

**Connie Simon and Maria McCabe Call to Worship
from the May 7, 2017 Beyond White Privilege Service**

CONNIE: Good morning and welcome to this house of peace, justice and love. I'm Intern Minister Connie Simon and I'm honored to be with you this morning and to welcome María McCabe, Director of Social Justice and Community Ministry from our neighbors the UU Church of the Restoration. Maria, on behalf of this congregation, thank you for sharing this day with us. And thank you for being my friend and my colleague and joining me in this important work.

MARIA: I want you to know that you are making history today. You are now one of 684 Unitarian Universalist congregations who have made the commitment to use this time of Sunday worship to explore the Legacy of White Supremacy. Let that sink in – 684 congregations, representing every one of our 50 states and seven countries! Tens of thousands of us, in this moment, living into our faith and our determination for a brighter and more just future.

Together we are engaging our curiosity, raising our voices, and opening our hearts. We are ready to hold one another in this moment. And we are ready to lean into our fear of the unknown. To be honest, as exciting-and my heart is pounding in this moment- as exciting as this is, I am afraid, you may be too.

CONNIE: You've heard me speak from this pulpit about what it's like to be a Black UU – to feel so loved and so overjoyed at finding a theological home yet sometimes feeling lonely, wary and frustrated. Facing every day the realization that White culture, the dominant culture, is and always has been the dominant culture in Unitarian Universalism; and struggling with what that means for me as I embark upon my ministry. It's real and sometimes it's very scary. But you know me, I am not one to give up. I have hope that we can change. I have hope that we can find a NEW way of being, of being together, that truly welcomes, embraces and includes ALL of us.

Unitarian Universalism needs to change. It can't stay the same – nothing ever can. And I know that this change is uncomfortable. It's hard. And sometimes it's painful. And it's necessary. You should also know by now, how much I love you all. And you should know that I don't want to do or say or bring anything into this space that would hurt you. But we need to do this. We need to do this today. Even though it's uncomfortable and it's hard and it might hurt a little. It might hurt a lot. But we need to do this if we're ever going to change and realize that dream of Beloved Community.

Today is not going to fix everything – but it's another step forward - a new beginning for us and for Unitarian Universalism.

MARIA: So here we are, representing two of the oldest congregations in the United States, both of our congregations with long histories of fighting for justice...and fighting for what is right; struggling to create and to bring about Beloved Community. Our congregations have seen a lot of change already. But we are most certainly not done. Change, fueled by faith and heart, bodies and minds, is happening among us still. For that I am grateful and excited.

CONNIE: And so, with gratitude and excitement, a little bit of fear and a whole lot of hope and love, I invite us into worship and ask my sister Maria to honor us by lighting our chalice, the symbol of our chosen faith. As we begin our work and worship together here today, may the light of this flame shine as a symbol of hope, peace, love and community.