

BACKGROUND. THE EIGHTH PRINCIPLE AT UCC

THE EIGHTH PRINCIPLE 3.25.2023

Another focus at GA 2023, along with Article II revision, is the Eighth Principle Project.

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppression in ourselves and our institutions.

These links give background.

The 8TH Principle of Unitarian Universalism <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/background>

The 8th Principle—Frequently Asked Questions <https://www.rruuc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FAQ-for-8th-Principle-May-1-2021.pdf>

The Article II Commission's Statement

The 8th Principle affirms and promotes 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.

Unitarian Universalism is no stranger to movements that call for racial justice both within and beyond our institutions. Over and over again, pockets of people have worked to say racism is a problem, racism is a problem *for us,* and that we are committed to fighting racism and other oppressions. In 1997, the General Assembly voted to commit to intentionally becoming an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, multicultural institution. Yet, almost 25 years later, we continue to fall short of our commitments and promises.

When the 8th Principle project began, it addressed something vital that had been missing in our UU movement, namely that anti-racism and anti-oppression must be central to congregational life and our community building. The mammoth project of fostering conversation within congregations and other communities, and then calling on those communities to make an explicit statement in the form of the "8th Principle" has become a true groundswell within Unitarian Universalism. The text of the 8th Principle says "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse and multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." In this way, thousands of Unitarian Universalists have become part of the real, fundamental work of anti-racism and anti-oppression in our own communities.

The process of examining and possibly revising Article II of the UUA Bylaws is a scheduled effort of the UUA Board, demanded by the bylaws themselves. The Study Commission, who has been charged with making a proposal to the UUA Board in January of 2023, has tremendous respect for what the 8th Principle movement has accomplished—and is accomplishing within UU communities. More than the language of the 8th Principle itself, we are moved by the ongoing conversations about what it means to be accountable to each other, and how we must—through our actions—take on the work of anti-racism and anti-oppression as an inextricable part of our Unitarian Universalist faith.

And so, though the task we have been charged with is larger than the specifics of the 8th Principle, we understand these ideals to be at the very heart of our work and very much part of the direction we are journeying. We understand the work we are doing to be building on the strengths of the 8th Principle movement. Whatever flowers grow from the process of engaging UUs in this reimagining, the seeds sown by the 8th Principle project will surely bloom brightly.

RESULTS: MAY 14 UCC SHARING CAFÉ: 8 TH PRINCIPLE

A big thank you to everyone who participated in our Sharing Café. Such good ideas and insights. We have grouped your responses into categories. All recorded responses are included, and some responses may appear in more than one category. You can review this amazing collection of reflections and wisdom via this

link <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-hEKxggfM7463TPTsOQUtyjut54C9uE/view?usp=sharing>.