

Issue

Racism is fundamental to U.S. social systems. White supremacy culture operates economically, institutionally, politically, and culturally, shaping everyone's chances to live healthy, fulfilling lives. It is also the nation's most toxic export, shaping policies and practices that do profound harm to the Earth and all living things.

Grounding in Unitarian Universalism

White supremacy culture shaped everything we consider norms, which recent experience has pushed us to analyze. Sociologist Robert Bellah challenged us to make "the interdependent web of all existence the first of your principles and not the last." Decentering whiteness calls us to decenter individual dignity for our collective liberation.

Topics for Congregational Study

White supremacy operates intersectionally. Beyond black and white and interwoven with other forms of oppression, it is multiracial and intersects with issues of class and income, gender, age, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and more.

- How are people socialized into various overlapping supremacy systems, creating a white dominated hetero patriarchy that serves the interests of US corporatism?
- How do different racial and economic strategies get applied to different racial groups, often disguised in coded language that pretends to be colorblind while having racialized impacts?
- How can we, as UUs, build transformative relationships of trust and accountability across race lines?

Through reflection and action, courageous conversations should foster our abilities to de-center whiteness and other "isms". At the core we must equip UUs to work inside and outside our congregations, building trust by following the leadership and direction of the most vulnerable in society.

Possible Congregational/Regional Actions

- Provide ongoing training and education in antiracism and anti-oppression on a multi- and intergenerational basis to all who wish to deepen their understanding of the impacts of intersectional white supremacy.
- Build local relationships with people of color and other oppressed people, inside and outside our congregations, so that agendas and strategies for social justice efforts respond to the real vulnerabilities they face.
- Mobilize UUs to participate in community organizing that is guided by accountable partnerships.

Actions can include street protest, advocacy work, resource sharing, local, regional, and national campaigns, letter-writing, community asset building, and more. The key is organizing with strategic accountability while building sustainable communities of resistance. This work should happen in the areas of environmental racism, mass incarceration and police brutality, reproductive freedom, immigration, access to quality health and education systems, and more.

Related Prior Social Witness Statements

There are few social witness statements from the last ten years that do not have implications regarding intersectional white supremacy. Here are some standouts: [Reaffirmation of Commitment to Racial Justice](#) (2016), [Support the Black Lives Matter movement](#) (2015), and [Reproductive Justice](#) (2015). Robert Bellah's 1998 Ware Lecture is another resource.