



UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
MINISTERS  
ASSOCIATION

Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada Chapter

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## **UUMOC Call to Action on Racial Justice Released April 2018**

We, Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada, committed to a world where our interdependence calls us to love and justice, call upon Canadian Unitarian Universalists to act for racial justice in our organizations, our communities, and also in our hearts, so that ALL people, regardless of racialized identities may know their sacred worth and dignity.

We recognize that as a people of faith we are just beginning to engage with the multiple ways in which structural racism and the Eurocentric origins of our movement impact who we are and how we live and interact.

We believe each of us brings a life experience that is essential to understanding the whole. We also affirm that each of us is at a different point along this journey of undoing white supremacy through action. Each of us has things to learn. Not all of our voices have been heard, nor has each played an equal role in the evolving story of our movement in Canada.

Honouring these differences among us, we call upon all Canadian Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist congregations to pledge as member societies to initiate intentional actions of conscience around racial justice issues. Recognizing the range of demographics and resources represented across our various congregations, and the differing priorities in racial justice issues in our Canadian communities, this Call to Action on Racial Justice invites each congregation into discernment of their own unique Action. We encourage each congregation to seal their commitment by seeking endorsement or affirmation of an Action on Racial Justice at their society's Annual General Meeting or other business meeting of their membership.

As a way to deepen and further your own commitment, and those of your congregations, here are **10 Actions for Racial Justice**.

These examples are in random order. We invite you to engage some of these and/or to develop your own activity or initiative. Please tell us about your activities so that we can curate them into a resource list made available for all Canadian Unitarian Universalist congregations.

For the UUMOC Action on Racial Justice Task Force:

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## **10 Actions for Racial Justice**

### **UU Ministers of Canada Action on Racial Justice Task Force**

As a way to deepen and further your own commitment – as individuals, and in Canadian UU communities – here are **10 Actions for Racial Justice**.

1. **Create safer spaces** Ensure that people of colour/indigenous participants within your congregation have opportunities to explore their experiences within Unitarian Universalism together, by setting a regular time and space for people from historically marginalized communities to meet. For more: <https://www.mcgill.ca/edu4all/edu4all-themes/making-safer-spaces-takes-all-kinds-work>
2. **Learn your land history** Settler communities often ignore the history of the land that sustains their congregations or homes. Learn the history of the land you live on, and let this be an entry point into individual or congregational reconciliation work. To go further, explore the CUC's *Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide*: <https://sites.google.com/view/thrrg-introductiontoallguides/welcome>
3. **Don't wait for organized teach-ins to continue learning** Offer a racial justice workshop in your congregation and open it to your community, either by partnering with a local facilitator or by sending a group to an online workshop, such as this one: <http://www.37days.com/racism/>. Host a film series focused on racial justice in Canada: the *THRRG's Young Adult Guide* has a wonderful list of films. Have a small group discussion series using podcasts – Red Man Laughing, Season 5 (on reconciliation) is a great place to begin. [www.redmanlaughing.com](http://www.redmanlaughing.com) Develop congregational skills through revisiting the principles developed in the *CUC's Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide* (see above), or by learning about Bystander Training, intersectionality, and linked oppressions. <https://uucsj.org/unit-6-get-intersectional/> Consider establishing a dedicated congregational team whose role is to explore and help teach strategies for learning and change.
4. **Include more voices ... with integrity!** Ideally, the words, music, and visual images featured in worship and congregational web-based communications will champion the wisdom of people from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Also, becoming intentional about including people from diverse backgrounds on your worship, welcoming, and leadership teams is a step in the right direction toward reflecting the diversity – and vitality – of the wider world.

At the same time, there's a fine line between striving for diversity and using the faces and words of historically marginalized people as window dressing, or exploiting these resources for our own ends. Learn more from these resources:

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/decentering-whiteness-worship-webinar> as well as the Church of the Larger Fellowship's podcast The VUU, #196: UU's, Music and Appropriation: <https://www.questformeaning.org/vuu/vuu-podcast/page/2/>

5. **Look within** Despite our movement's stated embrace of diversity, our congregations do not reflect the actual cultural and racial diversity within Canadian society. One way to begin looking at barriers to change is to screen *Radical Inclusion*, Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison Reed's keynote address from the CUC's 2013 Annual Conference and Meeting, followed by a conversation or study group in your congregation: <http://cuc.ca/video-from-2013-acm>
6. **Launch a Common Read** Invite all members of your congregation to commit to reading – then discussing – a book that will deepen understanding of racial justice issues here in Canada. Purchasing several copies for your church library, and ensuring digital versions are available from your municipal library will ensure the book is accessible to all.
7. **Put it into practice** Develop spiritual practices that help you centre and enact a commitment to racial justice. Here are two examples from American sources: <https://uucsj.org/study-guide/spiritual-practice-and-social-justice/> <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/reconciliation-as-spiritual-discipline> And, if you would like to help develop a uniquely Canadian bank of UU spiritual practice resources relating to racial justice, contact us [here](#).
8. **Situate yourselves** Host all-ages experiential activities like the *Privilege Walk* <https://peacelearner.org/2016/03/14/privilege-walk-lesson-plan> or the *KAIROS Blanket Exercise* <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org> to help participants explore the varying dimensions of their identities and social location. Understanding social location is a tool for better being able to recognize how power and privilege are distributed unequally.
9. **Become good allies** ... a challenge that can be easier said than done. For more: [http://www.becominganally.ca/Becoming\\_an\\_Ally/Home.html](http://www.becominganally.ca/Becoming_an_Ally/Home.html) Partner with local racial justice organizations. Begin by attending their events and building relationships. Learn where your allyship is needed, and then step up in support. Support Indigenous businesses (The UUMOC Racial Justice Task Force maintains a resource list of recommended Indigenous owned businesses in Canada offering a variety of goods and services, such as -- clothing, art, accessories, book subscriptions, cosmetics, herbs, wine, drums, etc. Please inquire.)
10. **Bravely share your stories** Seek out opportunities to increase congregational story telling, in a way that still honours, yet de-centers the stories of those who occupy privileged spaces. Pairing stories of “falling down” with others on the theme of “how we tried to raise ourselves up” helps model that not all our experiences revolve around success. And finally, share your congregation's stories of learning with the wider Canadian UU community, by sending regular updates to the Canadian Unitarian, so that we can all learn from and be inspired by one another!

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