

Proposed Process for Racial Equity and Inclusion at ERUUF

This document was prepared by ERUUF's Change Team to outline a process for working toward racial equity and inclusion at ERUUF. (May, 2016)

Overarching Goal: Create a culture where racial equity and inclusion are the norm by making the learning and practice of racial equity and inclusion integral to ERUUF's policies, programs and interactions. This will be evident both within ERUUF and in relationships between ERUUF members and the larger community of which we are a part, as we engage individually and collectively.

The Spiritual Foundation: We engage this crucial work of creating a community of racial equity and inclusion as Unitarian Universalists, within the sacred space of our covenantal faith. At the heart of our tradition are questions about who we are, whose we are, and how we intend to be together with one another, our neighbors, and the larger world. Living these questions together in community is our spiritual journey, a primary way that we grow in spirit and transform our lives.

Core Concepts: The core of our vision for ERUUF is a culture where racial equity and inclusion are the norm. Deciding what that means will be part of the ongoing discussion and dialogue as individuals and groups explore how to engage in the larger process of dismantling racism. As a start, we have been guided by the work of the Annie E. Casey Foundation which has excellent resources for understanding the terms used. You may access the “[Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide](#)” for a full explanation and tools for action. Here is an excerpt from this publication¹:

Inclusion:

Inclusion is the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and numerical representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging.

Equity:



¹ The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2014). Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide. Baltimore, MD. Retrieved from www.aecf.org.

The Process:

One hundred twenty ERUUFians have completed the Dismantling Racism workshops. After numerous conversations in small groups, the team responsible for planning and organizing the workshops and our follow-up has compiled this document from the workshop notes and goal setting meetings in which you may have participated. Members, staff, and ministry units will be encouraged to develop Objectives, Strategies, and Actions to work toward this Overarching Goal. The Change Team has identified some initial Indicators of goal attainment (Ends) based on outcomes from the Dismantling Racism workshops. Specific actions are presented as possible “**means**” to “**ends**” (Indicators of goal attainment). The Possible Specific Actions are intended as “idea and discussion starters” for the groups that will consider how to build racial equity and inclusion into the life of ERUUF.

(Letters in parentheses following the actions or means stand for various units within ERUUF that may find the item especially relevant or well-suited for their work.)

AP – Adult religious education & programs

J – justice

B – Board

N – Nominating Committee

M – Membership

A – Administration

RE – Religious education for children & youth

H – Healthy Congregations Committee

W – Worship

AM - All ministries

PC – Pastoral care

C – Coordinating Team

Indicators of goal attainment (Ends)	Possible Specific Actions (Means)
1. Programs benefit, appeal to and meet the needs of People of Color ² to the same extent as White people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and address needs of POC. (RE, AP, PC, W, M, N, B) • Affirm and include multiple varied ways of being and doing in worship. (W) • Shift culture from a concentration on highly educated, individualistic, intellectual norms to a <u>balance</u> that involves increased emphasis on lived experience, emotional experience, feelings, and community. (W, AP) • Add diversity to the ERUUF Board. (N, B) • Offer programs that would be open and appealing to POC in the wider community. (AP)

² In this document we use People of Color to indicate that the statements are applicable to any or all of the following groups: African Americans and others of African descent, Arab, Native Americans, Latinos, Asians and Pacific Islanders.

A term of solidarity referring to African Americans, Arab, Native Americans, Latinos, Asians and Pacific Islanders. This term is preferred to other terms often heard, such as “minority” and “non-White.” While people of color are a minority in the United States, they are the vast majority-nine-tenths- of the world’s population. White people are the distinct minority. Use of the term “minority,” therefore, obscures this global reality and reinforces racist assumptions. To describe people of color as “non-White” is to use the White race as the standard against which all other races are described, or as a referent in relation to whom all others are positioned. It is doubtful that White people would appreciate being called “non-Black” or men would like being called “non-women.” The term “people of color” was born out of an explicitly political statement that signaled a solidarity among progressive African Americans, Arab, Asian Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders. People may choose to identify this way for a variety of factors including race, ethnicity, culture, physical appearance, class and political perspective (Beloved Conversations © 2015).

Because not all People of Color identify as politically progressive or feel solidarity with other marginalized groups, naming the specific population is preferred.

<p>2. A significant number of ERUUF members who are from the dominant culture embrace this new identity as an institution that cultivates racial equity and inclusion, and dismantling racism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share and discuss ERUUF’s history. (AP) • Identify people who see this (change in emphasis) as a threat and listen sympathetically to what they have to say. (PC, AP, H) • Promote strong congregational commitment to anti-racist emphasis and action. (B) • Offer more Dismantling Racism workshops. (C)
<p>3. A significant number of ERUUF members who are from the dominant culture enthusiastically welcome diverse cultural experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make hidden rules and norms visible, and acknowledge them to be derived from a particular culture. (AP, W) (For example, clapping or not during worship, styles of dress, name tags, and everyone, including ministers addressed by first names.) • Provide opportunities for people of the dominant culture to express their concerns (e.g., fear of change, sense of loss, nostalgia for the ways things were), and be listened to. (PC, H) • Find or create opportunities for ERUUF members to develop relationship with people of various cultural backgrounds and ethnicities, focused on listening, seeing and learning with the intent for ERUUF to be changed by the interaction. (Possibly hosting meals and inviting people to share their stories and help us understand each other’s needs and challenges more fully; and/or engaging in “cultural plunges” beyond our comfort zones.) (AP, M)

4. Diversity and inclusion in worship services, adult programs, religious education and ambience are the norm.

- Draw content from a rich variety of resources and cultural traditions. (PC, RE, W)
- Integrate multicultural content into RE curriculum and practices. (RE)
- Include more diversity in art and décor. (A)
- Increase diversity and joy in music. (W)
- Shift culture from a concentration on highly educated, individualistic, intellectual norms to a balance that involves increased emphasis on lived experience, emotional experience, feelings, and community (within and beyond ERUUF). (AP, W, RE)
- Affirm and include multiple varied ways of being and doing in worship. (W)
- Present more POC in pulpit. (W)
- Develop more POC worship associates. (W)

5. Genuine respect, friendship, and kindness are evident in [relationships](#) and interactions among ERUUFians and between ERUUFians and others in the Durham community.

- Create more ways for ERUUFians to get to know one another as complex and unique people by providing opportunities to share personal stories and continue conversation. (AP, W, M)
- Find or create opportunities for ERUUF members to develop relationship with people of various cultural backgrounds and ethnicities, focused on listening, seeing and learning with the intent for ERUUF to be changed by the interaction. (AP, M)
- Define outreach as solidarity and partnership, not just helping. (J)
- Engage young adult POC within the community. (AP, M)
- Learn and practice deep dialogue and collaboration from the beginning of interactions, both within ERUUF and beyond. (AP, H)
- Form relationships of understanding, caring and advocacy with people and groups (e.g., cultural, interfaith, social service, political) in the community. (J)
- Develop systems to engage new members across cultural lines and differences. (M, AP, C)

<p>6. ERUUF is known in the community as a strong voice and advocate for dismantling racism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage young adult POC within the community. (AP, M, W) • Place racial justice at core of Justice Ministry. (J) • Partner with POC (churches, political organizations, community groups) in dismantling racism. (J) • Be present and visible in the larger community via editorials and other means of advocacy. (J) • Promote strong congregational commitment to anti-racist emphasis and action. (A) • Add racial equity and inclusion as a distinct goal in the strategic plan; clarify ERUUF mission as anti-racism. (A) • Offer more Dismantling Racism workshops. (B) • Add budget line for racial equity and racial justice work. (A) • Develop a process for ERUUF to speak publicly on matters of racial equity. (AM, C)
<p>7. Clearly stated criteria and expectations are met by ERUUF's various ministry and program units and by ERUUF as a whole.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make governance, procedures and roles more understandable and accessible. (A, C) • Identify racial equity and inclusion goals. (AM, C) • Articulate the connections between each goal and UU principles. (AM) • Outline and execute a plan of action to achieve the goals. (AM, C) • Assess and evaluate efforts, using qualitative and quantitative methods. <i>(Each group could be asked to create a list of questions (or be provided with a list of questions) on which to reflect periodically to assess how they are doing, and convey answers to the appropriate person or team (e.g. staff member, coordinating team or lay leader).</i> (AM, B, A, C)

<p>8. Continuing education to build and sustain awareness of racism, White privilege, and the power and structural dynamics that perpetuate racism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer racial justice RE curriculum. (RE, AP) • Discuss issues of class and economic disparity, distinct from and interacting with race. (AP, J) • Provide racial equity and inclusion training for staff and lay leaders. (A) • Build simple cultural power analysis into all our entry points. (AM) • Support HBCU initiative. (B)
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Created by ERUUF's Dismantling Racism Change Team.

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Vision Statements from ERUUFians on the Change Team: (These statements are included to reflect the vision behind the Ends Statements)

about diversity and assumptions--

I'd like to see a widely shared recognition that every person comes to this community from a different background, different life experience, and as a result we each view the world through a different set of lenses, and act out of a different understanding. (Cayer)

I would like us to consciously assume differences if we assume anything about anyone, and carry a love for and curiosity about difference and particularity with us into every encounter with each other. I'd like us to know in our bones that (as Rev. Jeremiah Wright says) "Different is not deficient." That in fact our authentic differences make us stronger and better together than any one of us, even the most "fortunate" among us, is on his/ her own. I'd like us to take this understanding about difference, and our commitment, love, curiosity and respect for each other's difference with us beyond our walls. (Cayer)

There would be an acceptance of our differences, in fact, a welcoming of differences. (Blount)

White people at ERUUF would know what assumptions they are making. (Brooks)

All members of ERUUF are treated with fairness and dignity, realizing our many commonalities as humans while also recognizing and appreciating each other's differences, and embracing the opportunity to learn from them. (Fletcher)

about building relationships and community—

Because we will fail at this over and over, daily, sometimes more than once, and badly, we will have practices for "calling each other in," rather than fearfully calling each other out. This is how we'll call each other back to our shared commitments and loyalties, our shared covenant. (Cayer)

about dismantling racism--

I want ERUUF to take an active role in working for racial equity within our own ERUUF community, in the Durham and Chapel Hill communities, and in the larger world we live in. This means that White ERUUFians would take responsibility and challenge their own often unquestioned White privilege, seek to let go of the attitudes and actions that keep them from treating all people as truly equal, and to ask how they can partner with People of Color in dismantling racism wherever possible. (Grandstaff)

about needs of People of Color—

In my opinion, a commitment to racial equity and inclusion within ERUUF would essentially mean that the ERUUF community embraces the full humanity of People of Color. Consequently, we would be seen and appreciated for who we are-- complex and unique persons with varied life experiences--rather than simply members of a racial category. (Searles)

I want to feel as if my race doesn't matter, that I don't "represent" Black people, and that I can speak for myself as an individual in most situations. I don't want to be marginalized or feel out of place when I attend small group activities. I would like for others in small groups to speak for themselves without implying that everyone in the room shares or should share their views. (Hall)