

## The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle History at UUSD Task Force Focus

This task force engaged with the congregation about the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle and discussed views on dismantling racism against Black and Indigenous people in our society and within themselves. A key component of the discernment process was in-depth education and discussion about the historic roots of racism and the kind of anti-racist action needed today.

### To engage the congregation, the Task Force conducted the following activities (in reverse chronological order):

- In June of 2022, at a congregational meeting, UUSD **voted** to adopt the following as an 8<sup>th</sup> principle (to add to the 7 principles already adopted): “The liberation, transformation, and love that comes with dismantling racism and all oppressions in ourselves and in our society.”
- Conducted **Discussion Forums** (1 in person and 1 online) where the 8<sup>th</sup> principle task force presented the congregation with a choice of two statements that would, if adopted, make a public statement that UUSD was committed to being a beloved community and not tolerate racism or other oppressions. The statement would also publicly commit to working toward making that a reality. The first option was a statement developed as a grassroots movement within the Unitarian Universalist faith community (1) below. Some UUSD members agreed in principle but were uncomfortable with the language and developed the second option (2) below.
  - Option 1: 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.
  - Option 2: The liberation, transformation, and love that comes with dismantling racism and all oppressions in ourselves and in our society.
- Created a [Black History Test](#) - a quick online quiz that congregants could take on their own to see how much they learned about Black History over the year of discernment.
- Showed the **Film: Who We Are** - a powerful documentary about the history of racism in the U.S. In the film, criminal defense and civil rights lawyer, Jeffery Robinson, interweaves lecture, personal anecdotes, interviews, and shocking revelations to draw a stark timeline of anti-Black racism in the United States, from slavery to the modern myth of a post-racial America. Robinson shows how legalized discrimination and state-sanctioned brutality, murder, dispossession, and disenfranchisement continued long after slavery ended, profoundly impeding Black Americans’ ability to create and accumulate wealth as well as to gain access to jobs, housing, education, and health care. Weaving heartbreak, humor, passion, and rage, Robinson’s words lay bare an all-but-forgotten past, as well as our shared responsibility to create a better country in our lifetimes.
- Offered a **6-session discussion group** entitled **Just What is Going on with White People?** using the 14-episode podcast docuseries titled "Seeing White." Participants listened to two – three episodes of the podcast each week. The podcast addresses: Just what is going on with white people? Police shootings of unarmed African Americans. Acts of domestic terrorism by white supremacists. The renewed embrace of raw, undisguised white-identity politics. Unending racial inequity in schools, housing, criminal justice, and hiring. Some of this feels new, but in truth it’s an old story. Why? Where did the notion of “whiteness” come from? What does it mean? What is whiteness for? In this series, *Scene on Radio* host and producer John Biewen took a deep dive into these questions, along with an array of

leading scholars and regular guest Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika.

- Encouraged congregants to take an online **Implicit Bias Test** that was linked to on the UUSD website. — <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>.
- Created a tour of places significant to the history of BIPOC that required deciphering clues and doing some research. The **Sussex County BIPOC History Hunt** is available with instructions. [Click here](#)
- Created and distributed an anonymous 8th Principle Initiative **Survey** to assess where congregational members were about engaging in anti-racism work.
- Arranged for Bruce Pollack-Johnson, the co-author of the proposed 8<sup>th</sup> principle to lead a **worship service** and remain to answer questions.
- Hosted four **Community Meetings** that allowed for discussion of the 8<sup>th</sup> principle and what UUSD might want to do about adopting it. The first three meetings were on Zoom only. The last meeting was after a Sunday service and was in person at UUSD.
- Created a series of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle readiness **assessment tools** for committees and other groups within UUSD to consider how consciousness of anti-racism and anti-oppression could influence the workings of relevant groups towards building a diverse Beloved Community at UUSD. The UUSD Board and almost every committee and covenant group within UUSD completed their self-assessment. Each shared with the Task Force their long- and short-term goals developed as a result of the assessment. [8th Principle Readiness Analysis Explanation](#). You may download the forms for the following groups.
  - [Adult Faith Exploration](#)
  - [Children's Faith Exploration](#)
  - [Communications](#)
  - [Covenant Groups](#)
  - [Executive Team and Administration](#)
  - [Expansion and Planning](#)
  - [Finance](#)
  - [FUNdraising](#)
  - [Human Resources](#)
  - [Leadership and Governance](#)
  - [Leadership Development](#)
  - [Kitchen Committee](#)
  - [Membership and Greeters](#)
  - [Pastoral Care](#)
  - [Rental and Usage](#)
  - [Social Justice](#)
  - [Worship and Theology](#)
- Made available a **list of Black and Indigenous Peoples Organizations** in Sussex County Delaware

**Members of the Task Force:** Susan Goekler — Chair, Mac Goekler, Kaz Huston, Betty Kirk, Darlene Sellers, and Rev. Heather Rion Starr.