

Proposed USG Theology Action Items

COIC Recommendation 1: Re-engaging with our theological legacy and its use today will both ground our efforts to welcome all who are drawn to our faith and provide resources for resilience for Unitarian Universalists in these difficult times.

COIC Recommended Action: Center the theological work of Black scholars, Indigenous scholars, and scholars of color, both professional and lay, whose knowledge is resonant for our times.

Possible USG Actions:

Goal: Center the theological perspectives of people from diverse communities including BIPOC, LGBTQ, disabled communities and those living with economic distress in worship services, in ASD/CSD and communications and increase them over time.

Action: Track how many of the above voices (service participants, authors of readings, stories, pieces of music, people in videos) our worship services include. A section could be added to the OOS planning grid to identify whether service elements came from a person from one of these communities which would both remind service crafters of the goal and to make tracking simpler. *Worship Arts Committee*

Action: Track the voices drawn from and presented in our ASD and CSD programs with a goal of increasing the communities represented. *Ryan, ASD, CSD*

Action: Highlight the lives and teachings of members of the above communities in the newsletter. *On hold as we get the other things started and figure out what this might look like*

Action: Create a church service about anti-oppression, using the Avatars from the WCC Report *Worship Arts Committee*

COIC Recommendation 2: Reinterpretation of our theological legacies in these times should be liberatory and articulate our commitment to affirming and welcoming those who have been marginalized in our larger society and within our communities and organizations.

COIC Recommended Action: Resource multigenerational efforts within Black/Indigenous/people of color communities to develop rituals of healing and other worship materials to be used in congregations, regions, and national gatherings.

Possible USG Actions:

Goal: Provide experiences that are meaningful to people with a wide range of identities.

Action: Look to a range of communities for wisdom while being sure to credit and acknowledge those sources *Worship/Kent/WtC member?*

Action: Examine UUA guidelines about cultural misappropriation:

<https://www.uua.org/multiculturalism/introduction/misappropriation> to ensure that USG events/worship services are mindful of sources and attribution *Worship/Kent/WtC member?*

COIC Recommendation 3: *Acknowledgment of anti-oppression work as a theological mandate is essential.* We need to resurrect, research, document, and teach the words of Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, women, and others who have been largely lost though their presence has been with us throughout history. These constitute a valuable tool for our times. We call on individual white Unitarian Universalists to engage in deep spiritual discernment, including engagement with our need to examine the dominant white-centered culture of our congregations.

COIC Recommended Actions:

-Further incorporate and reclaim accounts of Universalist, Unitarian, and Unitarian Universalist leaders of color and Indigenous descent in Tapestry of Faith resources to serve a more diverse children and youth population.

- Encourage collaboration between the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries, and Liberal Religious Educators Association on a virtual library of resources for liberatory worship anchored in cross-cultural competency.
- Develop standards for ethical cross-cultural uses of worship materials from other traditions, and those previously developed by the Council for Cross-Cultural Engagement should be updated and discussed by religious professional associations.

Possible USG Actions

Goal: Continuing education in anti-oppression for all lay leaders (includes Board, MET, Committee chairs, Worship Associates)

Action: Each lay leader commits to attend at least one workshop/course/program focused on anti-oppression per year. *Ryan/ASD identifies some options, expectation can be communicated through relevant groups and at the planned Board/Committee chair retreat*

Action: Encourage all congregants to do the same, offer financial support if needed, consider creating a fund. *Consider putting into the budget for FY 22-23 or doing a special fundraiser (Board/MET)*

Action: Identify ways to acknowledge systemic racism & white supremacy culture & invite feedback & critique from individuals who have been harmed by it (Committee on Ministry, use of Quaker type trained “Noticers”) *Consider process observer for Annual Meeting, with observations to be discussed at a separate time, not as part of the meeting? Develop program in the future? Needs leader*

COIC Recommendation 4: Education about the covenantal nature of our faith will allow communities to support and nurture one another as the overall US climate becomes more hostile to and disinterested in a life of faith.

Returning to the practice of honoring covenant is essential in the world in which we find ourselves. The divisions between generations, between economic levels, and between people of different races, ethnicities, abilities, sexual orientations, and gender identities are unprecedented. If we remember that we are a covenantal faith, we have a better chance of surviving the changing perceptions and attitudes about religion and faith in our nation.

COIC Recommended Actions:

- Provide support from regions to prioritize developing congregational covenants tied to mission and goals and including aspirations for equity, inclusion, and diversity.
- Spread promising practices around addressing disruptive people and microaggressions as a barrier to covenantal community.
- Develop resources for training on engagement with, rather than avoidance of, conflict as a part of change and transformation.

Possible USG Actions:

Goal: Develop accountability process for addressing/repairing the harm of microaggressions

Possible Actions: *need leaders*

- Revise USG covenant statements to include more actions at the individual as well as “system” & policy levels
- Increase congregational knowledge & use of the Covenant of Right Relations through publicity & education
- Develop practices that increase accountability to the Covenant of Right Relations
- Consider revisions to the Covenant of Right Relations that address microaggressions
- Consider creating a Right Relations Task Force to implement & support these ideas