

# Racial Justice Task Force Minutes – 15 February 2018

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**In Attendance:** Generose Lambert, Jud Lawrie, Zoe Hart, Sarah Rosedahl, Gabriel Ely, Martha Molpus, Linda Cooper, Sandy Beehler

## Agenda

- Opening Words (Martha) →
- Racial justice struggles and highlights
- Approved January minutes
- Update on BLM banner hanging
  - The banner will go up in the Meeting House for the 2/25 service and stay inside for one week.
  - The banner will go up outside and be dedicated on 3/4.
  - The banner will be yellow with black lettering and a black SWL heart.
- Update on planning a gathering for FUUSB POC
  - Gabriel will make a Doodle Poll including folks who've been asked so far.
  - Calling it a gathering for POC might exclude folks who don't self identify that way. Something more like "FUUSB community members who share diverse racial and cultural backgrounds" would be more welcoming.
- Service Planning group update
  - The 2/25 service planning is going well! We hope lots of folks come.
- Discernment Process
  - Linda will reach out to Sally about facilitating a first meeting of the "Action" sub-team that is focused on doing work in the greater VT community.
  - The form and function of that meeting is flexible. It might include:
    - Self naming
    - Drawing ideas from the discernment process
    - Coming up with new ideas
    - Planning a way to get feedback from POC
    - Brainstorming local orgs/movements to support and how to do that without overwhelming limited staffing resources
    - Creating a vision/mission for the group
    - Planning recruitment of more members
    - Discussing leadership structure

### **The Promise and the Practice: Chalice Lighting #1**

We light our flaming chalice as a beloved people united in love and thirsting for restorative justice.

May it melt away the tethers that uphold whiteness in our midst.

May it spark in us a spirit of humility.

May it ignite in us radical love that transforms our energy into purposeful action.

This a chalice of audacious hope.

This chalice shines a light on our shared past, signaling our intention to listen deeply, reflect wisely, and move boldly toward our highest ideals.

**-Rebekah Savage**

- Zoe & Gabriel will meet soon to discuss the subteam(s) internal the the FUUSB and make a plan for getting the ball rolling on those after the banner has been installed when time resources are greater.
- On April 13 & 14 there is a UUA Regional Meeting in NH focused on white supremacy
  - Linda Cooper is planning to attend and would like to carpool either as a driver or passenger.
- BLUU
  - We would still like to try to meet the \$4700 matching goal.
    - We can't fundraise for it during the stewardship campaign.
    - We currently have raised a few hundred dollars.
    - The loose plate collection on 2/25 will be shared with BLUU.
  - We planned to write statement of conscience for the congregation to vote on, but it makes the most sense to instead have the congregation vote to adopt the 8th principle.
    - The 8th principal states: "journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."
    - This was written by UUs of color and accomplishes at least as much as passing a statement of conscious would.
    - A new principle is not only publicly visible, but affects the core of our belief system.
- Empowering leadership to make spending decisions
  - It was decided that the RJTF co-chairs are empowered to spend the RJTF budget without seeking prior consensus, but must report back to the RJTF for feedback and make spending decisions with the mission of the society and the Task Force as a guide.
- Jud will be stepping down as co-chair of the RJTF at the end of June
  - Jud has decided he wants to focus his time and attention on local elections in order to do his part to combat Trumpism.
  - Gabriel would like to stay on as co-chair, but taking on the work of both chairs is too much.
  - Finding a new co-chair would be ideal and is the first step to take, but restructuring leadership within the RJTF is another possible solution.
- Next meeting:
  - Date: March 15
  - Time: 5:00 – 6:30
  - Opening Words: ???

## Racial Justice Task Force Mission and Goals 2017-2018

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### **Mission**

The mission of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington (FUUSB) Racial Justice Task Force is to engage Society members and friends in the work of identifying, understanding, and undoing racism within ourselves, our faith community, and our broader society. While racism affects many different groups of people, at this time in our history the task force recognizes the urgency of racism as it affects black people in America.

We seek to understand and address the underlying attitudes and habitual responses to anti-black racism in America in our times, including white privilege and white fragility. We engage in this work through discussion, supporting racial justice work in the larger community, and participating in direct action.

### **Goals**

1. Deepen the congregation's understanding of and engagement around racial justice issues to ensure that they're well prepared to be active and outspoken advocates for racial justice.
2. Continue the process for engaging the congregation in discerning our Society's work in Racial Justice and identify one or more projects for the FUUSB to pursue.
3. Pass a statement of conscience in support of Black Lives Matter and hang a Black Lives Matter banner outside of the Meetinghouse.