLK Day, now it is integrated into many services. For example, in a recent service the Ella Baker Center was part of a service, as was a West Oakland muralist.

The existing worship manual, which is many years old, does not address the AR/MC topic but is not heavily used. Quarterly worship associate trainings are a much stronger source of guidance for the WAs; those are usually conducted by the congregational minister. The present ministers are strong proponents of both anti-racism and shared ministry.

One of the Worship Associates who is a POC expressed how for them the role feels quite large, in part because it is how the church is most directly represented to all those who attend services, but also in that for People of Color the role takes on even greater significance, and becomes too much work. They also pointed out that some (non-worship associates) who take on speaking roles in the church say things that can be offensive (microaggressions), showing a lack of anti-racism/multiculturalism awareness.

Another worship associate expressed paying little or no attention to anti-racism concerns while writing his pieces, which do not touch on the issue, but said that he has hopes for services in which several different people from separate religious and spiritual backgrounds would all speak and end up making similar points.

Time appears to be a cultural issue that occurs in worship. When there is a multicultural element to services, congregants often feel that the service went too long. Either services with a multicultural element have too many elements jammed in, or there is some cultural conflict about time that comes up in multicultural services, or both.

Worship Associate Suggestions

1. Consider having “readers” from the congregation, to make participation on the lectern a possibility for more people who can’t commit the time it takes to be a worship associate.
2. Consider providing one or more worship services that explore cultural values and approaches to time.

Assessment Team Recommendations (same as preceding suggestions)

Chancel Choir

Introduction

There is currently no Music Committee, so seven members of choir and the co-choir director (Renée Witon) met with the Assessment Team.

Self-Assessment

Choir members are pleased about the diverse types of music they sing, as well as recent improvements in providing cultural context to song that are sung in choir. “We need to provide context for all songs, including songs by white men, so we’re not ‘normalizing’ white men by not mentioning their history and context.” Thirty years ago, the choir focused on Western classical music, and all the music was written. That is less true today. A strength Stefan (the leader of our music groups, Six of One, and Joyful Noise) brings to diversity in the music program is that he doesn’t come from the “only written music” school of learning music.

The choir is not racially diverse. Because no committee exists, there is no structure for reaching out to new members and no point person to contact potential members. This means the choir functions like a club - people join who already know what to expect from a UU choir. (Stage 2) “You have to have a really thick skin to join the choir, and already know what UU choirs are like.” The only active outreach is based on individual initiative. For the most part, choir members still learn from written music, which can be off-putting and intimidating for people who don’t read music.

Learning about cultural backgrounds of songs goes well sometimes, but sometimes there are mistakes, such as singing a song from Japan for the Chinese New Year service.

Suggestions from the Choir and Congregation

Create a committee and procedures and point people for reaching out to new choir members, both from within and outside of congregation.

Recruit choir members, letting them know what to expect (no robes needed and ability to read music is not a requirement).

Make flyers to recruit choir members from people who rent our facility.

Incorporate welcoming activities in choir rehearsals, so new members get connected.

Open up search for choir director so that it is inclusive of People of Color and other cultures.

Consider using written music less and call and response teaching in choir rehearsals more.

Assessment Team Analysis

The fact that choir members took an hour on a Sunday afternoon to participate in the assessment shows their “commitment to dismantling racism and eliminating white privilege”. (Stage 4) Their comments about obstacles to being inclusive showed “consciousness of institutionalized white power and privilege.” (Stage 4) As they noted, there is a lack of outreach to People of Color, which is the Stage 2 on the Jubilee continuum.

Recommendations from Assessment Team

Continue to make it a regular practice to incorporate music from a variety of cultures and traditions, with attention to authenticity and respect for the music’s sources.

We appreciate that the choir is looking for ways to be more welcoming, and encourage them to implement their suggestions.

Church in General

Introduction

This section summarizes comments that the Assessment team received which did not pertain specifically to any of the aspects of congregational life specifically assessed in other sections of this Report.

Congregational Views

The vast majority of assessments by white respondents are very sunny, either self-congratulating or at least satisfied with where we are. None of the white respondents responded that they are tired of hearing about anti-racism or disagree with the mission or expressed discomfort with it. However, the responses more often referred to diversity rather than anti-oppression.

It appears that most white respondents like the congregation the way it is; a prevalent viewpoint is a desire for more diversity but no acknowledgement of a need to change institutional culture or practices. Suggestions from white respondents universally had to do with outreach and skills training rather than deep cultural and institutional change.

On the whole, comments from People of Color are in rather stark contrast to comments by white members and friends. People of Color often were attracted by our stated anti-oppressive mission; but yearn to see more than talk; to see movement in that direction. There was praise for the trainings we do, but disappointment that it is always about doing things and not about appreciating what is.

Some of the ways that People of Color expressed being made to feel not accepted as an equal and as themselves were: expressing that they do not feel truly ‘seen’; being often subjected to microaggressions; and being asked to represent People of Color generally rather than just themselves. Particularly with the latter, being asked to represent a group without recognition of this fact and or sympathy for how it must feel.

One interviewee, a person of color, gave this perspective: “Just like black kids go to the principal’s office more often than white kids, issues involving POC at church get more negative attention while similar issues involving white folks do not; this is a kind of privilege – getting a pass if you are white, but not if you are POC. What rule or norms are in place? What systemic safeguards can we put in place to prevent the use of privilege to counter an issue that would raise concerns if it involved a POC?”

Congregational Suggestions

Several comments from people who identified as People of Color about things they would like to experience here: We need to build practices of honoring people just for being and not for doing. Do we feel in our bodies that we are creating an anti-oppressive beloved community? Do we feel like what just happened was spiritual? “I appreciate when someone called us to stop and appreciate something. My hope – how do we nurture a culture where we create holy curiosity in more people. I would like JTW, People of Color caucus and Board to do something remarkable around helping the congregation see how things are connected.” “I would like to see groups be less siloed and children be less siloed.” “If we talked about it, we might be surprised about how our visions of beloved community differ. I would like us to be more welcoming of new members and new people in general.” One expressed the hope that they might one day hear someone speak from the pulpit, pointing out the microaggressive speech, and ask that no one ever say that to anyone again.

A few perspectives offered were: “We need to work toward a shared vision of what beloved community means and what it looks like.” “Explain why anti-racism, anti-oppression is a core mission.” “As individuals, we need to desegregate our lives outside of church if our church is to be diverse – both in terms of race and class. Maybe there’s some way a church program could support that.” “We just have to work more on our own racism, e.g., on avoiding micro-aggressions.”

Conducting outreach (inviting more People of Color), and reaching out to neighboring churches and organizations led by People of Color were mentioned a few times. Congregants also suggested hiring trainers to teach us how to conduct business in Church committees with anti-oppressive practices.

Assessment Team Analysis

Referring to the ‘Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Congregation’ from Crossroads Ministry (where 1 is segregated; 2 a club; 3 symbolic change; 4 identity change; 5 structural change; and 6 fully inclusive): the comments indicate that some areas of Church life lead others; that is, in some areas our Church has undergone identity change; in other ways we are in a state of symbolic change; and in still others we are still a club institution.

In many ways we are at the stage of ‘symbolic change’. We have our mission statement, but most responses reflect complacency and a desire for more diversity. We carry out inclusiveness efforts; we want ‘more People of Color’ in Church and on committees and as clergy and staff. We see diversity as important on other dimensions as well; age, physical ability, gender identity and others. However, culture and policies are largely unaffected.

In one significant way we are still a club institution, pointed out by the comment that People of Color are treated differently than White people (see the congregational comment that begins “Just like black kids go...” when an interpersonal issue comes to the attention of the Institution: we tolerate People of Color with “the proper perspective.”

In some ways, however, we have progressed toward anti-racist identity. We show some attributes of an organization undergoing identity change (Stage 4): we sponsor anti-racism training programs, and our understanding of racism as a barrier to effective diversity is growing. Also, we have developed accountable relationships to a couple of Person of Color–led institutions in the community.

On an interpersonal level, we as a Unitarian Universalist Church will always have new members and friends with varying histories and backgrounds and levels of engagement with anti-racist practice.

On the cultural and institutional levels, however, although we support leaders with anti-racism training, and have added some practices, our trainings are not geared to teaching specific skills in conducting an analysis of racism. For those of us who have never experienced being part of a fully multicultural anti-racist institution and community, how do we know we’re moving in the right direction? Part of the answer is to raise up the voices of People of Color in our midst who are telling us some the ways it will feel different to them when we have moved more along that path.

Assessment Team Recommendations

1. Build awareness of our expectation that this transformation is one done through all members; our welcoming, responsibilities of membership, and preaching should all emphasize the importance of understanding racism on the personal, institutional and cultural level. Several concrete suggestions where this can be related:
 - a. during orientations,
 - b. during classes for prospective members,
 - c. during reflections by Worship Associates,
 - d. during sermons by clergy.
 - e. have a sticker for folks’ name tags when they’ve attended a training.
2. Promote opportunities for deeper anti-racism and multicultural trainings and experiences:
 - a. Promote community-based trainings and experiences, possibly through a list maintained and promoted by the JTW and the Adult Faith Development program.
 - b. Continue to offer trainings through the Church’s Adult Faith Development program
 - i. Include trainings that go deeper into an analysis of racism than trainings we have done in the past.
 - c. The Adult Faith Development program and the JTW should collect and develop curricula on the analysis of racism and develop leaders to conduct trainings in this area to church groups such as the Board and committees.
3. Make anti-racism training, analysis of church structure and processes, and multicultural exercises a regular part of church leadership / committee processes. Regular practice, ‘practical application’, of the analysis of racism will give church leaders skills to apply in deliberation before decision-making. Multicultural exercises help remind people who is in the room and promote collegiality.
 - a. Training may begin with the group receiving a short training (or series of trainings over time) on the analysis, one which includes application of the analysis, guided by the facilitator; after which the group will be able to apply the analysis on its own.
 - b. The Board had already begun doing multicultural exercises. We encourage them and other groups to continue this practice, with pre-determined topics possibly proposed by the JTW.
4. Develop accountability structures and processes. Without accountability structures, tokenism (one person being asked to represent a group within the church) and paternalism (someone deciding what is best for others without getting their input) are dangers. Committees and Boards sometimes decide to be accountable to caucus groups for this purpose. It creates a specific point of contact for

input from communities which might have needs different from the dominant group, and provides a counterbalance against the undocumented, informal sources of input which often serve to the advantage of the dominant group. These institutional groups especially would benefit from such relationships:

- a. Board of Trustees
- b. Justice Council

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Section 2: Assessment Team Analysis Summary

The Assessment Team was asked to use multiple rubrics to look at our Church and congregation. Rather than try to meld a single analysis, we organized this summary into two parts. The first part provides an analysis based on the Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution from Crossroads Ministries. The analysis in the second part uses the Racial Justice in UU Congregations rubric created by Julica Hermann de la Fuente.

Analysis Based on the Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution

(The Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution, copyright Crossroads Ministries, is not reproduced in this document. It's available to each reader of this report by request; send requests via email to assessmentteam@uuoakland.org or jtw@uuoakland.org. It may not be reproduced in electronic form without express permission.)

The "Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution" is a useful model for our assessment, which describes traits of institutions; from those that are intentionally segregated all the way to those that are fully anti-racist and multicultural (here multicultural is understood as membership). Here is a short summary:

Stage 1 is a monocultural, intentionally segregated institution that intentionally excludes People of Color

Stage 2 is a minimally multicultural "club" institution

Stage 3 is a multicultural institution with 'symbolic' changes

Stage 4 is an anti-racist institution that is changing its identity

Stage 5 is an anti-racist multicultural institution that is transforming and making structural changes

Stage 6 is an anti-racist multicultural institution that is fully inclusive, a transformed institution in a transforming society

In real institutions, different parts of the institution may operate on different levels; context is always important. At the same time, our institution has a charter, a mission, a covenant, a Board, and other governing documents and groups; and this rubric is extremely valuable because it is exactly this transformation, toward becoming a fully anti-racist multicultural institution, which is the subject of this assessment.

The information we gathered for this report indicates to us that while various aspects of our Church exhibit traits all the way from Stage 2 (club institution) to Stage 5, we are mostly at Stage 3.

Stage 3: we see many indicators of an organization at the stage of 'symbolic change':

- We have 'official policy pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity': Our covenant to "...work intentionally to counter oppression and prejudice among ourselves and in the world" and our vision "To build a radically inclusive community, to grow the beloved community by expanding the welcome table and deepening our commitments to countering oppression as an intentional multiracial, multicultural, multigenerational congregation"
- We 'carry out intentional inclusiveness efforts' in recruitment for visible and sensitive positions such as worship associates, the Board, mentors for children of color, and the Ministerial Search Committee, among other places.

- Our ‘expanding view of diversity includes other oppressed groups’, including age, physical ability, sexual preference and gender identity.
- An organization in the stage of symbolic change ‘sees itself as a non-racist institution, with open doors for People of Color’. Because of the range of social justice-based education, experience and exposure design attitudes and opinions on subjects like this; we need to recognize that there are multiple realities in the congregation, among POC as well as with white congregants. The fact that so many people see our problem as a lack of diversity suggests that many of us don’t see the barriers that still exist.
- Financially, the congregation is multiculturally aware but not anti-racist in one sense: socially responsible investing by church members is not discussed often; and though the church has been consistent in its financial support of the racial justice programs, church does not channel money into movement building beyond the congregation.

Stage 2: In two significant ways we are still a club institution: we ‘tolerate People of Color with “the proper perspective”’: People of Color are treated differently than White people when issues come to the attention of the Institution (see the congregational comment in the Church in General subsection that begins “Just like black kids go...”). Also, ‘We don’t have a problem’: a very significant number of white members decline to participate in any anti-racism training.

Stage 4:

- We ‘sponsor anti-racism training programs’: with financial support from the Board of Trustees, through Adult Faith Development and JTW’s sponsoring Jubilee and Beloved Conversations; the Community Connections committee’s trainings on multicultural welcome; and the JTW sponsored monthly education sessions and caucus group meetings at First Sundays for Anti-Oppression.
- Increasing commitment to dismantling racism and eliminate inherent white advantage: evidenced by the Board of Trustees’ funding of racial and social justice programs and trainings
- We have ‘begun to develop accountability to racially oppressed communities’ through our relationships to the Ella Baker Center, Lafayette Mentoring Program, and the Accompaniment Teams.
- Develops analysis of systemic racism: Some Board Trustees are beginning to use their own analysis gained from experience with anti-racism efforts and education to inform the Board’s responses to other social oppressions and vice-versa, such as by intentional inclusiveness and improved communications.
- The Board has begun to develop an identity as an anti-racist institution in its use of inclusive meeting processes, process monitoring, requirement of its members to attend anti-racism training, and its relationship with the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team.
- But: there are not yet any accountability structures in place to ensure power-sharing at the Board of Trustees level. This allows for traditional power through influence, where insiders have more power. Many anti-racist practices are beginning to be used regularly at the Board and committee levels, but few have been codified, leaving it up to individual leaders.

Stage 5: There are a few ways in which our congregation has indicators of a transforming institution that is undergoing structural change.

- Some of the permanent and ad hoc groups in the institution have implemented “structures, policies & practices with inclusive decision-making and other forms of power-sharing,” in the following ways:

1. The most recent capital campaign was designed to be inclusive of everyone regardless of income.
 2. The Board adopted a selection process for the Ministerial Search Committee (combining voting and appointments) in order to have a strong representation of People of Color on the committee.
 3. The Cottage Conversations (focus groups) for the ministerial search invited People of Color to speak first in order to put voices of People of Color front and center.
 4. There is regularly a process monitor at Board meetings to help ensure that all voices are heard and power is shared.
- We “commit to struggle to dismantle racism in the wider community and build clear lines of accountability to racially oppressed communities” through our work with the Ella Baker Center (working against racism in the prison system) and the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (working to support immigrants and their rights.).
 - However, our charter has not changed to reflect anti-racist principles. Annual congregational meetings follow Robert’s Rules of Order. To a lesser extent, the Board of Trustees uses select elements of Robert’s Rules of Order. (The use of Robert’s Rules of Order has produced alternatives when organizations realize its linear and Eurocentric nature. Please see the link to a Sage Journals article on “Martha’s Rules” given in Appendix B, the List of Resources.) However, most groups operate on a more adaptable and inclusive model of seeking consensus in decision-making processes. Nonetheless, we are still at the beginning stages of figuring out what kinds of structures, policies and practices effectively counter white privilege and create a vibrantly multicultural beloved community with inclusive decision-making and power-sharing. We have not yet implemented new policies, practices and structures in all aspects of our congregational life.

Analysis Based on the “Racial Justice in UU Congregations” Rubric

The Racial Justice in UU Congregations rubric (the rubric) was created by Julica Hermann de la Fuente using materials – with permission – from Rev. Ashley Horan at MUUSJA, Rev. Leslie Takahashi, and the Dismantling Racism Resource Book. (Please use with proper attribution.)

The rubric describes what a church might look like in each of three different possible stages: status quo (white cultural hegemony), multiculturally aware, and anti-racist. The stage, or category, is listed in column one; the description is in column two. Since these descriptors will look different for different aspects of church life, there is a separate sections for several different aspects of Church life, for instance one being Public Witness and Prophetic Voice, and another Worship; each with their own descriptors.

We compared each of our programs to the corresponding section of the rubric. We underlined descriptors in column two that describe our congregation’s program. We also added a third column for our analysis.

Yellow highlighted items describe what we think may be missing, or growing edges for our congregation.

Social Justice Programs: the “Public Witness and Prophetic Voice” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of First UU Oakland
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“keeps discussion about social and political issues to a minimum,” due to fear of “offending other members of the congregation.”	<i>This does NOT describe our justice work.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	has “ <u>small groups... who represent the church in public witness</u> ” based on their “pet projects and issues,” but “ <u>the majority of the congregation is not involved in social justice efforts.</u> ”	<i>The co-ordination of the Justice Council has taken us away from the “pet projects and issues” approach. The majority may not be involved, but a sizeable minority has done at least one action.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	“ <u>congregation is in agreement about their role in the public square. A large group of members regularly, boldly and accountably uses its institutional capital to publicly problem its yearning for racial justice as a natural outgrowth of its religious values.</u> ”	<i>We’re somewhere between large group and small group. In the past three years, 20 – 30 congregants attended at least 7 protests, vigils, and board of supervisor’s meetings. Understanding and speaking about this work in religious terms is a growing edge for us.</i>

Worship: the “Worship” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of whether we fit that category
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“Worship privileges and <u>centers the White Protestant tradition, both in its format and with the music and rituals it observes.</u> ”	<i>This somewhat describes our worship, particularly in terms of the amount of time we expect worship to take.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	“ <u>Worship sometimes incorporates practices or music from other cultures.</u> Can sometimes fall into <u>cultural misappropriation</u> , using these resources thoughtlessly or without proper contextualization.”	<i>Our worship program and practices appear to combine elements of all three stages.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	“ <u>congregation regularly expresses commitment to building a racially just and loving world through communal worship, embodied ritual, and practices of joy and gratitude.</u> Multiple voices and cultures are carefully and thoughtfully incorporated in the service. <u>Worship also occurs outside of the traditional Sunday morning format.</u> ”	<i>We do express commitment to building a racially just and loving world – how often is regularly enough? There is a question about whether Asian cultures (and authors) are represented.</i>

Pastoral Associates Program: the “Small Group Ministry and Pastoral Care” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of the category	Assessment of whether we fit that category
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“No awareness of the impact of race/ethnicity... on our daily experiences. “Pastoral care providers have no training in supporting activists or People of Color with the specific challenges they encounter.”	<i>There has been no training in supporting activists or People of Color.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	“Pastoral care providers have some awareness of the impact of race/ethnicity and other social identities...Success in addressing these issues is mixed. There is a budding awareness that the work of social justice and anti-racism in our many roles is taxing and requires support.”	<i>Many of the Pastoral Associates have participated in anti-racism workshops.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	Pastoral care providers are aware of “the various ways our social identities impact our daily lives...power dynamics and the consequences of white supremacy....All pastoral care providers have been trained and are supported in this awareness and have tools and techniques that are effective in supporting those on the front lines of AR/AO work. The congregation prioritizes nurturing the spiritual and emotional health of its justice leaders, and equipping them with the competencies to be faithful and effective.”	<i>These are the cutting edges for pastoral care in our congregation, not just for Pastoral Associates but for the entire congregation.</i>

Adult Faith Development Committee: the “Religious Education for Adults” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of whether we fit that category
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“Issues of racial justice are not included in religious education. The congregation does not recognize the impact that anti-oppressive learning has on our many roles as parents, managers, teachers, etc.”	<i>For the most part, this is NOT true. The book group regularly reads books about racism, and congregants describe the effect of Jubilee and Beloved Conversations on their work.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	<u>“Racial justice education is sometimes offered and is an option for interested members. The focus is primarily on helping white congregants become more “woke” regarding racism. The congregation offers some support for folks who want to apply their anti-racism skills in other areas of their lives.”</u>	<i>Beloved Conversations has been offered every year for the past 5 years, and Jubilee anti-racism training is offered every 2 -3 years. The Adult Faith Development team has begun to collaborate with Journey Towards Wholeness to organize these trainings.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	<u>“regular opportunities for members to learn about justice issues.... The congregation expects members to be engaged in their own education and development around racial justice issues... “ The spiritual needs of members of color ...are acknowledged and addressed through educational programming.”</u>	<i>This is a cutting edge, to support members in engaging in their own development and to support congregants in applying what they learn. Education regarding spiritual needs of members of color hasn’t hit our radar yet.</i>

Children and Family Ministries Program: the “Religious Education for Children and Youth” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of First UU Oakland
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“all education is target toward white children and youth. No discussion around racial justice issues is included.”	<i>This does NOT describe our Children and Family Ministries program.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	“Other cultures are sometimes incorporated into religious education. Sometimes racial justice issues are brought up, like when we study MLK Jr.”	<i>Every other year, the weeklong Chalice Camp program addresses system racism. Worship program include justice issues.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	“The different needs of white youth and youth of color are acknowledged and addressed in religious education. The teaching/learning occurs with a complex understanding of both social identity and faith development stages.”	<i>The worship-based program addresses children’s needs on an individual basis, which applies to white youth and youth of color. Mentors for coming of age youth and Our Whole Lives instructors are thoughtfully recruited to support children of color.</i>

Leadership: the “Mission and Purpose: Leadership” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of First UU Oakland
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“no mention of racial justice in the congregation’s mission or vision The purpose of the congregation is to continue to provide services and programs for current members....Leadership is coveted and tightly held by a few individuals.”	<i>This does NOT describe our mission, purpose and leadership.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	“ <u>congregation includes racial justice in its mission, but does not reflect it consistently in its practices..</u> Leadership is more distributed, but an idolatry of the democratic process and making sure every voice is heard and included keeps the congregation mired in discussion and ineffective in its practices.”	
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	“ <u>congregation engages in critical self-assessment and seeks outside consultation to ensure that power structures and practices align with ...racial justice values and make space for diverse leadership and participation.</u> Racial justice is explicitly mentioned in its mission/vision, and <u>concrete practices are in place to support the continued relevance of the work.</u> Leadership is actively shared and is seen as a <u>behavior rather than a role</u> ; it is leveraged effectively in the service of the agreed-upon mission and vision.”	<i>Seeking outside consultation may be a next step for us. Some concrete practices, such as process monitoring, are in place – may need more.</i>

Partnerships with Community: the “Partnerships and Solidarity with Community” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of whether we fit that category
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“The congregation exists in a bubble, with no partnerships in the community..”	<i>We do NOT fit this category.</i>
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	“ <u>The congregation is building relationships with community members and organizations</u> , and is <u>getting involved in local issues</u> . Some activist work is shared with others in the congregation, but the definition and scope of that work is not actively discussed or negotiated.”	<i>Partnerships with Ella Baker Center and Lafayette School for about 10 years. Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity is a new partner. Environmental justice team works with West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project as well as East Bay Clean Energy Alliance.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	“The <u>congregation cultivates cultural and spiritual humility</u> , and <u>develops deep and mutually-fulfilling partnerships with other faith communities and coalitions working for racial justice</u> . <u>Congregants understand that they have opportunities to influence systems in their work life</u> and the communities they live in: <u>they leverage resources and support in their congregation to make this work more effective.</u> ”	<i>Some congregants have influenced systems in their work lives.</i> <i>Collections for school supplies and snacks support Lafayette Mentoring Project.</i>

Theology: the “Theology” section of the rubric

Category title	Descriptors of that category	Assessment of whether we fit that category
1. Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	“Individual expression and freedom of belief are the most important values. <u>Theology is not public or shared.</u> ”	
2. Multiculturally Aware Congregation	“ <u>The intersection between racial justice and theology is sometimes explored or shared, regarding individual members’ theologies.</u> ”	<i>Our ministers do this.</i>
3. Anti-Racist Congregation	“ <u>The congregation sees racial justice work as a natural expression of their tradition’s values and beliefs, can articulate a communal theology of racial justice, and is able to evaluate issues and actions through the lens of their faith.</u> ”	<i>As a congregation, most of us have done a minimal amount of reflection and articulating the connection between our theology and racial justice. This is a growing edge for us.</i>

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Section 3: Assessment Team Recommendations Summary

Introduction

The longing to be more multicultural and racially diverse, expressed by many of our white congregants, needs a bit of unpacking as it feels superficial and we think it is not a valuable end in itself. We can sing songs in languages other than English, include rituals from many traditions; we can bring in more black and brown people so that we look diverse. In doing so, have we necessarily achieved meaningful and lasting transformation (personal and institutional)? Do we truly appreciate and understand non-white non-mainstream cultural values and practices? Are we conscious of the history and experience of black and brown people so that we take pains not to replicate oppression in our Church? Do we have the humility to let go of what's comfortable and what we like in order to make space for something new, that forces us to be quiet for a turn, sit on the sideline a bit, not be on center stage/chancel, share power and privilege? If so, then it is all but guaranteed we will be more multicultural and racially diverse. Better yet, our internal transformation will reflect in how we are with whomever we encounter outside of church and in the greater effectiveness of our justice work beyond our walls, where it matters most.

Assessment Team Rationale

The Assessment Team came up with our recommendations in the following ways: in some cases we simply adopted or expanded on congregational suggestions; some others are logical responses to the issues identified by our responders; and some are our own insights, which we refined as we expressed and discussed them for this report.

We have included recommendations that we thought would help the congregation:

- Meet the criteria given on the AR/MC continuum and the Racial Justice rubric;
- Establish more equitable and inclusive relationships; or
- Communicate more fully, honestly, and effectively.

Assessment Team Recommendations

1. Build awareness: help our congregation and its leaders to
 - a. Experience our anti-racism work as spiritual work.
 - b. Connect our mission to become an anti-racist, multicultural institution with the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism.
 - c. Understand that our anti-racist, multicultural mission is grassroots; it is fulfilled when each member engages by becoming educating about how racism operates, not just on the personal but also on the cultural and institutional levels; by attending trainings and multicultural events; by working for racial justice with others in community; and by consistently showing up for one another in community.
 - d. Understand that the way we show up for each other, both in community and in our work in Boards, committees and other working groups, embodies how we are living out our anti-racist, multicultural mission.

Many venues and interactions may help to build this awareness:

- Speaking from the pulpit
- how we go about our welcoming
- including anti-racism training in our responsibilities of membership
- giving trainings and classes (elucidated in #2 below)
- providing and guiding small-group ministry, such as the covenant groups

- “web” and personal communications
2. Promote opportunities for deeper anti-racism and multicultural trainings and experiences:
 - a. Promote community-based trainings and experiences, possibly through a list maintained by the JTW and the Adult Faith Development program, and promoted for example during coffee hour and on the public website.
 - b. Continue to offer trainings through the Church’s Adult Faith Development program and/or Journey Toward Wholeness.
 - i. Include trainings that go deeper into an analysis of racism than trainings we have done in the past.
 - ii. Include trainings that help people develop interpersonal multicultural skills
 - c. (The Adult Faith Development Program and the JTW) collect and develop curricula on the analysis of racism. Develop leaders to conduct trainings in this area to Church groups such as Board and committees.
 - d. We encourage the Adult Faith Development Team in their efforts to develop a core curriculum, in which anti-racism is taught as an authentic UU practice.
 - e. Find more ways to promote First Sundays and other events sponsored by the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team.
 - f. Microaggressions were noted as a continuing problem; we recommend that this issue not be overlooked in anti-racism trainings.
 3. Make anti-racism training and practice using a power analysis of racism on Church structure and processes a regular part of Church leadership and committee processes. Regular practice, ‘practical application’, of the power analysis of racism will give Church leaders skills to apply in deliberation before decision-making. Multicultural exercises help remind people who is in the room and promote collegiality.
 - a. Training may begin with the group receiving a short training (or series of trainings over time) on the analysis, one which includes application of the analysis, guided by the facilitator; after which the group will be able to apply the analysis on its own.
 - b. Before decision-making, groups should make it a habit to analyze the decision to be made and consider how historically marginalized or under-represented groups may be affected. If accountability structures have been developed and time allows, then those groups can be consulted.
 4. Develop accountability structures and processes. Without accountability structures, tokenism (one person being asked to represent a group within the Church) and paternalism (someone deciding what is best for others without getting their input) are dangers. Committees and Boards sometimes choose to be accountable to caucus groups as a specific point of contact for input from communities which might have needs different from the dominant group. It provides a counterbalance against informal input, which may serve to the advantage of the dominant group. These institutional groups especially would benefit from such relationships because of the potential impact of their decisions and actions:
 - a. Board of Trustees
 - b. Justice Council
 - c. any executive group such as an Operations Team
 - d. program council

The Justice Council, having worked to establish accountable relationships with outside organizations led by People of Color, are encouraged to share their experience with the rest of the

- congregation, possibly in worship services or through presentations during leadership development trainings.
5. Make socially responsible purchasing and investment choices.
 - a. Possibly staff or volunteers may investigate alternative sources for the Church for purchases and contracts for services.
 - b. Where the Church has investments, we strongly encourage
 - i. they be made in a socially responsible way AND
 - ii. the fact that the Church is making socially responsible investments is publicized
 - c. Congregants should be encouraged to make their own investments in a socially responsible way
 - i. The Adult Faith Development Program could offer resources for congregants to inform themselves
 - ii. The Adult Faith Development Program or other group or individual could seek knowledgeable people to speak on the subject at a forum at the Church
 6. Support and encourage the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Team to
 - a. increase its capacity by
 - i. adding new members and / or
 - ii. engaging allies to help with specific tasks or responsibilities on a limited basis (without requiring them to commit to Team membership or to attend Team meetings)
 - b. evaluate its First Sunday activities and consider how to improve or add to them
 7. Pastoral Associates continue to consider not only who they are serving, but who they are missing.
 8. We encourage the Pastoral Associates to work with the ministers, social justice team and JTW to think about how we can support all who come through our doors, given our limited resources. Expanding pastoral support services would include responding to more requests for services and a greater workload overall. This would call for the group to decide how to respond to a new set of requests and to expand in some fashion. We recommend that the PAs consider taking these measures .
 9. Support the development and ongoing maintenance of more small-group ministries where congregants 'old and new' may make deep personal connection.
 10. Improve the depth of our community connections by spending more effort to show concern for member retention.
 - a. Congregants can extend our welcome beyond the person walking in the door, being welcoming in community events.
 - b. Create and support more small-group ministries, and help people connect to them.
 - c. We recommend that congregants reach out to people they know who stop attending to say hello and let them know you care.
 - d. Revive circle suppers.
 11. Encourage all Church groups planning justice work working to find more ways to structure justice work as a community activity rather than as a committee activity. Presented and experienced in this way it may be woven deeper into the fabric of community life, and become for more people a spiritual experience.
 12. We commend our Justice Associates for their alliances with and accountability to local People of Color organizations, and encourage them to deepen these relationships.

13. We encourage all working groups within the congregation to ensure their chosen modes of communication are equitable;
 - a. find mutually agreed-upon communication channels that work for everyone.
 - b. when possible avoid making important decisions through email, to ensure listening and speaking for all concerned parties during decision-making.
 - c. our relationships are guided by our covenant and by mutual respect. Holding each other accountable for our commitments is best done respectfully and in person.
14. Improving our welcome
 - a. encourage leaders to attend periodic leadership development trainings on multi-cultural and collaborative processes.
 - b. encourage all members to welcome others during community events.
 - c. encourage those in the role of welcoming to extend personal invitations to small group settings such as Adult Faith Development classes and covenant groups.
 - d. We appreciate that the choir is looking for ways to be more welcoming, and encourage them to implement their suggestions.
15. We encourage Worship Leaders, Worship Associates and Musicians to use a wide variety of sources for readings, themes and music.
 - a. When using sources that are not from one's own tradition or culture, we encourage those selecting and using these sources to ensure they are using the material in a manner that is respectful of the community it comes from (avoid misappropriation); and that it is used in an appropriate context.
16. We encourage leaders to do an "acknowledge of place" sometimes during worship and other community activities, reminding us that this land is Native land.

Appendix A: Definitions of Key Terms Used in This Document

Accountability: Accountability is a keystone of racial equity work. “Accountability”... refers to creating processes and systems that are designed to help individuals and groups to be held in check for their decisions and actions and for whether the work being done reflects and embodies racial justice principles. Accountability in racial equity work is about checking the work often against a set of questions: How is the issue being defined? Who is defining it? Who is this work going to benefit if it succeeds? Who will benefit if the work does not succeed? How are risks distributed among the stakeholders? How will a group know if its plan has accounted for risks and unintended consequences for different racial and ethnic groups? What happens if people pull out before the goals are met? Who anointed the people and groups being relied on for the answers to these questions? Who else can answer these questions to guide the work? (*Racial Equity Tools* website)

Anti-racism: Anti-racism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably. (*NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity*)

Anti-racism is an active way of seeing and being in the world, in order to transform it. Because racism occurs at all levels and spheres of society (and can function to produce and maintain exclusionary "levels" and "spheres"), anti-racism education/activism is necessary in all aspects of society. In other words, it does not happen exclusively in the workplace, in the classroom, or in selected aspects of our lives. (*University of Calgary; Calgary Anti-Racism Education*)

Caucusing: White people and people of color each have work to do separately and together. Caucuses provide spaces for people to work within their own racial/ethnic groups. For white people, a caucus provides time and space to work explicitly and intentionally on understanding white culture and white privilege and to increase one's critical analysis around these concepts. A white caucus also puts the onus on white people to teach each other about these ideas, rather than constantly relying on people of color to teach them. For people of color, a caucus is a place to work with their peers on their experiences of internalized racism, for healing and to work on liberation.

White people are often uncomfortable with the idea of white caucuses as part of racial equity work. A typical comment is “if we are working on racism, isn't it better for us to learn together?” It does feel awkward to separate by race. Yet such separation occurs all the time in real life, and many times that reality is not understood or interrogated as it is when participating in a caucus. Since white people often find learning about [whiteness and white privilege](#) a steep learning curve, taking advantage of caucus time to do this work can be extremely useful.

Groups that use caucuses in their racial equity work generally meet separately and then come back together for collective work. [Accountability](#) is a key principle of this work. (*Racial Equity Tools* website)

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups. An analytic framework that attempts to identify how interlocking systems of power impact those who are most marginalized in society. (*Merriam-Webster*) Intersectionality considers that various forms of social stratification, such as class, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, disability and gender, do not exist separately from each other but are interwoven together. While the theory began as an exploration of the oppression of women of color within society, today the analysis is potentially applied to all social categories (*including social identities usually seen as dominant when considered independently*).

Microaggressions: Racial microaggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward People of Color. Perpetrators of microaggressions are often unaware that they engage in such communications when they interact with racial/ethnic minorities. (*Sue, D.W., et al.*)

Multiculturalism: The view that the various cultures in a society merit equal respect and scholarly interest. It became a significant force in American society in the 1970s and 1980s as African-Americans, Latinos, and other ethnic groups explored their own history. (*Dictionary.com*) Multiculturalism is important because it dilutes and dissipates the divisiveness of ignorance. It is important because it encourages dialogue, often between radically different cultures that have radically different perspectives. (*The Star.com*)

Appendix B: List of Resources

1. Rubrics
 - a. Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Congregation, by Crossroads Ministries (not reproduced in this document. It's available to each reader by request; send requests via email to assessmentteam@uuoakland.org or jtw@uuoakland.org)
 - b. Racial Justice in UU Congregations rubric, created by Julica Hermann de la Fuente
 - c. Euro-Americans continuum and Persons of Color continuum, created by Sherry Weston Vigil
2. Articles
 - a. Assumed Identities, A Personal History of Passing by Brando Skyhorse (UU World Spring 2018)
 - b. Language of Appeasement by Dafina-Lazarus Stewart (Journal of Higher Education, March 30 2017)
 - c. Sin is personal, not just systemic by Molly Housh Gordon (UU World Spring 2018)
 - d. White Supremacy Culture, From Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups, by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, ChangeWork, 2001
 - e. From White Racist to White Anti-Racist, the life-long journey by Tema Okun
 - f. Sage Journals article on "Martha's Rules": An Alternative to Robert's Rules of Order
<https://camblog.topssoft.com/coming-to-consensus-marthas-rules-of-order>
3. Curricula
 - a. Jubilee Participants' Manual (copyrighted material from UUA)
 - b. Process Monitoring Training (Jill Miller and Cile Beatty)
 - c. Strategic Questioning, An Approach to Creating Personal and Social Change by Fran Peavey
 - d. White Supremacy Culture script for white caucuses (not attributed)
 - e. White Supremacy Culture Worksheet, adapted from "White Supremacy Culture" (above), by Partners for Collaborative Change
 - f. Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups by the Western States Center, 2003
4. Visual aids
 - a. Children & Family Ministries 7 Principles Rainbow
 - b. Ladder of Empowerment (www.dismantlingracism.org)
 - c. White racist to white ally ladder (www.dismantlingracism.org)
5. Workbooks / assessment resources
 - a. Inclusion Initiative Index by Rev. Tet Gallardo
 - b. Tasks of the Privileged and of the Oppressed, from Managing Hot Moments and interrupting Isms at Work, by Dr. Kenneth Hardy
(https://www.artsmidwest.org/sites/default/files/KenHardyTasks_Handout.pdf), also from article "African-American Experience and the Healing of Relationships"
<https://dulwichcentre.com.au/articles-about-narrative-therapy/african-american-experience/>
6. Organizations and websites
 - a. <https://www.dismantlingracism.org>
 - b. Alameda County racial equity resources: <http://www.racialequityalliance.org/resources/racial-equity-toolkit-opportunity-operationalize-equity/>
 - c. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/home>

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Appendix C: 2004 Anti-Racism Assessment of First Unitarian Church of Oakland

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ANTI-RACISM ASSESSMENT

Name of congregation

First Unitarian Church of Oakland

City

Oakland

State

CA

Name of person completing form

Mary Foran, Convenor of the Council of Convenors

Daytime Phone Number

925-370-5930

Please answer Yes or No

1. Our congregation is familiar with the UUA's Racial/Cultural Diversity Initiative. No (unless it's also called Journey Toward wholeness)
2. Our congregation has a mission statement that reflects a commitment to dismantling racism. Y/N
See note at end + attached mission statement
3. People of color hold leadership positions in our congregation. Yes
A few, including the Church Manager
4. Policies and procedures in the area of employee recruitment, outreach, and interviewing reflect an anti-racist workplace. No
5. Our congregation commits time and financial resources to working against racism. Yes
6. Our congregation commits time and financial resources to support other groups working against racism. yes
7. Religious education and overall programming reflect an anti-racist perspective. No
8. Our RE curricula and reading materials are reviewed for racial bias. No (we do use UUA and UUA-affiliated curricula that are screened in Boston)
9. Our congregation is known for not tolerating racist community practices and policies. Yes
10. Language used in worship services reflects a commitment to ending racism. No
11. Overall, what level of priority does the congregation give to dismantling racism?
1 ② 3 4 5
(1- low level to 5- high level)

12. What general programmatic racial justice efforts has your congregation made?

Over a period of 15 plus years

- ☐ Nothing
- ☒ Art displays
- ☒ Books/videos
- ☒ Choir exchanges
- ☒ Community social service projects
- ☒ Cultural/social activities
- ☒ Discussion groups
- ☒ Formed racial justice committee
- ☒ Forums
- ☒ Joined coalitions
- ☐ Language/liturgy
- ☐ Multi-cultural potlucks
- ☒ Music programs
- ☐ Outreach
- ☐ Policy changes
- ☒ Pulpit exchanges
- ☒ Raised money for social justice work
- ☒ Rentals
- ☒ Whitney Young Ministry Sundays
- ☒ Worship Services

13. Workshops in which your congregation has participated:

- ☒ Beyond Categorical Thinking
- ☒ Black Pioneers in a White Denomination — ~~showed video~~ *Showed video + had discussion*
- ☐ District Social justice anti-racism workshop
- ☐ Jubilee World I
- ☒ Jubilee World II *Feb 04*
- ☒ Other: Please describe.

Workshop with Bill Jones

14. Religious Education curricula offered:

UU for Adult/High School:

- ☒ How Open the Door? *January 04*
- ☐ In Our Hands
- ☒ Parents as Social Justice Educators
- ☐ Weaving the Fabric of Diversity
- ☐ Welcoming Congregation

UU for Children:

- ☒ In Our Hands
- ☐ Race to Justice
- ☐ Rainbow Children
- ☐ Rainbow Making

From Other Sources:

- ☐ Study Circles: Conversations on Race
- ☐ Roots and Wings
- ☒ Other. Please describe. *Women & Race Adult RE group for 18 months*

15. Resource materials used:

- (✓) Book/Video - Black Pioneers in a White Denomination
- () Empowerment: One Denomination's Quest for Racial Justice 1967-1982
- () Book - Clyde Ford's We Can All Get Along
- (✓) Other The Bondwoman's Narrative - book discussion
- () Other

16. Approximately how many people have been involved in these programs? 200 + over 15 years

17. What has been the overall response to your racial justice efforts?

Slow progress. Stop & start. Hard, consistent work by some/
frustration, disappointment. Lots of involvement at times. Also
resistance and lack of recognition of the complexity and power of
institutional racism.

18. Please describe your congregation's recent efforts towards racial justice and achieving racial and cultural diversity.

January 03 the Annual Leadership Retreat focused on JTW. Then
Board voted to embark on JTW. We are active members of the
Oakland Coalition of Congregations, a multi-faith, multi-race
justice activist coalition. We have taken strong visible stands on
racist statewide Propositions and organized local housing justice
efforts. We have active service projects with three local public
schools serving neighborhoods of color. Share space with neighboring

19. How would you evaluate the effect of your current efforts? outreach
ministry. and
() No progress (✓) Limited progress () Good momentum NA/AA
meetings

Note: Process for completing questionnaire included distribution to all Convenors for sharing with their Committee chairs - most did not do, then consensus discussion with Council of Convenors - it was a thoughtful, deliberative discussion. Product reviewed with Interim JTW Steering Committee & Ministers.

The only question we could not come to consensus on was whether our mission statement reflected a commitment to dismantling racism. Some said the reference to "creating a beloved community" referred to racism, others disagreed.



Our Faith

Mission Statement

Mission Statement of The First Unitarian Church of Oakland

Adopted by the congregation on March 18, 2001

"We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of Oakland, unite to build a community within and beyond our walls. Guided by individual conscience and many sources, we gather in worship and service to nourish the spirit, work for and celebrate the divine in all."

adopted AFTER
2004 assessment
↓

— Our Congregational Covenant —

(Adopted by congregational vote, March 18, 2012)

In the spirit of love and in service to our shared commitment to build an intentionally multigenerational, multiracial, multicultural, anti-oppressive religious community, we covenant to:

Encourage and grow relationships with one another based on mutual understanding and respect;

Work intentionally to counter oppression and prejudice among ourselves and in the world;

Listen actively to the needs of others, assume best intentions, and acknowledge differences among us;

Value and speak our truth, and uphold the truths spoken by others in our common search for meaning;

Engage in direct conversation when we have conflicts or concerns, and seek equitable solutions;

Give generously of our spiritual gifts and material resources;

Offer help when we can and ask for help when we need it.

In caring for each other and ourselves, we intend to live by this covenant to build a beloved community.

Appendix D: Anti-Racism in UU Congregations rubric

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	Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	Multiculturally Aware Congregation	Anti-Racist Congregation
Public Witness and Prophetic Voice	The congregation is too consumed with internal affairs and strife to have a significant presence in the public square. Fear of offending other members in the congregation keeps discussion about social and political issues to a minimum.	Small groups, usually comprised of the same people, represent the church in public witness. The leaders of these small groups have “pet projects and issues” that they champion and invite others to participate with them. The majority of the congregation is not involved in social justice efforts.	The congregation is in agreement about their role in the public square. A large group of members regularly, boldly, and accountably uses its institutional capital to publicly proclaim its yearning for racial justice and equity as a natural outgrowth of its religious values. The congregation has a vital and healthy process that engages newcomers and invites them to contribute their perspective and energy to the collective project in the public square.
Mission & Purpose; Leadership	There is no mention of racial justice in the congregation’s mission or vision. The purpose of the congregation is to continue to provide services and programs for its current members. It behaves like a clique or small club. Leadership is coveted and tightly held by a few individuals.	The congregation includes racial justice in its mission, but does not reflect it consistently in its practices. The congregation is not yet practicing what it preaches. Leadership is more distributed, but an idolatry of the democratic process and making sure every voice is heard and included keeps the congregation mired in discussion and ineffective in its practices.	The congregation engages in critical self-assessment and seeks outside consultation to ensure that power structures and practices align with stated racial justice values and make space for diverse leadership and participation. Racial justice is explicitly mentioned in its mission/vision, and concrete practices are in place to support the continued relevance of the work. Leadership is actively shared and is seen as a behavior rather than a role; it is leveraged effectively in the service of the agreed-upon mission and vision.
Worship	Worship privileges and centers the White Protestant tradition, both in its format and with the music and rituals it observes.	Worship sometimes incorporates practices or music from other cultures. Can sometimes fall into cultural misappropriation – using these resources thoughtlessly or without proper contextualization.	The congregation regularly expresses its commitment to building a racially just and loving world through communal worship, embodied ritual, and practices of joy and gratitude. Multiple voices and cultures are carefully and thoughtfully incorporated in the service. Worship also occurs outside of the traditional Sunday morning format.

	Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	Multiculturally Aware Congregation	Anti-Racist Congregation
Small group ministry & Pastoral care	No awareness of the impact of race/ethnicity and other social identities have on our daily experiences. Small group ministry does not address racial justice issues, or the impact of social justice work. Pastoral care providers have no training in supporting activists or people of color with the specific challenges they encounter.	Pastoral care providers have some awareness of the impact of race/ethnicity and other social identities have on our daily experiences. Success in addressing these issues is mixed, depending on the person providing the pastoral care. There is a budding awareness that the work of social justice and anti-racism in our many roles is taxing and requires support.	Multiculturally competent pastoral care acknowledges the various ways our social identities impact our daily lives. An understanding of power dynamics and the consequences of white supremacy is included in this understanding. All pastoral care providers have been trained and are supported in this awareness, and have tools and techniques that are effective in supporting those on the front lines of AR/AO work. The congregation prioritizes nurturing the spiritual and emotional health of its justice leaders, and equipping them with the competencies to be faithful and effective.
Religious education for adults	Issues of racial justice are not included in religious education. The congregation does not recognize the impact that anti-oppressive learning has on our many roles as parents, managers, teachers, service providers, etc.	Racial justice education is sometimes offered and is an option for interested members. The focus is primarily on helping white congregants become more “woke” regarding racism. The congregation offers some support for folks who want to apply their anti-racism skills in other areas of their lives (work, school, other volunteer organizations).	The congregation offers regular opportunities for members to learn about justice issues, gain concrete skills, and develop political analysis. The congregation expects its members to be engaged in their own education and development around racial justice issues, and it recognizes that it has an active role in supporting people as they apply what they are learning to other areas in their lives. The spiritual needs of members of color in the congregation are acknowledged and addressed through educational programming.
Religious education for children and youth	All education is targeted toward white children and youth. No discussion around racial justice issues is included.	Other cultures are sometimes incorporated into religious education. Sometimes racial justice issues are brought up, like when we study Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.	The different needs of white youth and youth of color are acknowledged and addressed in religious education. The teaching/learning occurs with a complex understanding of both social identity and faith development stages.

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	Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)	Multiculturally Aware Congregation	Anti-Racist Congregation
Partnerships and Solidarity with community	The congregation exists in a bubble, with no partnerships in the community. In this type of congregation, the weekdays and the weekend are separate and independent spheres.	The congregation is building relationships with community members and organizations, and is getting involved in local issues. Some activist work is shared with others in the congregation, but the definition and scope of that work is not actively discussed or negotiated.	The congregation cultivates cultural and spiritual humility, and develops deep and mutually-fulfilling partnerships with other faith communities and coalitions working for racial justice. Congregants understand that they have opportunities to influence systems in their work life and the communities they live in; they leverage resources and support in their congregation to make this work more effective.
Finances	A small group of decision makers manage and control budget decisions for the congregation. No money is allocated toward racial justice work. There is little to no awareness of socially responsible investing by the congregation or its members.	Racial justice work is on a shoestring budget. It is often one of the first things cut when money is tight. There is some awareness of socially responsible investing, but it is not discussed openly and honestly in the congregation. Money is still seen as a taboo topic for the most part.	Commitment to racial justice work is reflected in the budget on a consistent basis. The congregation is self-aware about its financial resources and networks, and is willing to leverage this power to channel money into movement building for racial justice beyond the congregation. The congregation also engages in socially responsible investing and its members' financial practices are in alignment with these principles.
Theology	Individual expression and freedom of belief are the most important values. Theology is not public or shared.	The intersection between racial justice and theology is sometimes explored or shared, regarding individual members' theologies.	The congregation sees racial justice work as a natural expression their tradition's values and beliefs, can articulate a communal theology of racial justice, and is able to evaluate issues and actions through the lens of their faith.