

UU Asheville - Draft Congregational Assessment Report

Prepared by the Racial Justice Advisory Council

Compiled by Ed Prestemon

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Section 1 - Introduction

This report summarizes the results of a survey that was performed of members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville (UU Asheville). The purpose of the survey was to better understand current practices and anti-racism work at UU Asheville. Based on the results of the survey and other work of the Racial Justice Advisory Council (RJAC), recommendations were developed to help UU Asheville move towards becoming an anti-racist congregation.

Background

In a November 20, 2020 email to the congregation, the UU Asheville Board of Trustees asked all of UU Asheville to join together in a congregation-wide effort to further the cause of racial justice. They invited us to put our values of justice, compassion, inspiration and connection into action by working to become an anti-racist congregation. To that end, the Board had previously passed a resolution at its October 2020 meeting creating the RJAC. At the November 10th Board meeting the following five members were named to the Council:

- Noah Hall
- Eleanor Lane
- Melissa Murphy
- Ed Prestemon
- Missy Reed

Rev. Claudia Jiménez, our Minister of Faith Development, provides support and internal accountability for the RJAC. External accountability is provided by a consultant, Tracey Greene-Washington of Indigo Innovation Group, who reviews documents prepared by the RJAC and provides input to us as part of our overall process.

The RJAC and Rev. Claudia worked with the Board to better define the process in which we will all participate to further the cause of racial justice. In an April 22, 2021 email to the congregation, the RJAC proposed the following foundations upon which we build our work:

- We bring an anti-racist lens to our work. We examine the ways in which we will be inclusive and share decision making. We envision a process that invites on-going engagement in the process.
- We honor the lived experience. While those of us who are white can read and learn about racism, we understand that this is not the same as ensuring that the voices of people of color, of the global majority, who have experienced the harm of racism are at the table and guiding us throughout the process.
- We understand that our transformation to an anti-racist congregation requires an initial process that the congregation will find meaningful and one in which their input and feedback are valued, recognized and reflected in the goals and outcomes adopted.
- We want to reach out broadly to the congregation and keep in mind that we seek to complete the first phase of our transformation in a reasonable amount of time.

- We recognize that this is work of the heart and intellect. It will challenge and unsettle us, and we need to join in leaning into the discomfort that might arise during the process.

As part of our initial efforts, we wanted to better understand current anti-racism work at UU Asheville and to review our current practices. We prepared an on-line survey entitled the “UUCA Congregational Racial Justice Assessment”. A copy of this assessment is included in Appendix A. Also in Appendix A is a Racial Justice Glossary that was prepared as background information for completing the assessment. Appendix B includes analyses of the responses received as part of the assessment.

Communications were an important part of this process and included the following:

- Wednesday discussions after Vespers to review the assessment tool, the glossary, and the status of the work. These are continuing and are currently called “liberation conversations”.
- A video that provided guidance for completing the assessment tool
- Regular Faith in Action moments during the weekly services where various members of the congregation discussed their personal experiences doing anti-racism work

We began to use the term “liberation conversations” because the work we are doing to uproot white supremacy culture embedded in institutional life involves both personal and mutual liberation. In the United States, we have all been socialized to understand white culture as normative. Uprooting white supremacy culture begins with personal work to understand race, racism and our personal biases. Doing “anti-racism work” by participating in workshops, books, studies and other ways of learning and reflecting on our complicity and privilege (or lack thereof) is only part of the work of liberating ourselves from our conditioning. In liberating ourselves, we are better able to join with others to work for a society and institutions where all are free to thrive and live to their potential. Because we are interconnected, the liberation of each of us and others’ liberation are intertwined. All of us have work to do including white people who are also victimized by their socialization into white supremacy culture. This is collaborative work, not white people liberating People of the Global Majority. We are using the term “liberation conversations” as a reminder that this is work we do together, with compassion and grace. It is both personal and relational work. Our collective efforts are what allow us to co-create the Beloved Community we dream about, a community where all are welcomed and able to thrive. Furthermore, as UUs we tend to define ourselves by what we are against. Liberation conversations indicate what we are for. The following quote embodies the concept of liberation that we are talking about:

**“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time.
But if you have come because your liberation is
bound up with mine, then let us work together.”**

Aboriginal Elder Lilla Watson

Section 2 - Congregational Racial Justice Assessment

This section discusses the development of the Congregational Racial Justice Assessment and the Racial Justice Glossary used by UU Asheville. Summaries of the results of the assessment are also included.

Assessment Development

As our first step, the RJAC reviewed documents prepared by several congregations who had begun the journey to become anti-racist congregations. Based on this review we concluded that our next step would be to conduct a survey of our congregation to learn more about our current anti-racism activities and to review our current practices. We found a rubric that initially was prepared for the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA). The version of the rubric that we started with was created by Julica Hermann de la Fuente, Christina Rivera and Tania Márquez using materials (with permission) from Rev. Ashley Horan at MUUSJA, Rev. Leslie Takahashi, and the Dismantling Racism Resource Book.

The RJAC made a few minor modifications to the rubric to prepare our survey which we entitled the Congregational Racial Justice Assessment. Noah Hall of the RJAC converted the document to an on-line survey to simplify completing the assessment. A hard copy of the final assessment is included in Appendix A (Note: The format varies slightly from the on-line version).

The changes made to the rubric to create our final survey/assessment were:

- Designated the three types of congregations as 1, 3 and 5 as follows:
 - 1 - Status Quo Congregation (white cultural hegemony)
 - 3 - Multiculturally Aware Congregation (passive Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, and Multiculturalism)
 - 5 - Anti-Racist Congregation (active Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, and Multiculturalism)
- Added two categories as follows:
 - 2 – Between 1 and 3
 - 4 – Between 3 and 5
- Added lines for respondents to complete with the request: “Please provide evidence or examples to support your answer.”

We believed the evidence and examples would be especially useful in understanding why individuals rated our congregation as they did, and to identify areas of our practices that they believed needed to be improved. It is important to realize that the assessment only collected individuals’ perceptions of our congregation and its practices, that is, where we believe we are currently on our journey to become an anti-racist congregation.

The survey was not only a current assessment of our congregation, it was also a tool to educate everyone on the characteristics that we seek to become an anti-racist congregation. It was made

available on-line in mid-May 2021 and continued to be available through the end of September 2021.

Assessment Components

The Congregational Racial Justice Assessment in Appendix A consists of the following components:

- Instructions
- List of congregational groups that respondents can click on to register their involvement. The survey collects the responses for all respondents.
- Assessment sections for the following 15 areas:
 - Public witness and prophetic voice
 - Mission & purpose; leadership
 - Worship
 - Small group ministry and pastoral care
 - Religious education or adults
 - Religious education for children and youth
 - Partnerships and solidarity with community
 - Theology
 - Finances
 - Facilities
 - Communication style
 - Membership & welcoming
 - Human resources
 - Purchasing
 - Administration

For each area, respondents were asked to rate the congregation from 1 to 5 based on the descriptions in the assessment. They were also asked to list evidence and examples to support their rating. However, per the instructions, individuals were told that they were not required to provide an assessment for all 15 categories--only those they felt they had enough knowledge to evaluate.

Racial Justice Glossary

Prior to rolling out the assessment and based on input from Tracey Greene-Washington, our external accountability consultant, we realized that we needed to provide some basic education on the language used in anti-racism work. This was necessary so all individuals could understand and complete the assessment and to facilitate ongoing discussions on anti-racism within our congregation.

We had the following goals in completing the Racial Justice Glossary:

- Define all terminology used in the assessment tool.
- Define the major terminology utilized in anti-racism work.
- To make the glossary easy to use, limit its size to one 8 ½" x 11" page, front and back.

The glossary was distributed to the entire congregation via email and a copy is included in Appendix A.

After we prepared the initial glossary, we realized that the following additional terms were necessary to define for the completion of this report.

- **People of the Global Majority.** This term affirms and accurately describes the majority of the Earth’s population who have varying racialized ethnicities and skin pigmentation but share the common experience of systemic racism.
- **Equity and Equity Footprint.** Defined and discussed in detail in Section 3.

Summary of Assessment Results

A total of 126 responses were received using the assessment tool. A review of typical response rates for on-line surveys indicated that our response was comparable to other surveys. Table 1 summarizes the average ratings and number of responses for each of the areas evaluated.

Table 1 - Average ratings and number of responses by areas		
Area	Average score	Number of Responses
Public witness and prophetic voice	3.4	126
Mission & purpose; leadership	3.6	121
Worship	3.6	119
Small group ministry and pastoral care	3.1	78
Religious education for adults	3.5	108
Religious education for children and youth	3.7	75
Partnerships and solidarity with community	3.2	117
Theology	3.5	113
Finances	3.5	92
Facilities	3.2	71
Communication style	3.1	107
Membership & welcoming	3.0	107
Human resources	2.8	67
Purchasing	3.0	72
Administration	3.4	80

As indicated in Table 1, most areas had an average rating between 3 and 4, except for human resources which had an average rating of 2.8. The number of responses for each area varied from a low of 67 for human resources to a high of 126 for public witness and prophetic voice. The

lower numbers of responses for certain areas likely indicate that less people were familiar with those areas.

A rating of 3 corresponds to a Multiculturally Aware Congregation (passive Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, and Multiculturalism). A rating of 5 corresponds to an Anti-Racist Congregation (active Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, and Multiculturalism). A rating of 4 corresponds to somewhere in between a 3 and 5. Therefore, on average, respondents to the Racial Justice Assessment felt we were currently somewhere between a 3 or 5, but closer to a 3. While these values just indicate our congregation's perceptions of where we are on the journey to becoming an anti-racist congregation, they clearly show that we have a lot of work to do.

Detailed analyses of the responses including summaries of typical comments made by respondents are included in Appendix B. The analyses also include the total numbers of respondents that gave each area a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 rating.

The following sections provide a short summary of the assessment analyses by area.

Public Witness and Prophetic Voice

The average response rating for the Public Witness and Prophetic area was 3.4. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Members and friends attend marches in support of anti-racism and show their support by wearing the "yellow" shirt
- Congregation and board supported the church as a Sanctuary church and helped house an immigrant for 8 months
- Programs, book studies and action group focused on anti-racism work
- Participation in UU the Vote

Trending comments/observations:

- Small group of people doing the bulk of the work
- We have passive anti-racism vs active anti-racism; "talk with little action"
- Members held back from participation by pandemic

Mission and Purpose; Leadership

The average response rating for the Mission and Purpose; Leadership area was 3.6. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Congregation supported the church as a Sanctuary church

- We hire Black-owned businesses
- Leadership decision to start us on path to becoming anti-racist congregation
- Congregational statement in support of Black Lives Matter

Trending comments/observations:

- Small group of people doing bulk of the work
- Mission doesn't clearly address anti-racism work
- Talk and studying the problem versus action
- Internal versus external focus

Worship

The average response rating for the Worship area was 3.6. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Use of Spanish in greeting/welcome, music, stories, speakers, Latinx content
- Reverend Claudia's use of language and Latinx culture
- Multiculturalism in music, children's books, readings, vocalists beyond white voices
- Service centered in white Protestant traditions and music
- Majority of voices/readings, Eurocentric and majority white, male authors

Trending comments/observations:

- Divergence of thought:
 - A large number of comments focus on worship incorporating more aspects of multiculturalism and multicultural voices, with a significant number specifying use of Spanish in welcome, stories and hymns.
 - However, a smaller but significant number identify the service structure and content as white Protestant.
- Worship is comfortable in white Protestant tradition
- Appreciation of anti-racism efforts
- Focus on intellect and not emotions

Small Group Ministry and Pastoral Care

The average response rating for the Small Group Ministry and Pastoral Care area was 3.1. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Soul Matters groups
- Social and racial justice groups focusing on anti-racism across all spectrums including Black trans lives (URU; ARIJAG; JMC)

Trending comments/observations

- Don't know what pastoral visitors do

Religious Education for Adults

The average response rating for the Religious Education for Adults area was 3.5. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Book and discussion groups, e.g., *The New Jim Crow*
- Wednesday discussions after Vespers
- *Me and White Supremacy* reflection groups
- Dismantling White Supremacy Support Group

Trending comments/observations

- Small group of people doing most of the work
- Talk and studying the problem vs action
- Internal versus external focus
- We have passive anti-racism vs active anti-racism; "talk with little action"

Religious Education for Children and Youth

The average response rating for the Religious Education for Children and Youth area was 3.7. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- RE did own self-assessment
- RE Council having monthly anti-racism discussions in meetings
- Anti-racism parenting group continues to meet and learn together
- UU curriculum brings in racial justice issues--up to teachers to make it real
- RE circles and teachers are very good about talking about race and acknowledging how things are different for people with different skin tones.

Trending comments/observations:

- Many people don't know what's happening in RE
- RE Council and anti-racism parenting group clear focus is on anti-racism
- Coming of Age is area of focus for teaching anti-racism and multiculturalism

- Lessons and resources shared on anti-racism and multiculturalism, but not yet infused into whole curriculum
- Where is the curriculum covering anti-racism and multiculturalism; how are teachers making it real?

Partnerships and Solidarity with Community

The average response rating for the Partnerships and Solidarity with Community area was 3.2. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Coordination/partnership with other faith communities during sanctuary
- Room at the Inn
- Opportunities in social justice e-newsletter
- Partnership work with CoThinkk, Faith for Justice, Beloved
- Community Plate
- Sharing space with Jewish Community

Trending comments/observations:

- Small group of the same people- providing the “footprint” of UU Asheville, but not really the “work of the congregation”
- Individuals acting/not necessarily representing UU Asheville
- How much of our partner work/support is based on authentic relationship?
- This effort impacted by pandemic
- Most work through donations vs action
- Fragile partnerships
- “Pockets” or “moments” of this happening- true partnership

Theology

The average response rating for the Theology area was 3.5. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Our theology is unknown or unclear
- Services incorporate ideas from different cultures
- Lack of theological grounding on anti-racism
- “I Believe” series

Trending comments/observations:

- Our theology and its grounding on anti-racism are unknown or unclear

- UU's don't like to talk about theology
- Small group of people doing bulk of the work

Finances

The average response rating for the Finances area was 3.5. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Community Plate
- Spending of finances-not much discussion on how to spend re: racial justice, small group makes decision
- Budget left to leaders/members who are well versed
- Staff do good job of getting word out re: spending
- Social Justice Committee/social ministry group budgeted money as they see fit/supported at level beyond what they spent

Trending comments/observations:

- Community Plate was the example most often identified—which is funded by direct congregant donations rather than funds within the general budget.
- Big divide between those who see finances openly discussed and money in the budget for racial justice and those who see finances as not transparent and unaware of monies for racial justice
- Some people see a small group having power to choose what gets spent, including for racial justice.
- People tend to be aware of financially related issues and spending, when they are in a group that is directly addressing this area.

Facilities

The average response rating for the Facilities area was 3.2. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Facilities offered to community groups at reduced rate/free
- Hosted conference on Opportunity Gap in education
- REI and Building Bridges workshops housed in our space
- Who we hire- catering, lawn service (POC-owned businesses)

Trending comments/observations:

- People don't know- within congregation, in outside community- what policies are/what is happening/how we are operating in this area

- Reputation as organization that offers space/supports

Communication Style

The average response rating for the Communication Style area was 3.1. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Verbiage training on multiculturalism for Welcome Team
- Education/training on asset-based language
- Communication is very “white” with an emphasis of being polite and not disruptive
- Rev. Claudia’s Spanish in services

Trending comments/observations:

- Politeness and civility are emphasized.
- Communication is very “white”

Membership and Welcoming

The average response rating for the Membership and Welcoming area was 3.0. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- No significant numbers of People of the Global Majority
- Emphasis on financial requirement for membership
- Several mentions of the “pounce” related to People of the Global Majority
- No multicultural or anti-racism training for new members

Trending comments/observations

- Why would People of the Global Majority want to attend if we are a mostly white congregation?
- Emphasis on giving money limits membership and participation.
- We have very little experience interacting with People of the Global majority so little opportunities to develop relationships.

Human Resources

The average response rating for the Human Resources area was 2.8. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 1 or 3 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Several mentions of the hire of Rev. Claudia
- Hiring practices always include outreach to communities of People of the Global Majority, as best we can
- All staff have access to professional development

Trending comments/observations:

- Respondents not aware of hiring policies.
- Would like to see more People of the Global Majority hired.

Purchasing

The average response rating for the Purchasing area was 3.0. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- Fair trade coffee and chocolate
- Black-owned lawn care provider
- RE Council and the Auction Committee actively seek POC-owned vendors
- Food trucks owned by People of the Global Majority

Trending comments/observation:

- Fair trade coffee and chocolate
- Black-owned lawn care provider

It should be noted that almost half of respondents did not provide any comments on purchasing.

Administration

The average response rating for the Administration area was 3.4. The detailed characteristics of congregations with a 3 or 5 rating are included on the assessment tool in Appendix A.

Some of the salient examples or evidence given to support the respondent ratings:

- No significant numbers of People of the Global Majority
- Governance very white-oriented, focus on following procedures
- Certain way of doing things and expectations of behavior

Trending comments/observations:

- 27% of people responding aren't able to assess as they don't have the knowledge or are guessing. Another 9% are basing their assessment on impressions from the past.

- Governance and procedures rigid and white oriented.
- No significant numbers of People of the Global Majority people in reception/attending.
- Although many people chose 3 or 4, there were not a lot of examples given to support this.
- Positive intention of the congregation/administration, e.g., fact of initiating assessment speaks to commitment.

Section 3 – Recommendations

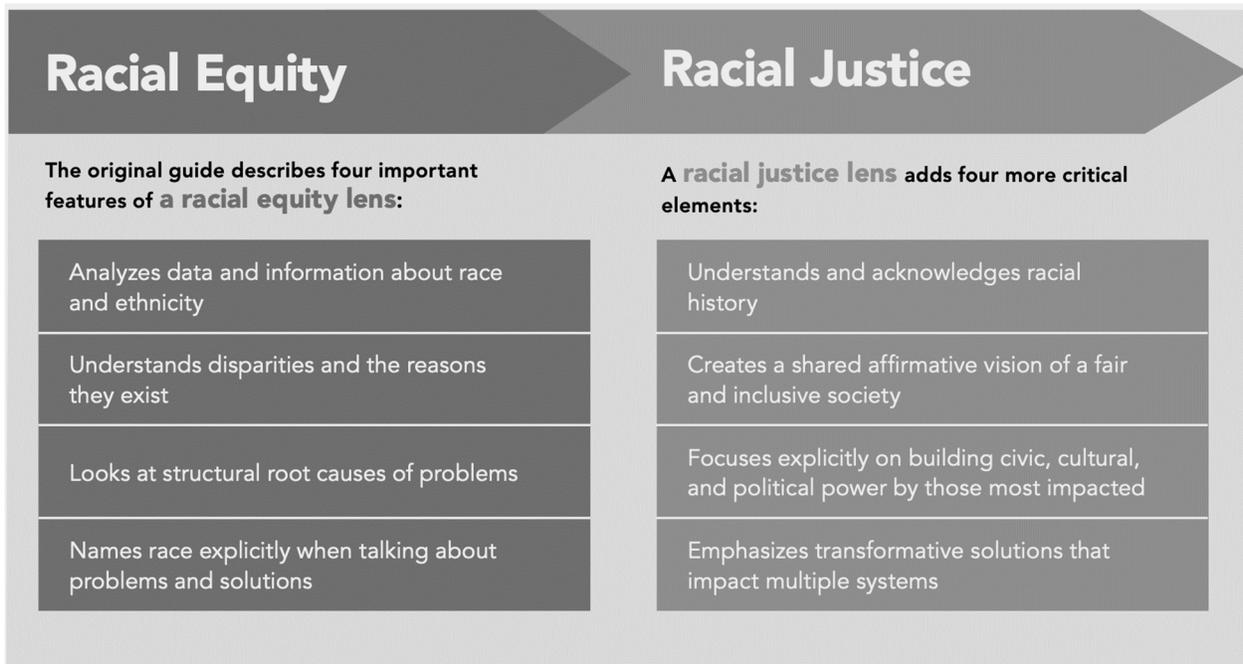
As we reviewed the results of the congregational racial justice assessment, we discussed the best approach for developing recommendations for moving UU Asheville forward to become an anti-racist congregation. In consultation with our external accountability consultant, Tracey Greene-Washington, we decided to use an equity footprint as a framework for developing our recommendations.

Equity Footprint

The equity footprint we decided to adapt for our use was created by Frontline Solutions (a Black-owned national consulting firm) in October 2019, for philanthropic organizations to support advancing equity. The basis of this framework includes the following:

- Equity is the quality of being fair and impartial; fair is not synonymous with equal.
- It is not enough to avoid inequitable organizational practices in a society grounded in white supremacy. There is a call to center equity in all aspects of organizational life.
- Considerations include diversity, equity and inclusion which are part of the anti-racism/liberation journey.

As we strive to become an anti-racist congregation, we are trying to achieve racial justice within our congregation, in our community and in the greater world. The following figure illustrates how racial equity leads to racial justice.

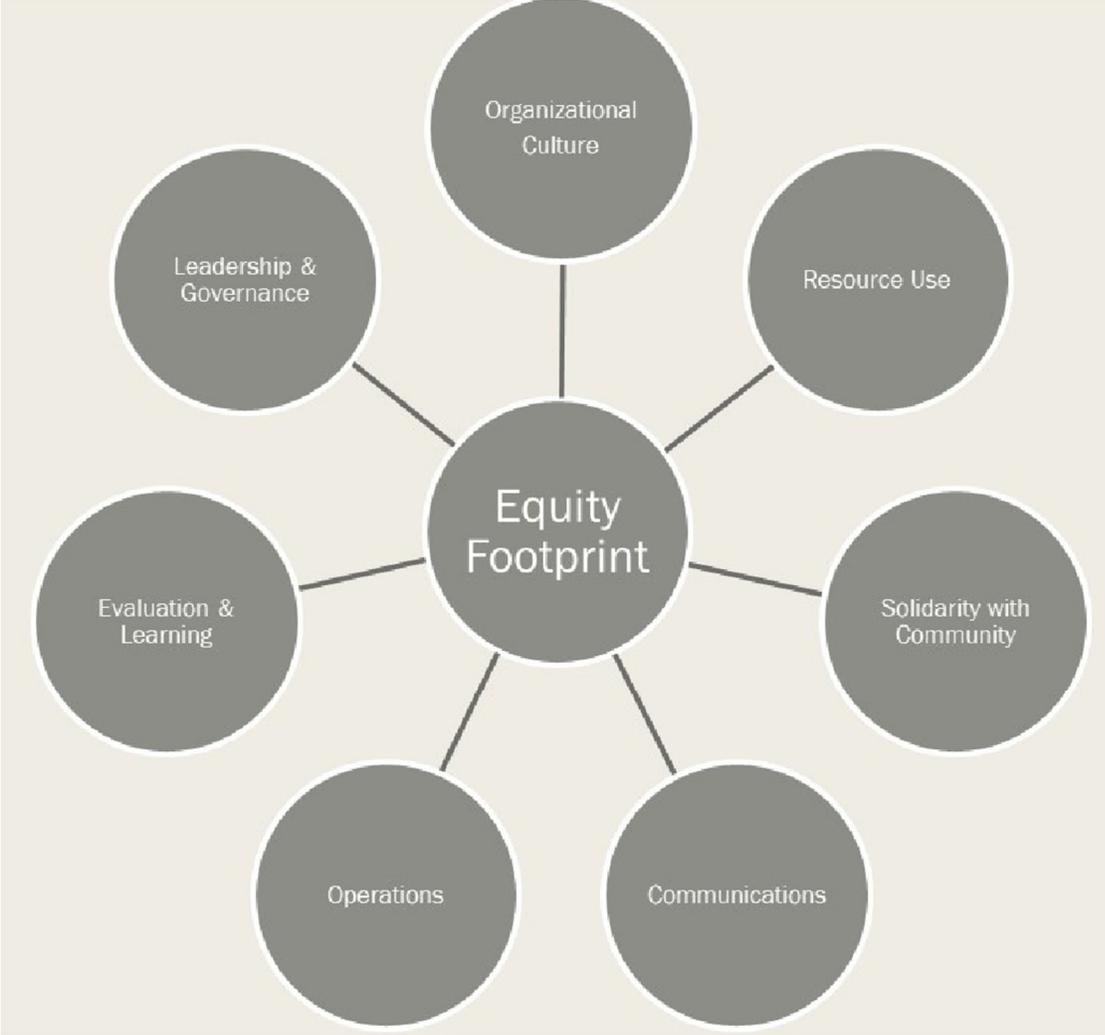


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An equity footprint is defined as the impact of an organization on community as it fulfills its mission, expressed as the extent to which it engages in equitable practices in all domains of organizational culture. There are three principles that apply to use of an equity footprint:

- Business as usual is inherently inequitable. Harmful systems and practices have been established as the default. It is not neutral.
- Every organization has room to increase its equity footprint. Leaders, formal and informal, are invited to pursue continual improvement and constant interrogation.
- Equity is a good practice for an organization. It is a myth that equity is promoted at the expense of efficiency, productivity and quality.

We modified the equity footprint developed by Frontline Solutions for philanthropic organizations to be used by our congregation as illustrated in the figure below.



As shown in the figure, there are seven aspects of our organization, or domains, that can contribute to development of an equity footprint. These are:

- Organizational culture
- Leadership and governance
- Evaluation and learning
- Operations
- Communications
- Solidarity with community
- Resource use

The RJAC used these seven domains to organize our recommendations which are presented below. Two types of recommendations are presented: Priority Actions are those that we feel UU Asheville should begin to implement as soon as possible; Other Recommendations are those that could be implemented in the future. The RJAC recommends that the board initially focus on the priority actions under organizational culture; leadership and governance; and evaluation and learning²

This is work of a lifetime and the congregation will have input through listening circles with recommendations for priorities.

Organizational Culture

Priority Actions

1. At the 2022 Annual Meeting, adopt the 8th principle, which states:

“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 oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

2. Update training and onboarding procedures and documents for all roles to include material regarding racial justice, multiculturalism, and equity (for example, asset-based language, diverse communication styles) for:
 - Greeters
 - Pastoral Care volunteers
 - Soul Matters Groups volunteers
 - New member orientation
 - Children and adult RE Volunteer Training
 - Board members
 - Leadership Development Committee

Other Recommendations

- Explore ways to incorporate more expressive elements and embodiment in worship, to complement and balance our tendency to focus on the cerebral and abstract.
- Commit to recruiting members of the Global Majority for guest minister and relevant program facilitation.

- Work to intentionally connect our justice work and spiritual work. For example, we should ensure that appropriate pastoral care is available for people involved in racial justice work and activism.

Leadership and Governance

Priority Actions

3. Explore models of equity audits within congregations and hire a consultant to perform a formal equity audit (see discussion below).
4. Clearly communicate/share the search process and materials for new Minister through all congregational channels when Transition Team is activated. Incorporate explicit equity-based questions and criteria in the search materials.
5. Create a mechanism for ongoing accountability regarding these recommendations and other racial justice and equity work. Consider transitioning the Justice Ministry Council into that role.
6. Prioritize a plan to distribute the reparations fund with input from People of the Global Majority
7. Review, clearly define and communicate criteria to the entire congregation for how the Board of Trustees and congregational committees, including the Leadership Development Committee members, are selected.

Evaluation and Learning

Priority Actions

8. Encourage congregational members to participate in reflection groups based on various sources considering different levels of engagement in liberation/anti-racism work. Examples are: novels written from the experience of People of the Global Majority; *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad; *How to be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram Kendi; *Uprooting Racism* by Paul Kivel; *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson; *Raising White Kids* by Jennifer Harvey.
9. Budget for and provide on-going, developmentally appropriate opportunities for all ages to learn about and counter racism and white supremacy (tools, skills, information).
10. Perform annual RE curriculum audit for liberation/anti-racism content. Examples: Do we have a Black and Indigenous history component in our curriculum? Are the People of the Global Majority included?

Other Recommendations:

- Encourage participation by congregation members in Building Bridges and other programs with the Racial Equity Institute.
- Communicate purpose and availability of pastoral care and small group ministry programs.
- Organize more family outings & activities to Black community events using a preparation, action, reflection model.

Operations

Priority Actions

11. Adopt radically welcoming membership requirements that focus on time, talent and presence alongside financial commitment. Remove financial requirements that have been barriers for participation.
12. Prioritize funding for resources to address white supremacy, learn multicultural competencies and support racial justice work (ex. equity audit, accountability partner).
13. Consider who is/isn't at the table for financial decisions and look for ways to widen the circle.

Other Recommendations

- Offer regular conversations (monthly or quarterly) to discuss the state of finances, board projects, etc. facilitated by a board member or a member of the finance committee.

Communications

Priority Actions

14. Develop an on-line and print booklet explaining the idea of an anti-racist congregation.
15. Provide ongoing workshops on engaging in difficult conversations and dealing with conflict in partnership with Adult Faith Development.

Solidarity with Community

Priority Actions

16. Explore using the Community Plate to focus on a smaller number of community organizations to encourage congregational participation and relationship building.
17. Strengthen connection with community organizations in which UU Asheville is a member, i.e., CoThinkk, Creation Care Alliance and Faith 4 Justice, to increase congregational awareness and participation.

Other Recommendations

- Have Justice Ministry Council explore defining what we want social justice to be at UU Asheville and bring to the congregation.
- Have JMC (or committee or action group) clarify and define the process for public witness (ex. yellow t-shirt events, public statements, editorials, action alerts, etc.) and facilitate/coordinate congregational participation.

Resource Use

Priority Actions

18. Set yearly budget allocations for ongoing liberation/anti-racism work for all ages, facilitators and lay leaders. Encourage facilitation by local People of the Global Majority.

Other Recommendations

- Analyze current use of space and policies for community partners- Where is there room to expand resource-sharing here?
- Analyze Community Plate process and consider revisions to invest in long-term/ongoing community partnerships.
- Explore and implement best practices for supporting staff not from white/normative/dominant culture.

What is an Equity Audit?

Priority Action No. 3 above recommends exploring models of equity audits within congregations and hiring a consultant to perform a formal equity audit for UU Asheville. With the completion of the Assessment Tool by congregants and an analysis of the responses by the RJAC, we now have a look at how the congregation perceives itself at this moment in time on a continuum moving toward becoming an anti-racist congregation. The Equity Audit would bring in an outside consultant, with experience in moving organizations forward, to do an external, deeper systematic assessment of our congregation, bringing to light areas out of our awareness, identifying barriers to and paths of growth to reaching our goals of being an equitable, anti-racist congregation. As a predominantly white congregation, aspects of white supremacy culture are embedded in our culture. The RJAC has identified three overarching areas for analysis: transparency, accessibility, and power-sharing; and this report makes specific recommendations for engaging in congregational cultural change. An Equity Audit would review policies, procedures and practices; aspects of organizational culture and leadership; and shed light on areas not seen. This analysis would move us toward becoming a community in which everyone feels valued and welcomed.