

Report from the Anti-Racism Working Group

PCUUC's Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG) began meeting in July of 2020 and has been meeting monthly since that time. As the name of the group implies, our focus is on working toward becoming anti-racist within ourselves and our church community, and working in solidarity with Black social justice organizations to combat systemic racism in our society. Our work is rooted in these UU principles 1) the inherent worth and dignity of every person; 2) justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; 6) the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and the proposed 8th principle, which is a commitment to: **journey 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.**

After consulting with Claudia Ramirez Islas and André Meeks from the Office of Intercultural Relations at Lake Forest College, we determined a direction for our group. We decided to use the UUA's guidelines and actions steps for becoming a Welcoming Congregation as a model for working toward becoming an anti-racist congregation. **We developed three subcommittees:** Congregational Life, led by Anne Thomason, Education, led by Jim Whitton, and Community Outreach, led by Cathy Moon. **The Congregational Life Subcommittee** is focusing on the structures and practices within PCUUC, examining where anti-Blackness and white supremacy show up and developing anti-racist strategies as corrective measures. **The Education Subcommittee** is focusing first on anti-racist education within our community, with the hope of eventually offering programming that will be open to other residents in the surrounding community. **The Community Outreach Subcommittee** has been in communication with Black Lives Matter Lake County to explore potential solidarity work.

You may have noted some changes at PCUUC initiated by the ARWG. For example, you may have read the anti-racism statement on PCUUC's website. Or you might have noticed that we light a candle at our worship services to acknowledge Black lives lost to police violence. You may also notice that our newsletter is beginning to contain recommendations for anti-racist films, readings, podcasts, and other resources.

In future e-newsletters we will be spotlighting the work of our subcommittees, to keep you informed and to invite you to take part in our anti-racism efforts. If you have questions or are interested in joining our working group, please reach out to us at: ARWG@prairiecircleuuc.org