

**Universalist Church of Nashua, NH (UUCN)
Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

October 13, 2021

Meeting held via videoconference due to COVID-19

Final Minutes by Jodie K. Holway, Clerk of the Board of Trustees

Reviewed by Lindsey Sylvester, Andy Capen, Burns Fisher, Victoria Agnew

Meeting Attendees: Victoria Agnew, Caro Barschow, Andy Capen, Burns Fisher, Roy Goodman, Lindsey Hedrick (Vice President), Jodie K. Holway (Clerk), Lindsey Sylvester (Treasurer), Brenna Woods (President), and Rev. Allison Palm

Excused: Cecile Bonvouloir

Full Agenda: Appendix A

1. Chalice Lighting and Check-In

1. This year each Board meeting will begin with a story about the whole congregation
 - i. Last year we began by telling a story about a congregant
2. Storytelling by Jodie K. Holway
 - i. Proud of our church for hanging the Black Lives Matter banner
 - ii. This'll be a short story today but it was a long process to agree to hang it up
 1. Rev. Allison led us through many workshops, conversations, learnings
 2. Opportunities to write our comments and fears and aspirations about it on yellow slips of paper provided in every pew, all were heard
 3. First we hung the banner inside on the organ for us to admire and get used to
 4. Then outside, as a testament to all people's inherent worth and dignity
 5. Whole community can see it as they pass by
 - iii. After 3 years of New England weather, banner is a bit tattered and faded
 1. New BLM banner designed with Black-owned business
 2. Please come to its rededication on Saturday Oct 30,
 3. Rededicate ourselves to this work, with attendees from BLM Nashua
3. Brenna Woods is happy to be able to describe our church as "the one with the BLM banner" rather than "the big white church" ever since our banner went up!

2. Minister's Report, Rev. Allison (see Appendix B)

1. Switch to leading worship from the sanctuary again, after so long from home due to pandemic
 - i. Big effort, lots of people are involved and helping make it happen
 - ii. Evolving, getting better as it proceeds; getting feedback on it as we go
2. First multiplatform memorial service, for Arthur Reublinger
 - i. His family attended in person, six people were in the sanctuary
 - ii. The rest of attendees were online, from different communities, not just congregants

3. Some outdoor worship opportunities at our church building
 - i. First was a hymn sing in September, attendees loved it, planned again for November
 - ii. Outdoor option for Oct 24, 2021: Switch-it-up Sunday
 1. Workshops planned: 2 outdoors and 3 online
 2. Probably won't be frequent due to lots of logistics, but now in fine weather
 - iii. Series of timeslots to add to the All Souls' Altar to remember those who have died
4. Planning Christmas Eve – right now developing two alternate plans
 - i. What if we cannot gather in the sanctuary?
 - ii. What if a limited number of people can gather in the sanctuary?
5. Faith Formation, this season is when lots of things start
 - i. Breakout Groups in zoom
 - ii. FF Family Hour: held monthly, families pick up packets and participate in activities
 1. First one had bulb planting and other activities, went well, 40 people came
 - iii. Ropes Course
 - iv. No OWL until January, hoping we can be in-person by then
 1. Trying to connect the OWL youth in the fall a few ways
 - v. Adult FF started a few weeks ago
 - vi. Newcomer sessions "Welcome to UU" is started, we have a few newcomers!
6. Social Justice
 - i. Study Group Widening the Circle of Concern,
 1. Two sessions so far, really rich discussions
 - ii. Land acknowledgement group: shared their work this past Sunday, working hard
 - iii. Crop Walk coming up with the interfaith community
 - iv. Climate Justice service this Sunday, led by Caro Barschow
 - v. BLM banner rededication on Saturday Oct 30, to recommit this to the community
7. Memorial services that have been put off are now restarting
 - i. Rev Allison officiated at one, while Caro took another with a conflicting time
 - ii. She senses some heaviness, depression, things are feeling difficult...
8. Building Our Vision team is working hard
 - i. Seven different architects have now had walkthroughs of our buildings
 - ii. Their proposals are all due this week, so far received only one – it's fascinating
 - iii. Esp. Jon Lasselle and Frank Grossman spent many hours on these walkthroughs
9. Safe Congregation training, based on [this policy](#)
 - i. Some of this board attended, thank you; finalizing the videos if you missed it
 - ii. Request for background check will be emailed if you're starting a new term on Board
10. Ericka Lavalley is still on parental leave
 - i. Note that covering for this is creating a fair amount of extra work for Rev. Allison
11. Auction for Stewardship is coming up
 - i. This is the only auction this year – unlike last year, when we changed schedules
 - ii. Some good donations are coming in now
12. Fall Cleanup – get folks together to rake leaves – note that this is more fun than it sounds!
 - i. Just responsible for the church grounds, not cemetery

13. Nashua Telegraph op-ed written by Rev. Allison
 - i. Burns Fisher requests this to be posted, make this more public
 - ii. <https://www.nashuatelegraph.com/opinion/local-commentary/2021/09/25/faith-leader-to-congress-pass-child-care-and-paid-leave-for-all/>
 14. Brenna Woods noted that our church policies all say “he/she” referring to minister
 - i. Monitoring Committee already aware, will make this language more inclusive “they”
 - ii. To go with Monitoring Committee changes about grievance procedures last year, was the Personnel Manual supposed to be updated too? TBD, Jodie and committee don’t recall – we will get back into this as we kick off our other sections of policy this year
3. **Baseline Survey Review**, Brenna Woods (see Appendix C)
1. For each, discuss:
 - i. What stands out as a noticeable trend, compared with last year’s findings?
 - ii. Why might each trend be occurring? How to improve in future?
 2. General comment: COVID skews everything, will these results look valid in 10 years?
 - i. Well, right now the staff needs this guidance for programming today
 - ii. Even if it’s a blip in the long term after we’re back accustomed to doing things the way we’ll be doing them then
 - iii. And note, responses are from late spring/early summer when Covid was starting to lift
 3. Q1, Efforts to Teach our Children
 - i. This year a bit higher score for Somewhat effective
 - ii. Maybe zoom is more visible – e.g. Wonderbot, kids are more central in zoom services
 - iii. Maybe adults who don’t have children are starting to get the idea
 - iv. Brenna Woods, as a remote teacher professionally, has observed that Zoom exposure by parents has increased their understanding and respect for teaching their kids
 - v. Hmmm, how can we continue this when back in person?
 - vi. Now note we have workshops for kids only 1/month, not 3/month, and remainder in service with adults – wonder what effect this has to make the children more visible?
 4. Q2, Comfortable taking new Risks, Make Mistakes in Congregation
 - i. Overall lower scores – maybe doing this is harder with technology and isolated
 - ii. E.g. asking our musicians to make a recording – technology is still overwhelming
 - iii. And when you’re scared/tired/depressed, everything is harder
 5. Q3, Ask People at Church to share life’s Struggles, Joys, and Transitions
 - i. Overall good, more people answered Extremely supported
 - ii. Maybe because people had so much struggle, there was no choice but to share it
 - iii. Typing your joys/concerns in Zoom is way easier than standing up in front of the congregation, doesn’t even require the forethought of writing a card
 1. Note that if someone takes that risk to ask for help, they would be surprised at the outpouring of cards and support they’ll get
 - iv. How to make it easier to retain this level of sharing, going forward when in person?
 1. Texting at a given point in the service, moment of silent contemplation where you can and are encouraged to text, or like a conference scrolling feed
 2. Rev Allison says yes we’re working on this – from our zoom experience, planning ways to retain the real-time text interaction

- v. Sheer amount of encouragement from leadership really helped people to share
 - vi. Church has been very consistent, unlike work or daycare or family gatherings – vs. church was very dependable, the one thing that was clear and could count on during COVID, so it's easier to ask for help from something that's so steady
6. Q4, When talk to others about UUism
 - i. This is improved, maybe because we're so steady
 - ii. Church has provided a good model that we can brag about, it's working
 - iii. Overall the numbers that aren't changing much is a testament to this steadiness
 - iv. Though note, the first year of survey responses was kind of in quarantine too
 7. Q5, Living your UU Values day-to-day
 - i. Some of us might be additionally frustrated, so need to put in more effort to live them
 8. Q6, Spiritual Practice for Wonder, to what extent has church enhanced it
 - i. Discussion: are people attending these online programs, more accessible; is this an intention to keep up after pandemic is over?
 1. Yes, online or hybrid ongoing – setting up technology in a couple of rooms to make it easy to do this
 2. Encourage each group to be intentional about whether it's necessary to meet in person every time – or X times per year in person, remainder via Zoom
 3. Accessibility including people who don't have transport or don't drive at night
 4. Easier for parents with small kids, folks who live further away
 5. Efficient to be overcommitted and jam many meetings in w/o commute time!
 9. Q7, Opportunities you wanted for Leadership, and how much Support
 - i. Increased at highest and lowest end
 1. Fortunately more increase in taking on a role than those who didn't want to
 - ii. Glad there's still nobody who felt no support or was shut out
 10. Q8, Did Church Leadership help you Grow
 - i. Discussed this last month: maybe people feel pretty skilled already? "Pretty fly"
 11. Q9, My Contributions have Direct Effect on UUCN
 - i. This is moving a bit in the right direction
 - ii. How could you not know?!? Maybe people think their contributions are too tiny
 - iii. Responding Neutral on this seems nonsensical (same with every other question)
 12. Q10, Participate in Larger UU Community
 - i. Very good! Virtual events are lowering the bar, making participation more accessible
 13. Q11, Do you see Members Working to Promote Healing in our World?
 - i. Increases on positive, decreases in the negative bottom end
 - ii. Several individual comments say e.g. "We do too much racial justice work, if we feel guilty, can we stop?" so in this question we see that everyone recognizes that we're doing this work, unable to ignore it even if they want to
 - iii. And if we're not making some people mad, we're not doing enough! Per Rev. Allison
 14. Q12, Teachings help understand Systemic Oppression and work to Dismantle
 - i. Maybe people are already sufficiently aware; response hasn't changed from last year
 15. Q13, Levels of Commitment to Racial Justice
 - i. Maybe some people think we got a bit better, others see a bit worse

16. Discussion of survey's free-text comments
 - i. Are comments valuable? Yes, but we must know they're just one voice on one day
Communication and Board of Trustees connectivity, minutes were not all posted
 1. We have already reached out to people who had specific comments like this
 - ii. Relax vs. resist, preference for what they get at church, some are just seeking peace
 - iii. Request for older-person style service – less outgoing, less active with new Ends
 1. Perhaps the new covenant group might help here? Name is Elderberries!!
 2. Maybe this is due to increased intergenerational, which elders don't want?
 3. Note this church has handled this melding of ages better than others
 - a. Rev. Allison is talking to other church leadership whose youngest attendee is 62 years old
 - b. Here we've made a big shift and people are willing to do it, even if not everyone is in love with it
 - iv. Difference between announcing opportunities vs. asking people to attend a rally
 1. Being invited by "the Church" vs . individuals supporting various causes
 2. Jodie actively invites Board to attend BLM banner rededication, please show up to make this short event successful
 - v. After 1 year this person still feels like a newbie – that's a shame
 1. But no, there are opportunities even today
 - vi. Some people commented that we're not a relaxing enough place due to too much racial justice focus; other comments say that we have the right balance; or rather that we should do less relaxing in order to do more about climate change!

4. White Supremacy Culture Traits, Rev. Allison (Appendix D)

1. Handout was mailed to our homes on paper: [original summary](#) from 1999 by Tema Okun
 - i. [Newer longer version](#) is updated from 2020, though not yet distilled
2. We had a great conversation at the end-of-summer retreat about half of these topics
3. Valuable for all of us to do the rest of them now:
 - i. Three breakout groups to do 2 topics each, in 15 mins
 - ii. Think about these topics in context of UU Nashua, present back any realizations
4. Power Hoarding – group 1 (Jodie K. Holway, Burns Fisher, Lindsey Sylvester)
 - i. Newbies do represent themselves, this is pretty good even compared with the people who believe they speak on behalf of the whole congregation
 - ii. Term limits and a wider spread of volunteers for leadership
5. Fear of Open Conflict – group 1
 - i. You can evaluate and disregard a complaint, but not due to the way it's presented
 - ii. UUs err on the side of overly polite, not facing conflict
 1. Sometimes we do talk about and address the conflicts
 2. A good example was the Family Corner pews: in this case we did face it, did a service to explain the thinking – even if not everyone ended happy/resolved
 - iii. And also you need to be OK that conflict won't always be resolved

6. Individualism – group 2 (Brenna Woods, Roy Goodman, Victoria Agnew, Rev. Allison)
 - i. Non hierarchical
 7. Progress is Bigger/More – group 2
 - i. Church talks a lot about Growing the numbers of the church – rooted in capitalism (as in, a company with the same numbers as last year is thought to die)
 - ii. Think about quality and reach, not just numbers – reframing as “expanding our reach” vs “growing our congregation”
 8. Objectivity – group 2
 - i. Esp. for COVID, vaccines, scientific vs. emotional responses
 - ii. Validate that some can have emotional responses that you don’t have
 9. Right to Comfort – group 3 (Andy Capen, Caro Barschow, Lindsey Hedrick)
 - i. Just like our survey comment: Racial justice makes me feel guilty and uncomfortable
 - ii. Moving through the discomfort to learn and grow – BoT working to take these comments in stride and continue to move forward
 10. Only One Right Way – group 3
 - i. Once they hear the right way, they’ll see the light and adopt; related to fear of conflict
 - ii. Ability to craft an argument is intellectual and admired – person with a different verbal style doesn’t have as much smarts or contribution as masters of rhetoric
 - iii. We can name it, when one person keeps coming back to harp on the single right way
5. **Financial Records Review**, Lindsey Sylvester
1. Topic moved to next month, due to time limits tonight
6. **Nominating Committee Liaisons**, Brenna Woods
1. Last year, Victoria and Jodie were liaisons
 2. Both would be fine to continue if needed, unless anyone steps forward to replace them
 3. Karen Leonard needs our voice to contact liaisons for the year
7. **Committee Check-In**, Brenna Woods
1. Monitoring plans for this year
 - i. Meet with Rev Allison to review the policy section on Exec Limitations and overall feel
 - ii. Then start digging in, to revise as needed
 2. Endowment Committee plans for this year
 - i. Finalize fact sheet, this is a big step
 - ii. Topics: our endowment, UU Common Endowment Fund, and questions from Invested Funds Committee
 - iii. Intern Caro Barschow expresses curiosity on this topic, invited to read and even join

8. COVID Check-In, Rev. Allison

1. Safe Congregation Team in charge of this, they've spent lots of hours over past year
2. As a Board we'll know where these policies came from, in case others wonder to us
3. Principles put out by UUA as guidance for us – August 2021 updated
<https://www.uua.org/leadership/library/delta-guidance>
 - i. Root our decisions in the values of inclusion and consent – inclusive of the most vulnerable, and make sure we have authentic consent, from people at so many different comfort levels
 - ii. Follow the science – even though it keeps changing
 - iii. Go slow and be flexible – don't rush into things, take a next step even if not comfortable, know we'll continuously be changing
 - iv. Be realistic with expectations of ourselves and others – current capacity of leadership, and of volunteers and lay-leaders and task-doers
4. Leads us to be more conservative in our policies than New Hampshire or other denominations
 - i. Which can feel challenging, yes we all want to be back together - but we're not yet through this pandemic in any way!
 - ii. Hearing more nudginess in both directions: We're too lenient, we're too strict!!
5. Safe Congregation Team could use more support and more talking it up, to get people on board and more patient and more appreciative, tell people about the UUA principles

9. Covenantal Check-out and Closing Words

Appendix A: Full Agenda

Appendix B: Minister's Report

Appendix C: Congregational Ends Survey

Appendix D: Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture, by Tema Okun

Agenda

Board of Trustees, Unitarian-Universalist Church of Nashua

October 14, 2021 6:30pm

- 6:30 (10) Check in**
- 6:40 (5) Chalice Lighting: Jodie's Story**
- 6:45 (10) Follow Up Story Telling (Everyone)**
- 6:55 (20) Allison's Board Report (Allison)**
- 7:15 (45) Baseline Survey Review (Brenna)**
 - Goal is to look at the survey and notice trends
- 8:00 (5) Break**
- 8:05 (45) White Supremacy Culture Traits (Allison)**
- 8:50 (5) Nomination Committee Liaisons (Brenna)**
- 8:55 (10) FRR Report (Lindsey S.)**
- 9:05 (10) COVID Check In (Allison)**
- 9:15 (10) Sub Committee Check in (Brenna)**
- 9:25 (5) Check Out and Closing Words (Brenna & Allison)**

Minister's Report to the Board of Trustees
Rev. Allison Palm
UU Church of Nashua, NH
October 13, 2021
Covering September 17 – October 13, 2021

I will offer the updates part of my report verbally this month

Children's Winter Garden with White Wing School

- Classes began on September 7. Classes are going well so far, as students and teachers get used to the new school year.
- Enrollment is at 78, which is nearly full.
- There have been some staffing changes in this first part of the year. One newly hired teacher did not work out.
- Chris is continuing to work on recruiting new parent Board members.

Minister's Schedule

- I was off on Oct. 10 and will be in worship the rest of the month, In November I am planning to take the entire week of Thanksgiving for either vacation or study leave (I haven't decided yet).

Monitoring Report of Policy B: Treatment of Church Members, Visitors, and Groups

The Executive shall not cause or allow conditions or procedures that are unsafe, disrespectful, or unnecessarily intrusive to members, friends, or visitors, including children. Accordingly, the Executive shall develop and maintain a Safe Congregation Policy that formalizes and details the necessary systems, policies, and procedures to support this goal. The Board of Trustees will approve this policy and any changes, but implementation will be the responsibility of the Executive, except when issues arise that require Board involvement as noted in the policy itself.

Interpretation: I interpret "unsafe" conditions to mean conditions that jeopardize a person's physical or psychological well-being, recognizing that we cannot guarantee safety, but will do our best to mitigate risk. I interpret "disrespectful" conditions to be those that do not honor the worth and dignity of each person. I interpret "unnecessarily intrusive" to mean conditions that invade someone's privacy without cause.

Data: Our Safe Congregation Policy can be found here: <https://www.uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Safe-Congregation-Policy-10.4.2018.pdf>. The policy covers how we will mitigate risk in the congregation, includes a behavior policy that addresses behavior that would fit in the category of disrespectful. In addition, there are several provisions in the policy around confidentiality. We are working on getting our volunteers to complete all the training and screening requirements that are needed at the beginning of the church year.

We also have a comprehensive Covid-19 policy about church programming and building use, which can be found here: <https://www.uunashua.org/covid19>

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance

The Executive shall not allow members of the congregation to be disconnected from the life and care of the Church.

Interpretation: Last year we decided that this was better to be monitored using the Ends Survey that we have been discussing over the last two meetings, so I will not provide additional data here.

The Executive shall not allow Church groups (committees, task forces, and other groups) to operate without his or her authorization and supervision.

Interpretation: All groups affiliated with the church should be operating with the knowledge of the Executive, and should have a staff point person who checks in on them at least once a year.

Data: The following is a list of groups affiliated with the church and their staff point person:

- Worship Associates: Rev. Allison Palm
- Pastoral Care Associates: Rev. Allison Palm
- Stewardship Team: Rev. Allison Palm
- Lead Greeters: Rev. Allison Palm
- Social Justice Team (and all sub-teams): Rev. Allison Palm
- CWG-WWS Board: Rev. Allison Palm
- Huntington Group: Rev. Allison Palm
- Building Our Vision Team: Rev. Allison Palm
- Fellowship & Fun Team: Rev. Allison Palm
- Music Team: Jed Holland
- Choir: Jed Holland
- Covenant Groups: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Faith Formation Teachers: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Adult Faith Formation Leaders: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Our Whole Lives: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Youth Advisors/Youth Group: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Buddhist Meditation Group: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- UU Hikers: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Elderberries: Sadie Kahn-Greene
- Property Team: Ericka LaValley
- AV Volunteers: Ericka Lavalley
- Intern Committee: Caro Barschow

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance

Policy C: Treatment of Church Staff and Volunteers

With respect to treatment of staff and volunteers, the Executive Director may not cause or allow conditions that are unsafe, inhumane, unfair, or unprofessional. Accordingly, the Executive Director may not:

1. *Discriminate (as defined by city, state, and federal laws) among existing or potential staff or volunteers on other than clearly job-related criteria, individual performance, or individual qualifications.*

Interpretation: The Executive Director will make decisions about recruiting, training, promotions, compensation, benefits, and all similar employment decisions in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other classification protected by law.

Data: All staff decisions have been made in compliance with federal, state and local laws.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

2. *Operate without written personnel policies that clarify procedures for staff.*

Interpretation: There will be a Personnel Manual that is easily found and kept up to date on the website that spells out employment policies and practices, wage and hour administration and benefits. All staff will be provided with a copy of the Personnel Manual at the time they are hired and a signed acknowledgement of receipt will be kept in their file in the church office. All staff will be notified promptly of any changes to the Personnel Manual.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here: <https://www.uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-20190521.pdf>. All staff have a signed acknowledgement of receiving the Personnel Manual in their Personnel file in the church office.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

3. *Withhold from staff a due-process internal grievance procedure.*

Interpretation: A clear grievance procedure will be included in the Personnel Manual.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here: <https://www.uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-20190521.pdf>. Section 2.4 includes a clear grievance procedure.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

4. *Prevent staff from grieving to the Church President when internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and the employee alleges either that*
 - a. *Board policy has been violated to the employee's detriment, or*
 - b. *Board policy does not adequately protect the employee's human rights.*

Interpretation: The grievance procedure in the Personnel Manual will include the option to bring the grievance to the church president when Board policy has been violated to the employee's detriment, or Board policy does not adequately protect the employee's human rights.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here: <https://www.uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-20190521.pdf>. Section 2.4 includes a grievance procedure that offers the option to grieve to the Church President.

Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

5. Allow the Church's at-will employment policies to be jeopardized (see Policy D-3-ii).

Interpretation: The Personnel Manual will include language that clarifies that the relationship between employer and employee is legally defined as "employment at will," which means that such employment may be terminated without penalty by either party for any reason, with or without notice.

Data: The Personnel Manual can be found here: <https://www.uunashua.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/UU-Nashua-Personnel-Manual-20190521.pdf>. Section 1.1 includes this language

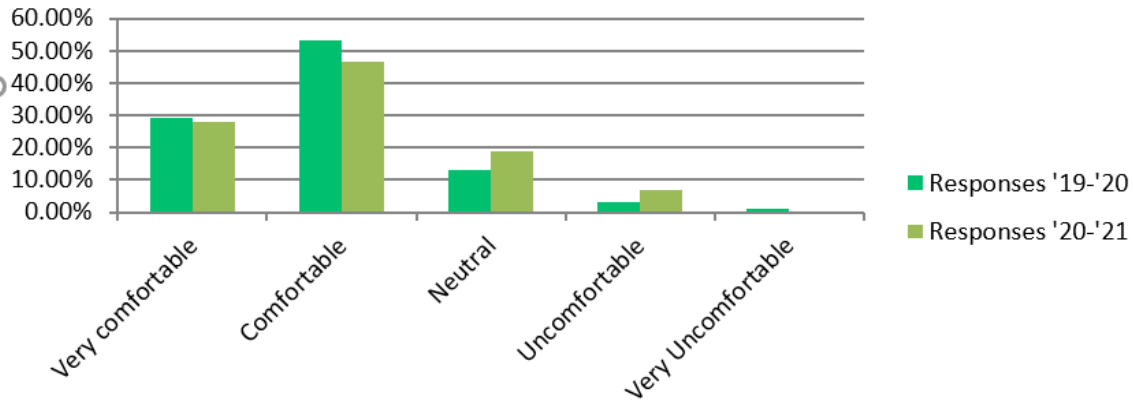
Statement of Compliance: I report compliance.

Question 1

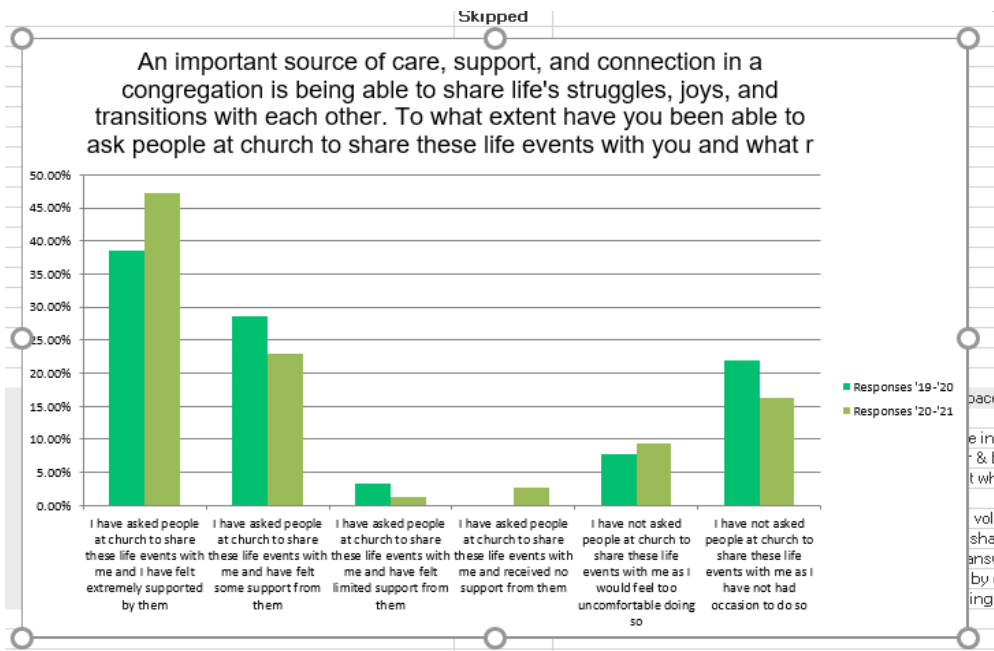


Question 2

To what extent do you feel that you can comfortably take risks, try new experiences, make mistakes and ask for help within our congregation?



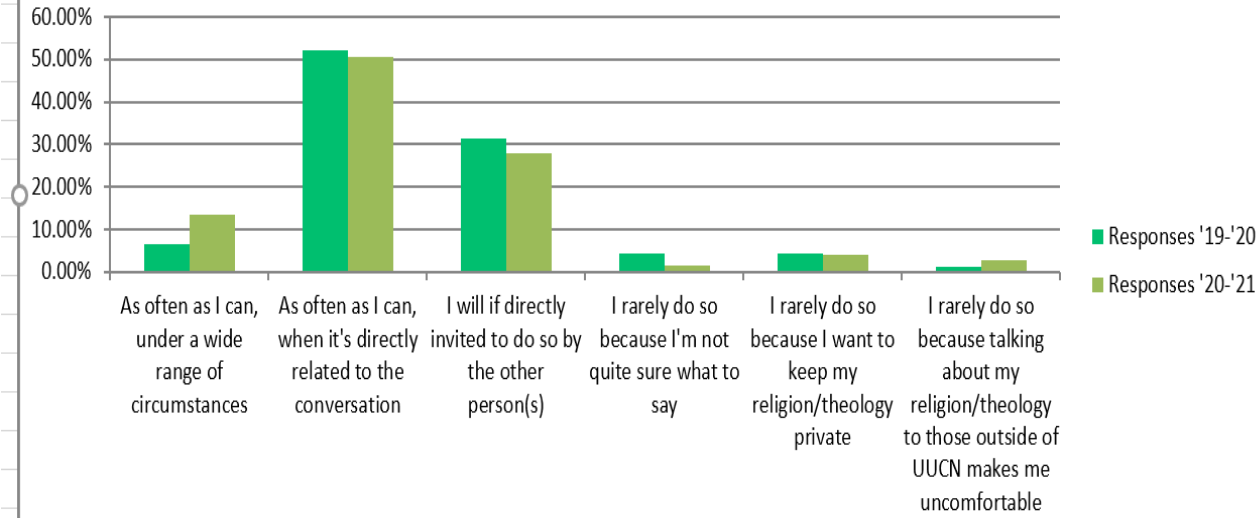
Question 3



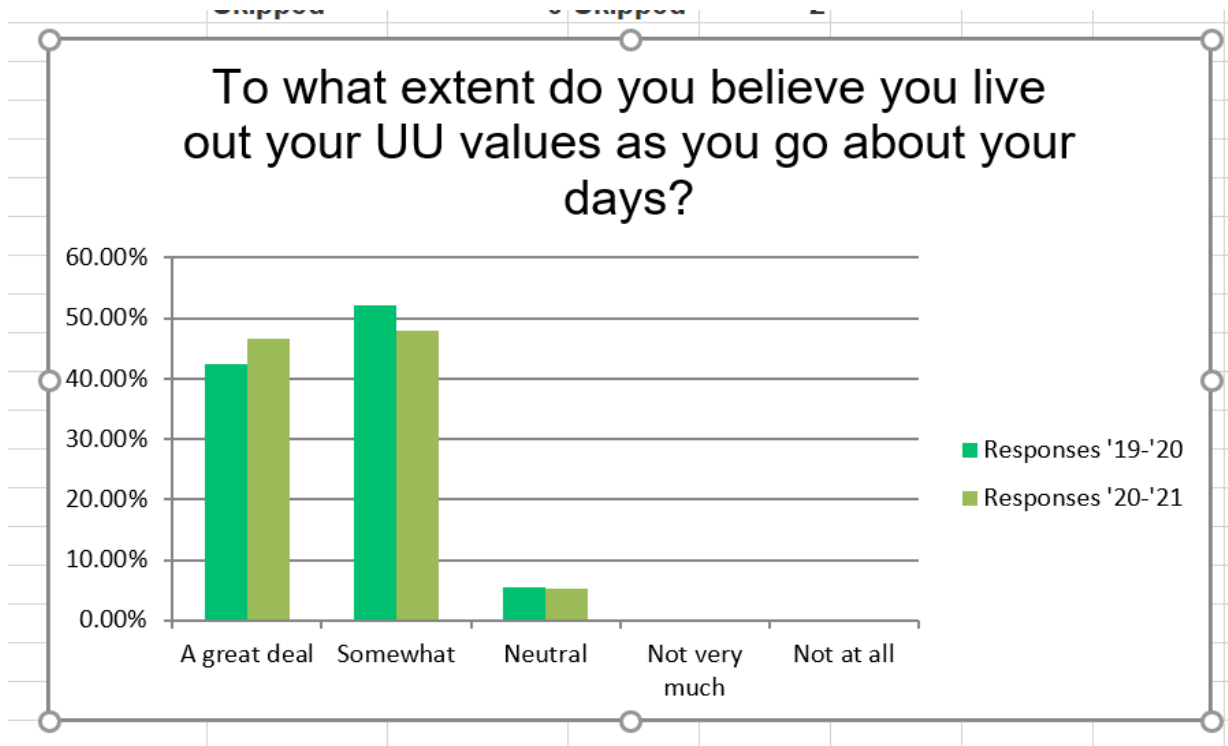
Question 4

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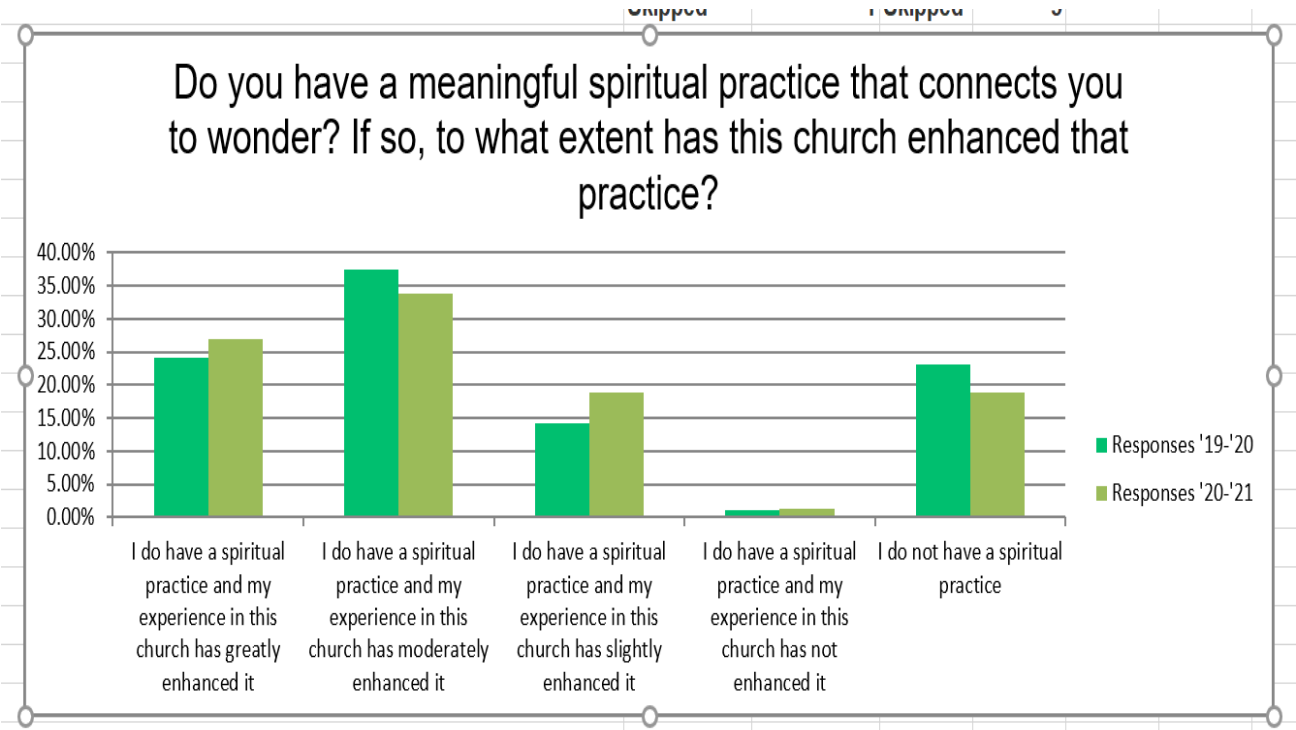
When do you talk to others (not within UUCN) about Unitarian Universalism?



Question 5

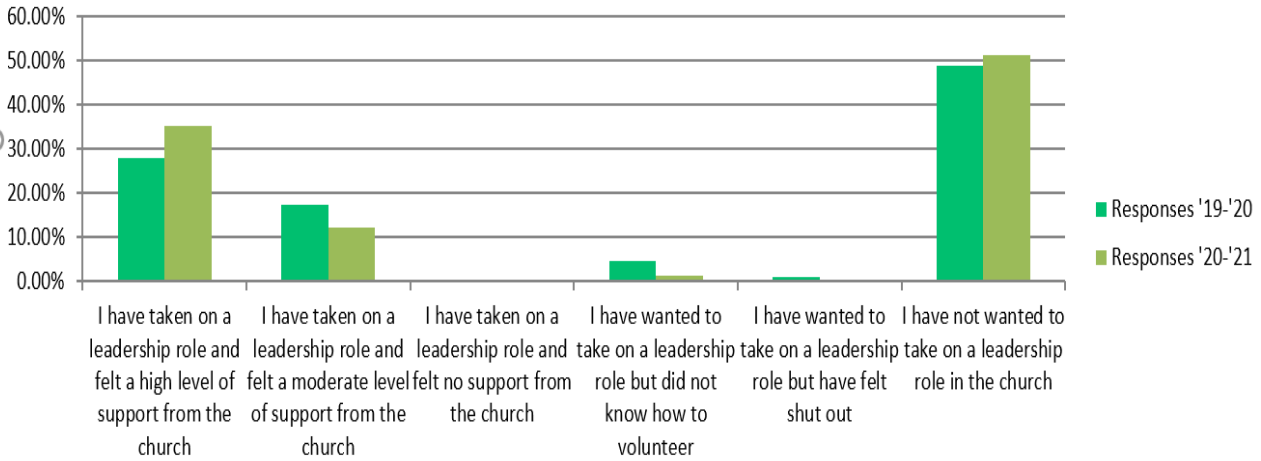


Question 6



Question 7

Has UUCN provided you with the opportunities you have wanted to be a leader within the past church year? If so, how much support did you receive?



Dependents

Response Dates feel free to add your thoughts about this question in the

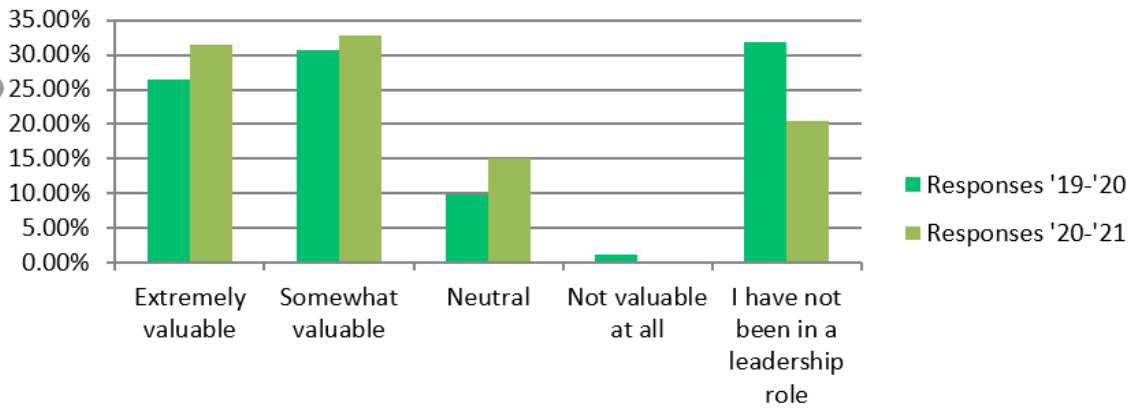
Question 8

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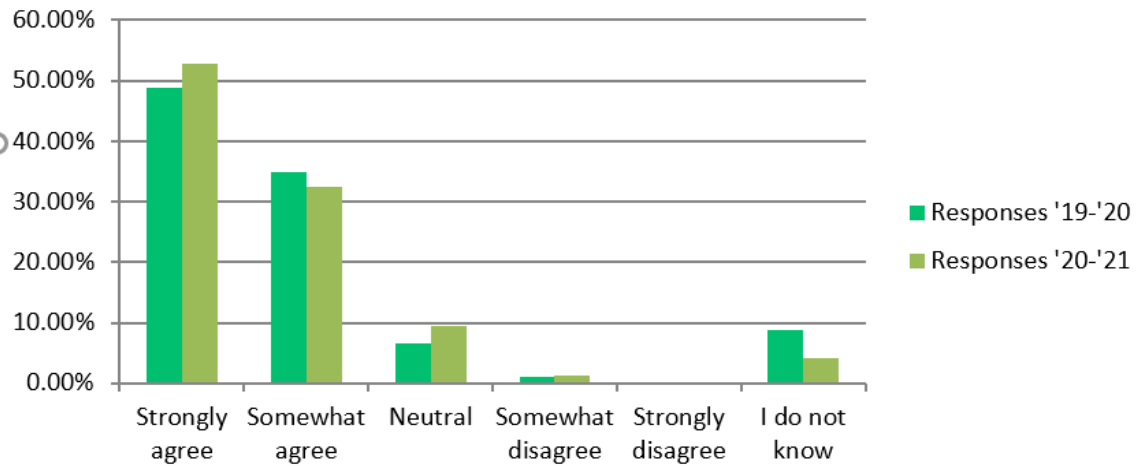
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How valuable has your church leadership experience been in expanding your skills and in supporting your growth as a person?

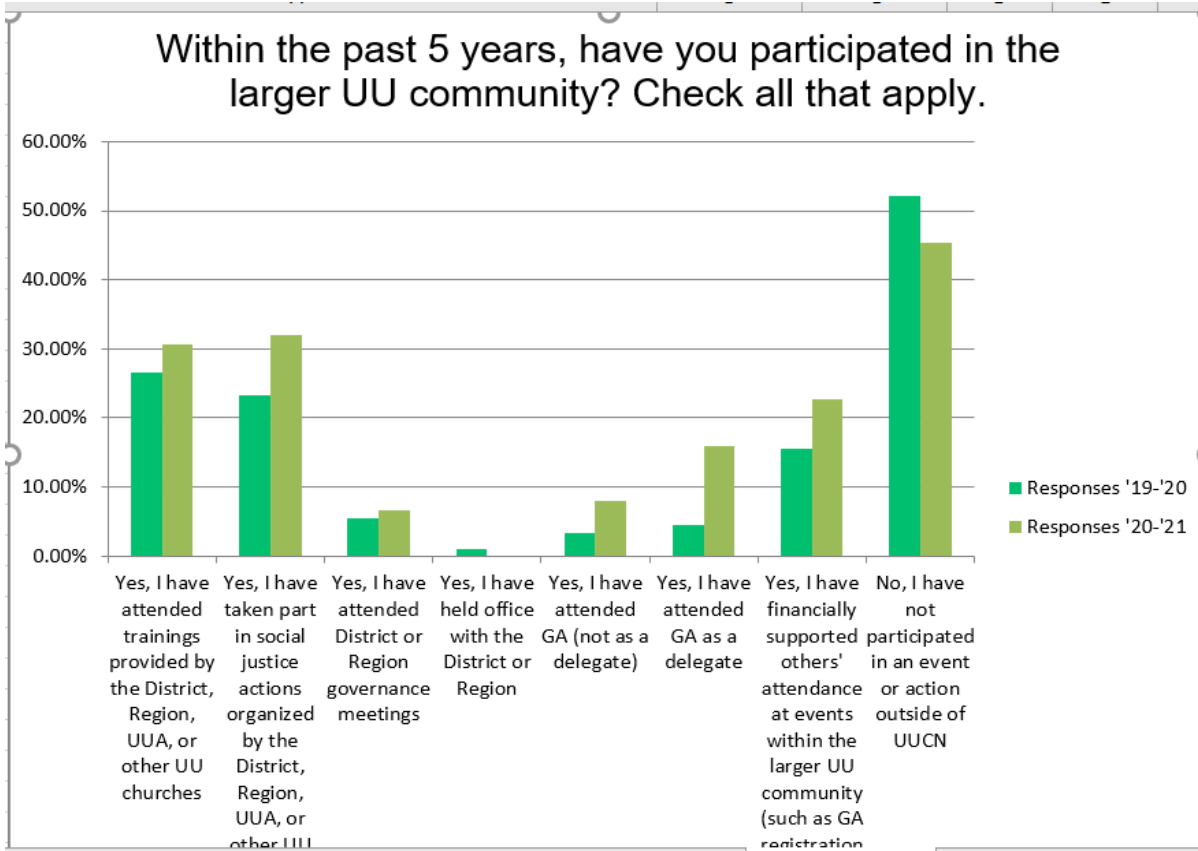


Question 9

My contributions in time, talent and financial support have a direct impact on the success and sustainability of UUCN.

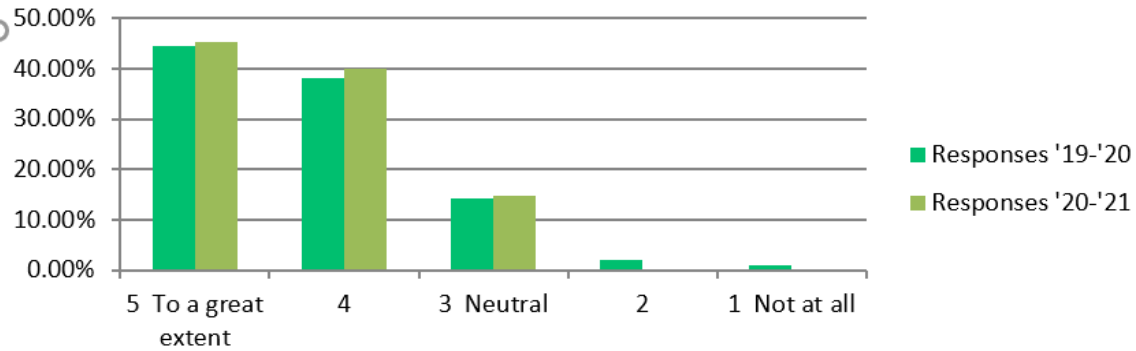


Question 10



Question 11

To what extent do you see members of UUCN working in partnership with each other and other organizations to advance justice and promote healing in our community and our world?



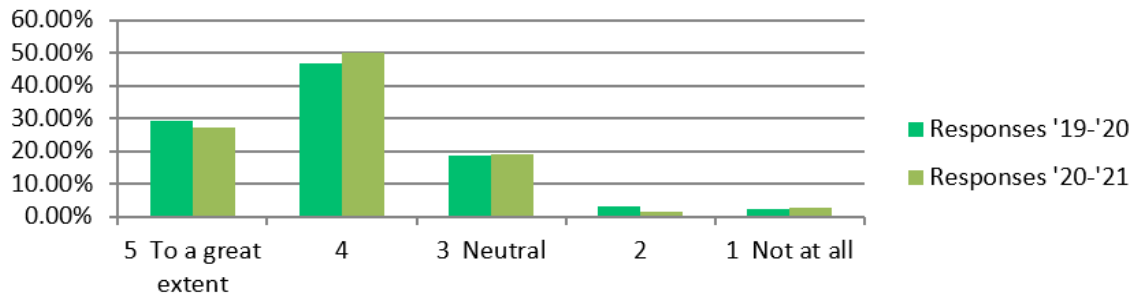
Question 12

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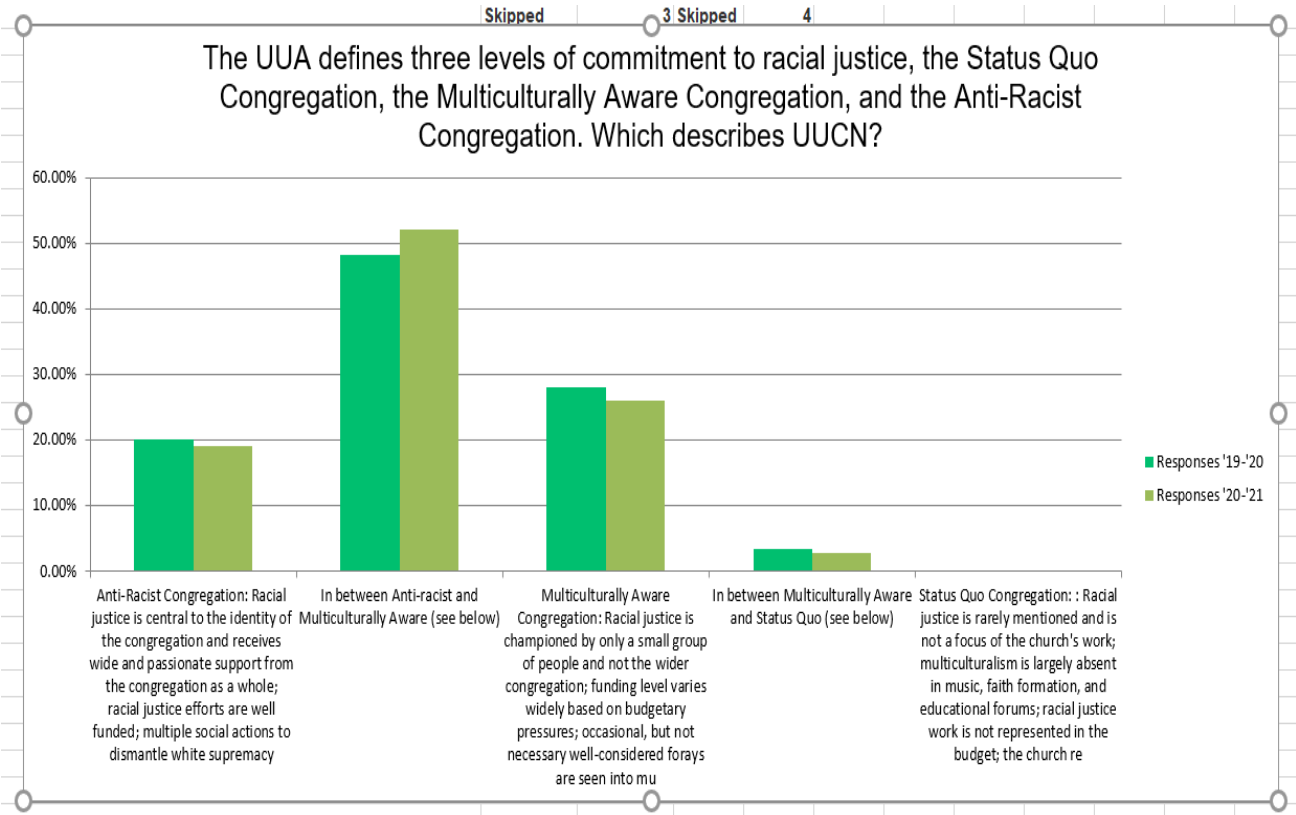
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3

To what extent have sermons and teachings at UUCN helped you develop a deeper understanding of systemic oppressions and helped you work to dismantle them, both personally and within the larger world?



Question 13



Q14 Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experience at UUCN? (The text box below will expand as you type.)

Answered: 18 Skipped: 58

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Challenges in communication and transparency. Curious about the what the board has been doing since March. Assume they have met but no minutes have been posted.	8/18/2021 2:11 PM
2	The remote model is not working well for me. I know the church is trying to make it work but it just doesn't.	8/18/2021 8:51 AM
3	I am a fifth generation Unitarian and I have often said that the Unitarian Church, along with three other institutions has been a vital part of my education and life experience.	8/16/2021 11:12 AM
4	I miss everybody!	8/15/2021 7:25 PM
5	I had some difficulty answering Q12. Mostly my relevant values and knowledge are so closely aligned with UUCN's messaging that there is little room for UUCN to move them, which implies a low-numbered answer. Yet in spite that that, some of Rev Allison's (her in particular) words on these topics moved me to a surprising extent to think about these issues even though I already think about them, if that makes sense. But it is no so much "deeper understanding" as it is surface-level attentiveness to what I already deeply understand.	8/15/2021 1:49 PM
6	I look forward to the time when UUCN congregants can meet in person again. I find it difficult to participate in any of the breakout sessions on Zoom- It's tough to make that leap into an unknown group of individuals	5/27/2021 7:22 PM
7	Plenty, unfortunately a multiple-choice survey will not cover it thank you Ian	5/22/2021 3:00 PM
8	I don't think that "racial justice is central to the identity of the congregation" is especially well matched to determine if we are approaching the end of "Understand systems of oppression and privilege and work to dismantle them within ourselves, our congregation, our community, and the larger world."	5/16/2021 11:12 AM
9	I have participate in church run workshops and in small group discussion programs such as the reading group and the Covenant group.	5/14/2021 10:49 AM
10	considering the pandemic, our church staff has been remarkable keeping congregation connected with on line services and groups.	5/13/2021 7:47 PM
11	Question 13 is a difficult one to answer. I think our church has focused on racial justice over the last few years. I understand a lot of it better but I am tired of my guilt by association. I feel like if I don't make this the focal point of my life I am a bad person. I am looking for peace on Sundays and instead find RESIST! as the theme. In general, the country just sucks right now.	5/13/2021 12:28 PM
12	I think in the fall of 2021 it would be beneficial, at least once per month, to have a late afternoon or early Sunday evening service specifically geared to the spiritual needs of older people. I know to grow we need younger families and the types of services that appeal to them, That is fine. But some older members feel their needs are being overlooked.	5/13/2021 9:53 AM
13	The main theme of this seems to be racial justice issues. I answered neutral to 12 because I did not hear anything that I was not already well aware of, but that might not be true for others. I answered 13 down one step from the max because while I think there is an attitude in keeping with the top tier there, and there are many symbolic and informational steps taken in keeping with that tier, there is not much in the way of practical steps beyond those already being taken by some members of the congregation personally. The simple difference between "there is a BLM rally on Saturday at..." and "please join the group of us who will be meeting at ... to represent UUCN at the BLM rally" would be a big step, and we don't do that.	5/13/2021 9:16 AM
14	I value my membership in UUCN, and the increasing opportunities for us to put our energies into love in action .	5/13/2021 9:11 AM

UUCN Ends Statements Survey - '20-'21

15	There is no place I would rather worship. It provides the right amounts of comfort and challenge to my life.	5/13/2021 4:35 AM
16	I'd like to see us doing more to heal the world, specifically to fight against climate change. I see this as crucial to our survival, and would love to see us doing more.	5/12/2021 9:00 PM
17	Although I've been a member for over a year, I still feel like a noobee.	5/12/2021 8:54 PM
18	We have an EXCELLENT President! Who will delete this survey!	5/12/2021 8:10 PM

15 Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture

- Perfectionism
- Sense of Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Quantity Over Quality
- Worship of the Written Word
- Only One Right Way
- Paternalism
- Either/Or Thinking
- Power Hoarding
- Fear of Open Conflict
- Individualism
- I'm the Only One
- Progress is Bigger, More
- Objectivity
- Right to Comfort

Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones,
Dismantling Racism Workbook, 2001

ANTIRACISM LITERACY PARTNERS

A NEXT RIGHT ACTION

“Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture” Discussion Guide

General Discussion Guidelines

1. What is racism and antiracism? To begin your discussion, start with the same understanding of these terms. See “Being Antiracist” on p. 4 of this reading guide.
2. Keep in mind that racism exists whether people are aware of it or not. A racial identification as white and privileged or as a person of color will affect our ability to see racism.
3. Speak to your own thoughts, behaviors, feelings, experience, and beliefs. Refrain from hopelessness and absolutes such as “Racism is never going to end,” or “I can’t do anything.”
4. Expect discomfort but avoid defensiveness. There is a difference between agreement and understanding; consider whether “I don’t agree” may actually mean “I don’t understand.”
5. Consider how your antiracism work furthers the values, mission, and ends of Unity Church-Unitarian. See on p. 5.
6. This guide is meant only to serve as a conversation starter. Feel free to create a format that works best for you, and create and discuss topics and questions as you think best.

Covenants

We will listen from the heart.

We will speak honestly from the heart about our own experience, not that of others.

We will respect the confidentiality of what is shared here.

We will not interrupt.

We will not give unasked-for advice.

We will not judge others by what they say.

We will honor the diversity of thoughts and feelings.

We will honor and respect our time together and our commitment to our learning partner.

Suggested 1-hour Discussion Format

5 min	Opening: Review of covenants
10 min	<i>Check-in.</i> What, briefly, is going on in your life today?
30 min	Discussion
10 min	<i>Check-out.</i> How are you feeling now?
5 min	Next discussion: where, when, scheduled on Zoom?

About

“**The Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture,**” from From Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups, by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun (ChangeWork, 2001)

View the article on the Showing Up for Racial Justice website:

<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html>

This resource lists of characteristics of white supremacy culture that show up in our organizations. The characteristics listed below are damaging because they are used as norms and standards without being pro-actively named or chosen by the group. The authors explain in detail why these characteristics are harmful and offers antidotes to help dismantle white supremacy culture.

Characteristics/Antidotes for Discussion

Perfectionism

- little appreciation expressed among people for the work that others are doing; appreciation that is expressed usually directed to those who get most of the credit anyway
- more common is to point out either how the person or work is inadequate
- or even more common, to talk to others about the inadequacies of a person or their work without ever talking directly to them
- mistakes are seen as personal, i.e. they reflect badly on the person making them as opposed to being seen for what they are -- mistakes
- making a mistake is confused with being a mistake, doing wrong with being wrong
- little time, energy, or money put into reflection or identifying lessons learned that can improve practice, in other words little or no learning from mistakes
- tendency to identify what is wrong; little ability to identify, name, and appreciate what is right

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Perfectionism

- develop a culture of appreciation, where the organization takes time to make sure that people’s work and efforts are appreciated;
- develop a learning organization, where it is expected that everyone will make mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning;
- create an environment where people can recognize that mistakes sometimes lead to positive results;
- separate the person from the mistake;
- when offering feedback, always speak to the things that went well before offering criticism;
- ask people to offer specific suggestions for how to do things differently when offering criticism

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Sense of Urgency

- continued sense of urgency that makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences
- frequently results in sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results, for example sacrificing interests of communities of color in order to win victories for white people (seen as default or norm community)
- reinforced by funding proposals which promise too much work for too little money and by funders who expect too much for too little

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Sense of Urgency:

- realistic workplans;
- leadership which understands that things take longer than anyone expects
- discuss and plan for what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of time
- learn from past experience how long things take; write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames
- be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Defensiveness

- the organizational structure is set up and much energy spent trying to prevent abuse and protect power as it exists rather than to facilitate the best out of each person or to clarify who has power and how they are expected to use it
- because of either/or thinking (see below), criticism of those with power is viewed as threatening and inappropriate (or rude)
- people respond to new or challenging ideas with defensiveness, making it very difficult to raise these ideas
- a lot of energy in the organization is spent trying to make sure that people's feelings aren't getting hurt or working around defensive people
- the defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Defensiveness:

- understand that structure cannot in and of itself facilitate or prevent abuse
- understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege)
- work on your own defensiveness
- name defensiveness as a problem when it is one; give people credit for being able to handle more than you think
- discuss the ways in which defensiveness or resistance to new ideas gets in the way of the mission

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Quantity Over Quality

- all resources of organization are directed toward producing measurable goals
- things that can be measured are more highly valued than things that cannot, for example numbers of people attending a meeting, newsletter circulation, money spent are valued more than quality of relationships, democratic decision-making, ability to constructively deal with conflict
- little or no value attached to process; if it can't be measured, it has no value
- discomfort with emotion and feelings
- no understanding that when there is a conflict between content (the agenda of the meeting) and process (people's need to be heard or engaged), process will prevail (for example, you may get through the agenda, but if you haven't paid attention to people's need to be heard, the decisions made at the meeting are undermined and/or disregarded)

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Quantity Over Quality:

- include process or quality goals in your planning
- make sure your organization has a values statement which expresses the ways in which you want to do your work
- make sure this is a living document and that people are using it in their day to day work;
- look for ways to measure process goals (for example if you have a goal of inclusivity, think about ways you can measure whether or not you have achieved that goal)
- learn to recognize those times when you need to get off the agenda in order to address people's underlying concerns

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Worship of the Written Word

- if it's not in a memo, it doesn't exist
- the organization does not take into account or value other ways in which information gets shared
- those with strong documentation and writing skills are more highly valued, even in organizations where ability to relate to others is key to the mission
antidotes: take the time to analyze how people inside and outside the organization get and share information; figure out which things need to be written down and come up with alternative ways to document what is happening; work to recognize the contributions and skills that every person brings to the organization (for example, the ability to build relationships with those who are important to the organization's mission)
- only one right way
- the belief there is one right way to do things and once people are introduced to the right way, they will see the light and adopt it
- when they do not adapt or change, then something is wrong with them (the other, those not changing), not with us (those who know the right way)
- similar to the missionary who does not see value in the culture of other communities, sees only value in their beliefs about what is good

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Worship of the Written Word:

- accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal
- once the group has made a decision about which way will be taken, honor that decision and see what you and the organization will learn from taking that way, even and especially if it is not the way you would have chosen
- work on developing the ability to notice when people do things differently and how those different ways might improve your approach
- look for the tendency for a group or a person to keep pushing the same point over and over out of a belief that there is only one right way and then name it
- when working with communities from a different culture than yours or your organization's, be clear that you have some learning to do about the communities' ways of doing
- never assume that you or your organization know what's best for the community in isolation from meaningful relationships with that community

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Only One Right Way

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- never assume that you or your organization know what's best for the community in isolation from meaningful relationships with that community

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Paternalism

- decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it
- those with power think they are capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power
- those with power often don't think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions
- those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does
- those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Paternalism:

- make sure that everyone knows and understands who makes what decisions in the organization;
- make sure everyone knows and understands their level of responsibility and authority in the organization;
- include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Either/Or Thinking

- things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
- closely linked to perfectionism in making it difficult to learn from mistakes or accommodate conflict
- no sense that things can be both/and
- results in trying to simplify complex things, for example believing that poverty is simply a result of lack of education
- creates conflict and increases sense of urgency, as people are felt they have to make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those which may require more time or resources

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Either/Or Thinking:

- notice when people use either/or language and push to come up with more than two alternatives
- notice when people are simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made
- slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis
- when people are faced with an urgent decision, take a break and give people some breathing room to think creatively
- avoid making decisions under extreme pressure

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Power Hoarding

- little, if any, value around sharing power
- power seen as limited, only so much to go around
- those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests changes in how things should be done in the organization, feel suggestions for change are a reflection on their leadership
- those with power don't see themselves as hoarding power or as feeling threatened
- those with power assume they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume those wanting change are ill-informed (stupid), emotional, inexperienced

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Power Hoarding:

- include power sharing in your organization's values statement;
- discuss what good leadership looks like and make sure people understand that a good leader develops the power and skills of others;
- understand that change is inevitable and challenges to your leadership can be healthy and productive;
- make sure the organization is focused on the mission

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Fear of Open Conflict

- people in power are scared of conflict and try to ignore it or run from it
- when someone raises an issue that causes discomfort, the response is to blame the person for raising the issue rather than to look at the issue which is actually causing the problem
- emphasis on being polite
- equating the raising of difficult issues with being impolite, rude, or out of line

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Fear of Open Conflict :

- role play ways to handle conflict before conflict happens;
- distinguish between being polite and raising hard issues
- don't require those who raise hard issues to raise them in acceptable ways, especially if you are using the ways in which issues are raised as an excuse not to address the issues being raised
- once a conflict is resolved, take the opportunity to revisit it and see how it might have been handled differently

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Individualism

- little experience or comfort working as part of a team
- people in organization believe they are responsible for solving problems alone
- accountability, if any, goes up and down, not sideways to peers or to those the organization is set up to serve
- desire for individual recognition and credit
- leads to isolation
- competition more highly valued than cooperation and where cooperation is valued, little time or resources devoted to developing skills in how to cooperate
- creates a lack of accountability, as the organization values those who can get things done on their own without needing supervision or guidance antidotes: include teamwork as an important value in your values statement; make sure the organization is working towards shared goals and people understand how working together will improve performance; evaluate people's ability to work in a team as well as their ability to get the job done; make sure that credit is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders or most public person; make people accountable as a group rather than as individuals; create a culture where people bring problems to the group; use staff meetings as a place to solve problems, not just a place to report activities
- i'm the only one
- connected to individualism, the belief that if something is going to get done right, I have to do it
- little or no ability to delegate work to others

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Individualism

- evaluate people based on their ability to delegate to others
- evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team to accomplish shared goals

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Progress is Bigger, More

- observed in systems of accountability and ways we determine success
- progress is an organization which expands (adds staff, adds projects) or develops the ability to serve more people (regardless of how well they are serving them)
- gives no value, not even negative value, to its cost, for example, increased accountability to funders as the budget grows, ways in which those we serve may be exploited, excluded, or underserved as we focus on how many we are serving instead of quality of service or values created by the ways in which we serve

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Progress is Bigger, More:

- create Seventh Generation thinking by asking how the actions of the group now will affect people seven generations from now
- make sure that any cost/benefit analysis includes all the costs, not just the financial ones, for example the cost in morale, the cost in credibility, the cost in the use of resources
- include process goals in your planning, for example make sure that your goals speak to how you want to do your work, not just what you want to do
- ask those you work with and for to evaluate your performance

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Objectivity

- the belief that there is such a thing as being objective
- the belief that emotions are inherently destructive, irrational, and should not play a role in decision-making or group process
- invalidating people who show emotion
- requiring people to think in a linear fashion and ignoring or invalidating those who think in other ways
- impatience with any thinking that does not appear logical to those with power

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes:

- realize that everybody has a world view and that everybody's world view affects the way they understand things
- realize this means you too; push yourself to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways which are not familiar to you
- assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Right to Comfort

- the belief that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort (another aspect of valuing logic over emotion)
- scapegoating those who cause discomfort
- equating individual acts of unfairness against white people with systemic racism which daily targets people of color

Where does this show up in our system?

Antidotes to Right to Comfort

- understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning
- welcome it as much as you can
- deepen your political analysis of racism and oppression so you have a strong understanding of how your personal experience and feelings fit into a larger picture
- don't take everything personally

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Only One Right Way

- the belief there is one right way to do things and once people are introduced to the right way, they will see the light and adopt it
- when they do not adapt or change, then something is wrong with them (the other, those not changing), not with us (those who know the right way)
- similar to the missionary who does not see value in the culture of other communities, sees only value in their beliefs about what is good

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Antidotes to Only One Right Way:

- accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal;
- once the group has made a decision about which way will be taken, honor that decision and see what you and the organization will learn from taking that way, even and especially if it is not the way you would have chosen;
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- when working with communities from a different culture than yours or your organization's, be clear that you have some learning to do about the communities' ways of doing;
- never assume that you or your organization know what's best for the community in isolation from meaningful relationships with that community

How might these show up in an anti-racist system?

Our Next Right Action: Unity Church began exploring Our Next Right Action shortly after the killing of George Floyd. “Antiracism Literacy Partners” is one of several “next right actions.” Further education, advocacy, and lifestyle changes that shift our awareness and privilege are part of how we can sustain antiracism as a lifelong commitment. What next right actions might you take next?

For More Information

From “Talking About Race,” National Museum of African American History & Culture: Being Antiracist

To create an equal society, we must commit to making unbiased choices and being antiracist in all aspects of our lives.

Race does not biologically exist, yet how we identify with race is so powerful, it influences our experiences and shapes our lives. In a society that privileges white people and whiteness, racist ideas are considered normal throughout our media, culture, social systems, and institutions. Historically, racist views justified the unfair treatment and oppression of people of color (including enslavement, segregation, internment, etc.). We can be led to believe that racism is only about individual mindsets and actions, yet racist policies also contribute to our polarization. While individual choices are damaging, racist ideas in policy have a wide-spread impact by threatening the equity of our systems and the fairness of our institutions. To create an equal society, we must commit to making unbiased choices and being antiracist in all aspects of our lives.

Being antiracist is fighting against racism. Racism takes several forms and works most often in tandem with at least one other form to reinforce racist ideas, behavior, and policy. Types of racism are:

- **Individual racism** refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism in conscious and unconscious ways. The U.S. cultural narrative about racism typically focuses on individual racism and fails to recognize systemic racism.
Examples include believing in the superiority of white people, not hiring a person of color because “something doesn’t feel right,” or telling a racist joke.
- **Interpersonal racism** occurs between individuals. These are public expressions of racism, often involving slurs, biases, or hateful words or actions.
- **Institutional racism** occurs in an organization. These are discriminatory treatments, unfair policies, or biased practices based on race that result in inequitable outcomes for whites over people of color and extend considerably beyond prejudice. These institutional policies often never mention any racial group, but the intent is to create advantages.
Example: A school system where students of color are more frequently distributed into the most crowded classrooms and underfunded schools and out of the higher-resourced schools.
- **Structural racism** is the overarching system of racial bias across institutions and society. These systems give privileges to white people resulting in disadvantages to people of color.
Example: Stereotypes of people of color as criminals in mainstream movies and media.

No one is born racist or antiracist; these result from the choices we make. Being antiracist results from a conscious decision to make frequent, consistent, equitable choices daily. These choices require ongoing self-awareness and self-reflection as we move through life. In the absence of making antiracist choices, we (un)consciously uphold aspects of white supremacy, white-dominant culture, and unequal institutions and society. Being racist or antiracist is not about who you *are*; it is about what you *do*.

Being Antiracist at the Individual and Interpersonal Level

When we choose to be antiracist, we become actively conscious about race and racism *and* take actions to end racial inequities in our daily lives. Being antiracist is believing that racism is everyone’s problem, and we all have a role to play in stopping it. In “[The Racial Healing Handbook](#),” Dr. Anneliese A. Singh reminds us of the importance of being purposeful: “You need the intentional mindset of *Yep, this racism thing is everyone’s problem-including mine, and I’m going to do something about it.*”

Being antiracist is different for white people than it is for people of color. For white people, being antiracist evolves with their racial identity development. They must acknowledge and understand their privilege, work to

change their internalized racism, and interrupt racism when they see it. For people of color, it means recognizing how race and racism have been internalized, and whether it has been applied to other people of color.

All racial groups struggle under white supremacy. People of color groups are not always united in solidarity. People of color can act by challenging internalized white supremacy and interrupting patterns of prejudice against other racial groups. For everyone, it is an ongoing practice and process.

Accessed Sept 1, 2020: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>

Unity Church-Unitarian Values, Mission, and Ends

Values

Unity Church-Unitarian honors the ambiguity and uncertainty in the search for greater truth, meaning, and equity. In all we do, we strive to embody:

- Wonder
- Open-hearted engagement
- Courageous action

Mission

Unity Church-Unitarian fosters transformation through a free and inclusive religious community that encourages lives of integrity, service, and joy.

Ends Statements 2018-2023

Working within ourselves, among our church community, and beyond in the larger world, we the people of Unity Church-Unitarian:

- Create a multicultural spiritual home built on authentic relationships.
- Ground ourselves in personal practice and communal worship that grows our capacity for wonder and spiritual deepening.
- Articulate our Unitarian Universalist faith identity, teach it to our children, share it with others, and live it courageously in the world.
- Know each other in all our fullness and create an ever-widening circle of belonging for all people.
- Generously give and openly receive compassionate care in times of joy, sorrow, and transition.
- Discover and pursue our individual and collective work to advance justice, wholeness, and equity for people, our Earth, and all life on it.
- Create brave space for racial healing and dismantling dominant culture.
- Sustain and steward the church and our larger Unitarian Universalist movement for the future.

Accessed 8.29.20: <https://www.unityunitarian.org/values-mission-ends.html>

Covenants adapted from UU Small Group Ministry Network, accessed 8.29.20:

<http://www.smallgroupministry.net/public/covenants.html>