

Canadian Unitarian Council  
Dismantling Racism Study Group  
Final Report on National Survey

May 8, 2021



**WE ARE:**



**ALL CONNECTED**



**STRONGER TOGETHER**



**LOVE'S HANDS IN THE WORLD**



**CALLED TO CREATE JUSTICE**



**RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE  
ANOTHER AND THE EARTH**

# Table of Contents

- Background ..... 3
- Overview of Findings..... 6
- Context ..... 7
- Results..... 10
  - Demographics ..... 10
  - Participation in Racial Justice Work..... 13
    - Whyte Avatar: “Activism” by Book Club ..... 18
    - BIPOC Avatar - Disillusioned Yet Determined..... 21
  - Listening to BIPOC Voices..... 26
- Summary and Recommendations ..... 27**
  
- Appendices ..... 32**
  - Appendix A - Preliminary Report
  - Appendix B - The 8th Principle
  - Appendix C - Resolution
  - Appendix D - Glossary
  - Appendix E - Resources

## Background

The following report contains data and analysis from a Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) national survey conducted in the spring of 2020. A preliminary report (**Appendix A**) published in October 2020 describes the survey's raw data. This final report, presented to the 2021 CUC Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May 2021, includes an analysis of the survey's findings.

The survey was designed and interpreted by the Dismantling Racism Study Group (DRSG). The DRSG was formed in May 2019 at the 2019 CUC AGM as part of a resolution passed by the Council. That resolution (**Appendix B**) tasked the Study Group with identifying and assessing efforts made in our congregations and communities to dismantle racism and other oppressions and explore possible action plans to engage Canadian Unitarian Universalists in serious conversation and action about racism.

The resolution was originally inspired by the proposed 8th Principle (**Appendix C** - <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>), which calls on us to 'accountably dismantle' systemic racism within Unitarian Universalism and beyond.

There were a total of 831 responses, including a few obvious duplicates. (The 2019 CUC Annual Meeting package reported 4,257 members. While the survey did not ask for membership status, we might assume a 20% response.) The survey was created on the Survey Monkey platform and was electronically distributed widely within Canadian Unitarian Universalist communities over a several month period. Distribution was done through emails, CUC groups, Facebook, and the CUC eNews. Because of the pandemic, no hard copies were provided within congregations.

This survey was distributed and answered during the COVID-19 pandemic in a time of uncertainty and anxiety. And, there was a surge in the number of responses following the murder of George Floyd in the United States of America and the worldwide anti-racism reaction that followed. This may explain the high response rate and indicate an increased interest in racial justice.

Throughout the report, you will find 'avatars'. These avatars are collective narratives based on the stories told as part of the survey by Black people,

Indigenous people and People of Colour (BIPOC) who have experienced acts of conscious or unconscious racism, as well as the experiences of white allies who have witnessed racist behaviours or heard/heard about racist speech in their Canadian UU congregations. We received stories, and using avatars allows us to maintain interviewees' anonymity, avoid creating "trauma porn", and represent the themes we identified in and across the stories provided.

Throughout this report, we have chosen to use the acronym BIPOC to refer to Black people, Indigenous people, and People of Colour. We recognize that this acronym is not accepted by all as appropriately descriptive, respectful, or inclusive. Yet, we could not land on another way to express 'non-white' in a way that does not normalize or center whiteness. Another term that is gaining popularity is 'People of the Global Majority', but this also does not have universal acceptance. We apologize to any for whom the use of 'BIPOC' is reductionist or exclusionary. This is an evolving conversation.<sup>1</sup>

The UUA Commission on Institutional Change published its *Widening the Circle* report in June 2020.<sup>2</sup> The DRSG found both inspiration and helpful interpretative language in that report. We are grateful for their work and the presence of this recent and comprehensive report on racism within the Unitarian Universalist Association.

There were several comments/questions from respondents who could not access the glossary of terms that were provided. This raises the possibility that questions may have been skipped when terms were not understood. That glossary follows as **Appendix D**.

So much has happened since this survey was crafted and distributed; responses are specific to the moment in time when the survey was answered. We appreciate those who took the time to complete the survey, as well as those who continue to share their stories with us. Your participation is a testament to your commitment to racial justice work.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.newsweek.com/bipoc-isnt-doing-what-you-think-its-doing-opinion-1582494>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening>

## The CUC's Dismantling Racism Study Group

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# Overview of Findings

The results of this survey indicate that there is a gap between who we say we are (our UU principles and aspirations) and the existence of racism within our congregations and communities. While Unitarian Universalists aspire to affirm and promote 'the inherent worth and dignity of every person'<sup>3</sup> and 'justice, equity and compassion in human relations'<sup>4</sup>, it is clear that this is not the lived experience for everyone who enters our doors. It is also clear that there is a direct correlation between our moderate commitment to racial justice work and the troubling lack of change actually happening in our congregations.

Working towards eliminating this gap is key to being 'radically inclusive, striving to create hospitable, diverse, multi-generational communities'<sup>5</sup> and 'acceptance of one another and spiritual growth in our congregations'.<sup>6</sup> Anti-racism work is spiritual work. If our congregations are to be vibrant, relevant, and a force for social justice, we must face and address racism while also understanding that many global challenges exist at the intersection of racism, climate change, economic inequities, and other oppressions. To do the work of dismantling racism and undoing white settler culture in our midst, we must forge relationships with BIPOC, those already in our congregations and those in the wider community. And we must actively develop, support and implement anti-racist policies that dismantle systemic racism locally and globally.

Neglecting yet another opportunity to act for compassionate human relations will have existential consequences for Canadian Unitarian Universalism. Our future depends on our ability to understand systemic racism and support anti-racism policies that overcome racial oppression through action in our faith and congregations.

The Dismantling Racism Study Group recommends that the CUC adopt an 8th Principle similar to the one being considered by the UUA. In addition, we recommend that the CUC devote resources to the work of dismantling racism. This would include developing a curriculum for UUs to bridge the gap in understanding and awareness of racism in our faith and beyond,

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<sup>3</sup> 1st UU Principle

<sup>4</sup> 2nd UU Principle

<sup>5</sup> 2nd CUC Aspiration <https://cuc.ca/unitarian-universalism/vision-mission/>

<sup>6</sup> 3rd UU Principle

assembling anti-racism educational and worship materials, and creating an anti-racism program similar to the Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Reflection Guides (THRRG) or the Welcoming Congregation Program.

See the summary and recommendations section of this report for more details.

## Context

Racism exists in Canada. This dramatically compressed overview of the history of racism against Indigenous peoples in our country reminds us of one facet of Canada's racist past. Colonization led to the genocide of many Indigenous peoples, languages and cultures. Land was stolen. Indigenous children were forced into residential schools away from their families. Treaties made with Indigenous nations have repeatedly been broken. This legacy of systemic racism continues as evidenced in such injustices as ongoing inequities in opportunities and education, a lack of health care and clean water in First Nations communities, and a disproportionate representation of Indigenous people in our prison system. The legacy of systemic racism also continues in each of us, manifesting as implicit bias and prejudice.

Just in the months leading up to this report, we have seen how both personal and institutional racism continue to persist:

- In December 2020, a class-action lawsuit was filed in the Federal Court of Canada<sup>7</sup> against the Government of Canada by Black public service workers who have worked in the government since 1970. These Black civil servants seek restitution for discriminatory hiring and promotional practices due to years of systemic racism and discrimination.<sup>8</sup>
- On March 22, 2021, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP (CRCC)'s investigation found that the RCMP members who notified Mr. Boushie's mother, Debbie Baptiste, of his death treated her with such insensitivity that her treatment amounted to

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<sup>7</sup><https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/more-than-600-come-forward-in-class-action-lawsuit-alleging-systemic-discrimination-against-black-public-servants>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2019/03/13/passed-over-bullied-mistaken-for-janitorial-staff-black-women-sue-ontario-public-service-alleging-systemic-racism.html>

discrimination. The RCMP members' actions included questioning Ms. Baptiste, an Indigenous person, about her sobriety, smelling her breath, and looking inside her microwave to verify her statement that she had put her now-deceased son's dinner there.<sup>9</sup>

- A report submitted to the Vancouver Police Board showed a 717% increase in Anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020.<sup>10</sup> One high-profile example of this trend was shared by Eileen Park, a Korean-American woman who has worked as a TV anchor and journalist who has experienced anti-Asian abuse in the form of comments online, emails, and direct messages throughout her career. Ms. Park noted in an article in The Star that since her wedding to former Vancouver mayor Gregor Robertson was featured in Vogue Magazine, she has been the target of increased anti-Asian hate.<sup>11</sup> The article was published the same week a white gunman killed eight people, six of them Asian women in Atlanta. The killings followed a year of mounting anti-Asian violence in the United States of America and Canada, which community leaders say is due to Asian Americans being blamed for the coronavirus.<sup>12</sup>

The racialized historical experience and lived realities of BIPOC are inseparable from the social, political, and institutional legacy of White supremacy and colonialist culture that permeates Canadian communities. As CUC membership is primarily White, UUs are immersed in this settler culture and benefit from its inheritance. As thoughtful Canadians, we must acknowledge that we participate in and perpetuate racism and other oppressions.

In past resolutions, Canadian UUs have recognized that racism within our communities and country is incompatible with our vision of who we are. In 2003, a CUC anti-racism resolution called for UU congregations to be

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<sup>9</sup><https://www.cccc-ccetp.gc.ca/en/newsroom/commission-completes-public-interest-investigation-rcmps-investigation-death-colten-boushie>

<sup>10</sup><https://vancouverpoliceboard.ca/police/policeboard/agenda/2021/0218/5-1-2102P01-Year-end-2020-KPI-Report.pdf>

<sup>11</sup><https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/03/23/weve-been-suppressing-our-rage-for-decades-how-the-atlanta-killings-then-the-backlash-to-her-own-wedding-moved-eileen-park-to-speak-out-against-racism.html>

<sup>12</sup><https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/eileen-park-gets-avalanche-of-anti-asian-hate-after-vogue-magazine-feature-1.5959083>



active witnesses for racial justice in our communities and encouraged congregations to engage in racial justice education and work. Our 2007 “Resolution on Racial, Religious, and First Nations Equity” resulted in training and production of materials focused explicitly on reconciliation and healing with Indigenous Peoples.

In 2014, the Canadian Unitarian Council and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada made an "Expression of Truth and Reconciliation" to survivors of the Indian Residential School System at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Edmonton, Alberta, committing to provide educational resources for our congregations as well as a new program about racial equity and intercultural competency.<sup>13</sup> From 2015 to the present, at least half of CUC congregations have used *Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guides* to learn about our shared history and continue the process of decolonizing our worldviews, actions and institutions.

In the above example, we see direct connections between making a commitment, dedicating resources and the degree to which our congregations engage in social justice work.

While these resolutions and actions indicate the respectful interdependent community that UUs aspire to create, it is clear that more action is needed to ensure progress towards justice, equity and compassion for BIPOC in our communities and congregations. The survey shows BIPOC continue to experience systemic racism and other forms of oppressions within Unitarian Universalism. Given the recent acceleration of violent incidents against BIPOC, locally and internationally, and given the increasingly diverse demographics of Canadian society, **dismantling racism and addressing injustice must become central to our faith.**

A significant and increasing portion of our Canadian society is BIPOC, often immigrants, children of immigrants or grandchildren of immigrants. Many UUs feel a need to make our congregations more diverse and reflect the community's demographics. Still, currently, our spaces are alienating to BIPOC. As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, one of our aspirations is to be

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<sup>13</sup> <http://cuc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CUC-Expression-of-Reconciliation.pdf>

"Radically Inclusive: We strive to create hospitable, diverse, multi-generational communities."<sup>14</sup>

This report acknowledges racial justice activity is present in our CUC institutions and gathering places. However, more anti-racist initiatives are necessary to counter the harm that systemic racism is doing in our congregations and communities. To create a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community, UUs must accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

## Results

The CUC DRSG 2020 survey collected observations and data from a significant sample of Canadian Unitarian Universalists (UUs); 831 responses represent nearly 20% of reported membership in UU congregations across Canada.

In this section, the DRSG highlights some of the findings from the preliminary data report (Appendix A) and offers some interpretation of that data. We consider our analysis to be a starting point for continued conversation and not definitive or final conclusions.

## Demographics

In general, the number of responses per congregation was proportional to congregation membership. In other words, congregations with larger memberships had more significant numbers of survey responses.

Two-thirds of respondents have been part of the UU community for over 10 years. Less than 10% of the respondents have been involved for less than 2 years. More than 10% have been part of a UU community for 2-5 years and 5-10 years, respectively. Most respondents have had at least a decade of observations within the UU culture to inform their responses.

Compared with national demographics, the Canadian UU population was older and less racially diverse, which means it's likely that most UUs attend a less racially diverse church than their community. Of the 831 survey respondents, two-thirds were 55 years of age or older, which is consistent with our understanding of the general demographics in our congregations.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://cuc.ca/unitarian-universalism/vision-mission/>

This is over twice the national proportion for this age group — Statistics Canada reports that 31% of Canadians in 2020 were 55 years of age or older.<sup>15</sup>

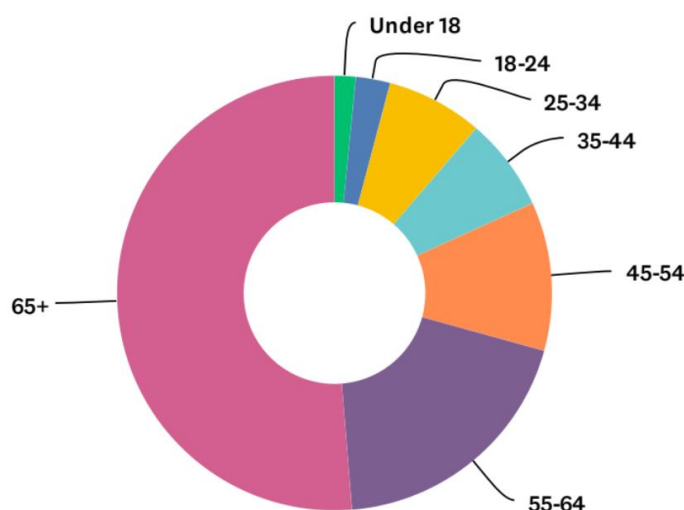


Figure 1: Summary of survey responses by age group.

Most of the respondents self-identified as White (89% or 724 responses). The remaining respondents self-identified as Asian (3%), Black (2%), Indigenous (2%), or wrote in another non-White, including bi-racial identities (4%). 13 respondents did not answer the question. The latest Canadian census (2016) found that 22% of Canadians self-identified as a visible minority (an outdated term for BIPOC) — double the percentage of Canadian UUs who self-identify in this way.<sup>16</sup>

Respondents were given the opportunity to identify themselves beyond the provided list of four categories (White, Black, Asian, Indigenous). As stated above, 32 people (4%) wrote in other non-white identities. Other examples of written-in responses were:

- “I don’t identify in this way”
- “Jewish, Scottish, Irish”
- “None”
- “Extremely important that English is not my first language”
- “Canadian”

<sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada. (2021, March 21). Population estimates on July 1, by age and sex. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1710000501>

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada. (2021, March 21). Population estimates on July 1, by age and sex. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1710000501>

- “This is pretty judgmental”
- “Sephardic” and ticked Indigenous box

We recognize the complexity of racial identity in our multicultural world. Still, most respondents were willing to self-identify within the specific given categories on this survey, which provides us with a clear picture of racial identities within Canadian Unitarian Universalism.

Compared to those of Canadians in a similar age group, the racial demographics of UUs are found to be similar. Two-thirds of the survey respondents were over 55 at the time of this survey. Approximately 11% of all respondents self-identified as something other than White. The latest Canadian census (2016) found that 13% of Canadians over 55 years old were BIPOC.<sup>17</sup> As this census was conducted four years before this survey, it is expected that the national proportion of over age 55 BIPOC was higher than 13% at the time of this survey.<sup>18</sup> This indicates that the level of racial diversity among UUs is lower than the diversity that exists in Canada’s current population.

There is a historical explanation for this lack of diversity. According to the Government of Canada, “In the two decades after the end of the Second World War (1946-1966), Canada maintained its policy of favouring immigrants from the United States, United Kingdom and other European countries.”<sup>19</sup> By 1967, “changes in immigration regulations resulted in the adoption of a universal point system in assessing prospective immigrants, irrespective of country of origin or racial background.”<sup>20</sup>

Over the past 50 years, the nation’s population has doubled, in significant part due to immigration from Asia, Africa and other non-traditional

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<sup>17</sup> Statistics Canada. 2016 Census - <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=01&Geo2=&Code2=&SearchText=Canada&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1&type=0>

<sup>18</sup> Demosim Team, Statistics Canada. (2017, January 25). Immigration and Diversity: Population Projections for Canada and its Regions, 2011 to 2036. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/91-551-x/91-551-x2017001-eng.pdf?st=2t-44GCG>

<sup>19</sup> Justice Department, Government of Canada. (2021, January 7). Cultural Diversity in Canada: The Social Construction of Racial Difference. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from [https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02\\_8-dr02\\_8/p3.html](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02_8-dr02_8/p3.html)

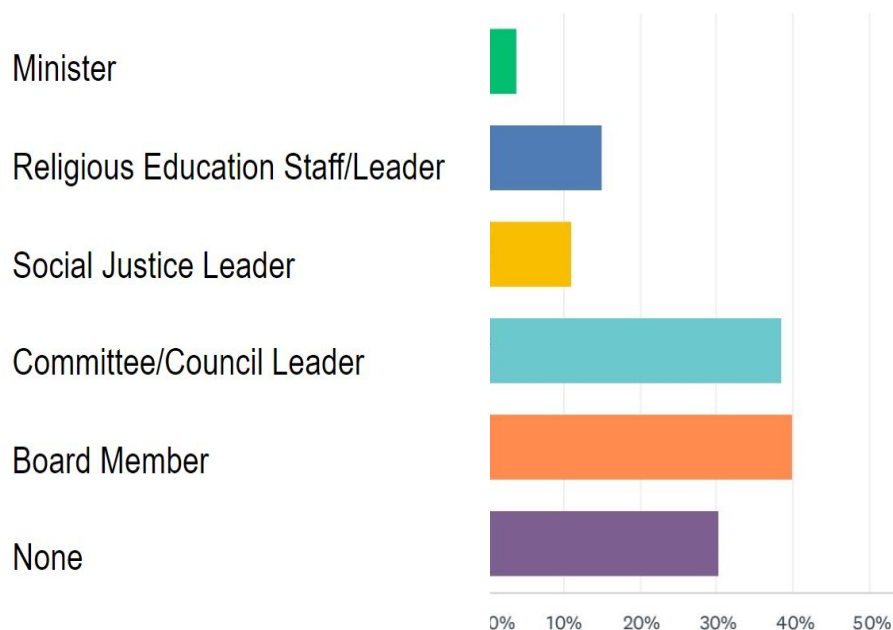
<sup>20</sup> Justice Department, Government of Canada. (2021, January 7). Cultural Diversity in Canada: The Social Construction of Racial Difference. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from [https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02\\_8-dr02\\_8/p3.html](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02_8-dr02_8/p3.html)

sources,<sup>21</sup> as well as, to a lesser extent, a growth in Indigenous community populations<sup>22</sup>. A 2017 Statistics Canada report forecasted that by 2036, an estimated 31-36% of the Canadian population will be BIPOC.<sup>23</sup> The neighbourhoods around our congregations will change demographically.

In addition, we expect to be seeing an increasing number of mixed-race children and children of transracial adoption in our Religious Exploration programming. To retain any relevance in a changing world, our congregations must respond to these changes.

### Participation in Racial Justice Work

Over two-thirds of respondents have held a leadership role in a congregation. Around 10% of respondents have served as a Social Justice Leader, and 60% served in other leadership positions (Minister, Committee/Council Leader, and/or Board Member).



<sup>21</sup> Justice Department, Government of Canada. (2021, January 7). Cultural Diversity in Canada: The Social Construction of Racial Difference. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from [https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02\\_8-dr02\\_8/p3.html](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/csj-sjc/jsp-sjp/rp02_8-dr02_8/p3.html)

<sup>22</sup> OECD. (2020, January 21). Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development in Canada (Chapter 2. Profile of Indigenous Canada: Trends and data needs). Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/e6cc8722-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/e6cc8722-en>

<sup>23</sup> Demosim Team, Statistics Canada. (2017, January 25). Immigration and Diversity: Population Projections for Canada and its Regions, 2011 to 2036. Retrieved March 21, 2021, from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/91-551-x/91-551-x2017001-eng.pdf?st=2t-44GCG>

Figure 2: Leadership positions held by Canadian UU respondents in their congregations.

Those in leadership positions have some responsibility in directing the congregation's focus and programming. Suppose our leaders are interested in racial justice; their interest would be reflected in the congregation's engagement in racial justice work. The fact is that 2 out of 3 of the respondents are formal leaders and that there is evidence that transformative racial justice initiatives are lacking. **We can conclude that there is insufficient commitment to racial justice work among those in leadership roles.**

Respondents were asked to rate a list of five possible anti-racism goals brought forward from the Study Group's collective experience. Very few responses indicated that any of the goals were *Not Important*. It's puzzling, however, that 20% of the respondents did not answer this question. Why was the importance of the stated goals challenging to assess? This is the first substantive question posed by the survey.

Each outcome was rated on a scale from 'Very Important' to 'Not as Important.' The overall rating was as follows, in order of importance:

1. To improve relationships across race and culture
2. To affect change beyond our congregations
3. To play a role in dismantling a culture of Settler Colonialism within our congregations/communities.
4. For personal learning and growth (particularly in regards to white supremacy)
5. To have greater racial diversity within our congregations and communities

Interestingly, the top two rated outcomes are directed outward. In contrast, the other outcomes would require changes within ourselves and within the UU community. Both outward and inward transformation is essential, and one does not happen without affecting the other.

We wonder if outward-facing outcomes are perceived to require less accountability or involve less disruption at the personal or congregational level. It is likely easier to hope for a result that does not require action on a

personal level. The reality is that effective anti-racism initiatives at any level are hard and deeply personal work.

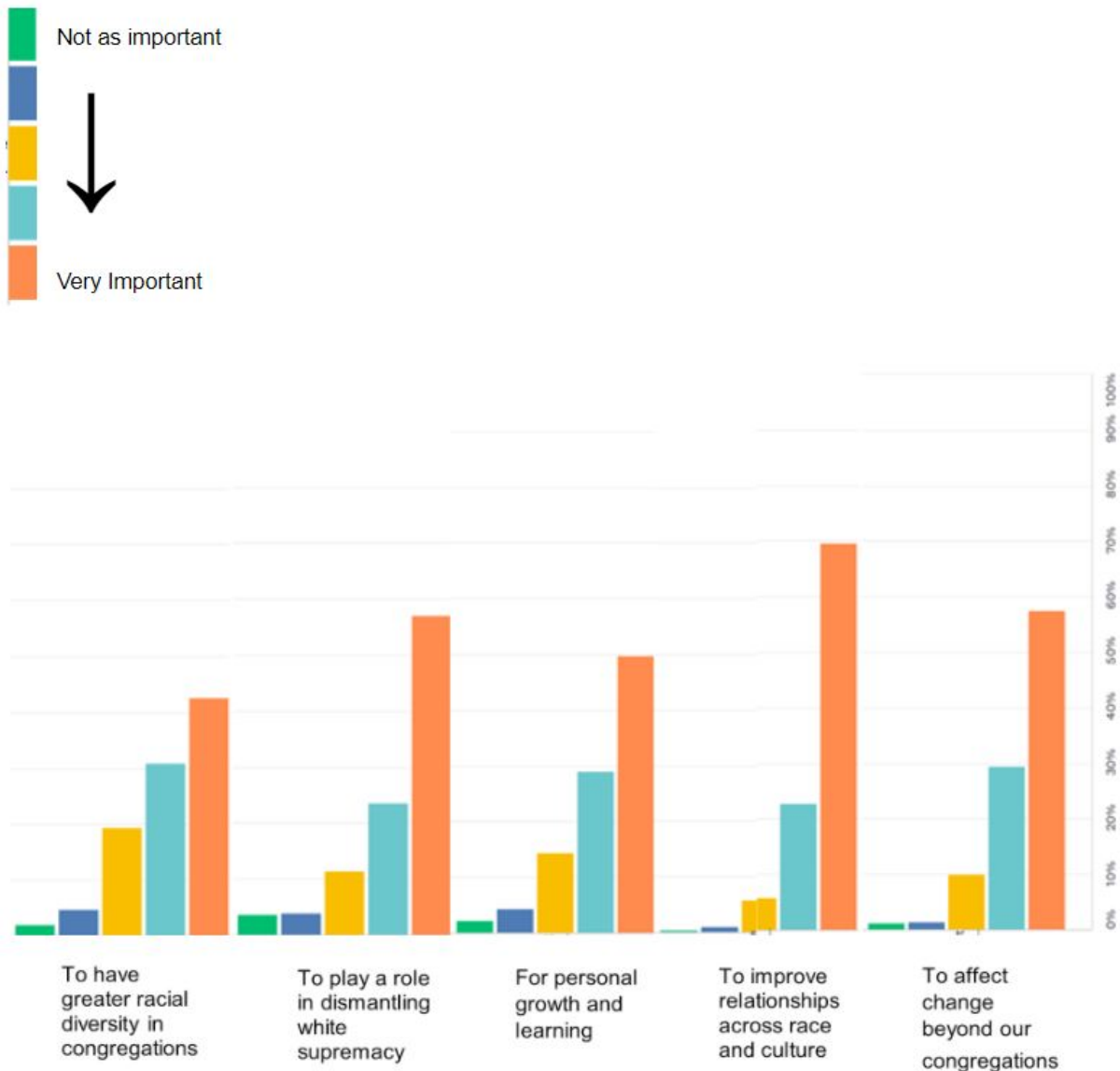


Figure 3: Importance of racial justice outcomes for respondents

We asked what kinds of racial justice work were happening in congregations. Again, 20% of respondents skipped this question. The responses received are individual perceptions of which racial justice activities congregations are engaged in. From these, we can generalize

what is most likely happening in most congregations. Still, it should not be considered an accurate accounting of the actual work being performed in individual Canadian UU congregations.

A few specifically named racial justice activities are commonly occurring in congregations across Canada. These include worship services addressing racial injustice, Truth Healing and Reconciliation work, immigration assistance and various harm reduction activities.<sup>24</sup> Some comments demonstrated pride in visible racial justice initiatives, particularly regarding partnerships with Indigenous-based organizations.

Respondents were asked to rate their congregation's visible and lived commitment to racial justice work. Only 5% of respondents rated their congregation's commitment "very high", which means that 95% of respondents know that their congregation could be doing more on anti-racism. 43% of respondents picked the middle of the rating scale, suggesting that while there is some work being done, racial justice work is not a high priority in our congregations. Note that 22.5% of respondents chose not to answer this question.

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<sup>24</sup> Respondents identified more than a dozen activities or initiatives; see the preliminary report, question 7 (appendix ?) for a complete list.



1= no evidence of commitment; 5 = racial justice is a top priority

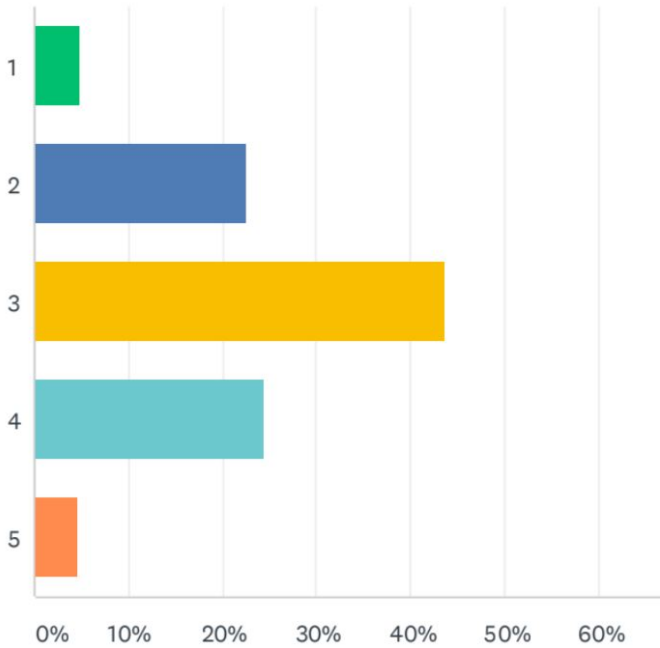


Figure 4: Respondents' rankings of their congregation's visible and lived commitment to racial justice work.

We wondered how many of us are engaging in racial justice work and learning outside of our congregations. 37% of respondents (308) have done so and have primarily engaged in this work via workshops and training—very few of them (19) offered by the UUA or CUC. We believe there is a vast opportunity here; that is, for us to create, promote, and deliver anti-racism training and programming within our congregations. Coordinating this on a national level would allow us to share resources and incorporate innovative approaches in a lifelong learning process.

## Whyte<sup>25</sup> Avatar: "Activism" by Book Club

Until very recently, if you'd asked whether racism existed in my congregation, I would have said no. I would have said that the problem we have is that we don't know how to attract people of colour to our church. We have had a few Black people and people of other ethnic minorities attend our church, but they don't stay very long.

In the past few years, our congregation has hosted anti-racism training and cultural competency workshops. I believe that this has helped us start and continue to unlearn racism. Our focus has been on racism against Indigenous people, so our church piloted one of the CUC's modules of the Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Reflection Guide. It is just in the last year, with the prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement, the death of George Floyd and the growing awareness of police brutality in Canada, that our attention has shifted to include anti-Black racism.

In response, I started a book club on anti-racism. Thus far, we have read Robin DiAngelo's book *White Fragility* and Ibram Kendi's *How to Be an Anti-racist*. In addition, our minister and some members of our congregation have given sermons on racism, White privilege, and White supremacy culture. Through this learning, I have realized that I have acted from my own unconscious racial bias and said and done things that I now understand are racist and did not allow the BIPOC in my congregation to feel safe and welcome. I am also noticing when other white members of my congregation commit microaggressions and the undertones of racial bias and white centering in our community. For example, there is a group of older white women who "control" access to our kitchen. I witnessed them telling a black woman who was new to our congregation, "you don't belong here," when she offered to help after a service. That woman never returned. I used to wonder

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<sup>25</sup> 'Whyte' is an alternative spelling used by POC on social media to avoid racist censorship algorithms, so we used this spelling to identify an ally.

why more BIPOC weren't joining our congregation. After witnessing this event and several like it from the same group of women, I now understand why our congregation is not growing.

What surprises me is the resistance some members of my congregation have towards speaking and learning about racism. While most proudly support gender and sexual orientation diversity, some believe that discussing racism is divisive and not enough of a problem for us to focus on. They naively believe that Canada does not have a history of slavery (which it does), and therefore racism doesn't happen here.

When I bring up the subject of racism with certain members of my congregation, things get uncomfortable pretty quickly, and I am accused of trying to blame or shame people. I have heard several members of my congregation say things like "I can't be racist, I have a black son-in-law" or "I'm not racist; I treat everyone the same." They get very upset when the terms "white supremacy culture" or "white privilege" are used because they interpret it as racist towards white people. I don't share this perspective and struggle to find a way to communicate that won't lead to this defensiveness.

I worry that people who are uncomfortable with talking about racism can be quite persuasive, and their arguments will tap into the unexamined fears of other white folks, thus shutting down our anti-racism work before it ever really gets going. One fear I have heard, even from those who support anti-racism work, is that if we did things and offered experiences that were more reflective of various backgrounds/cultures, they would lose their place of meaning, and they would not feel welcome anymore.

I simply don't understand that fear.

We asked if people had experienced, witnessed or heard of racism in their congregations. For this question, we offered a list of possible racist behaviours, using language and terms that may have inadvertently made responding to this question challenging. And, this question was intended to

quantify racism in our congregations while acknowledging that there are different levels of impact embedded in the type of encounter. Unfortunately, the question itself was flawed because the myriad choices offered muddled the clarity of the results.

Suffice it to say that there are many ways that racism manifests. Though the number of experiences varies considerably based on racism, every one of the racist behaviours listed has been noted in our congregations.

We asked for personal stories of experiences of racism and received 33. Some shared stories within their survey response, some sent a written text, and some met with us in person (online) to offer testimonies of their experience. These stories greatly informed our understanding of racism in our congregations and communities. They were used in the creation of the two avatars contained in this report.

The survey asked respondents to identify how they or their congregation had been changed by doing racial justice work and requested that respondents provide examples of new initiatives or practices. Two-thirds (572) of respondents skipped this question. 57 respondents (7%) either wrote in "N/A" or commented that racial justice work was not a priority. This raises the possibility that most respondents were either not aware of any such racial justice initiatives at their congregations or thought their congregation remained unchanged due to these initiatives. 46% (11) of BIPOC who answered the question commented that racism is not a priority in their congregation, an indication that those who are most significantly impacted do not see a lived commitment to racial justice work in our congregations. Given the underrepresentation of BIPOC in our congregations and the racial injustice in our communities, this lack of commitment to racial justice is likely to have far-ranging consequences.

One-third of respondents noted some changes apparent in themselves or their congregation and mentioned various initiatives or practices, ranging from "increasing personal awareness/understanding/action," which was mentioned 68 times, to "BIPOC caucus/visible diversity," which was mentioned 6 times.

The most significant change noted is in the area of awareness and understanding. This kind of personal work is essential in transformation, to

be sure. Still, we note that personal growth was not listed as one of the most important goals of racial justice work (see Question 6 in Appendix A). We would caution that it is not enough; it cannot be the end of our changes.

Four categories of changes (focus on Sunday services, community involvement, leadership and vision, refugee sponsorship) were noted by between 10-14% of respondents. We can only hope that these activities are laying the foundations for future, more systemic change in our mission/vision statements, core documents, hiring practices, and welcoming protocols. For example, just nine people mentioned that our racial justice work had impacted staff and volunteer recruitment or increased visible diversity in our congregations.

#### BIPOC Avatar - Disillusioned Yet Determined

Decades ago, I was drawn to Unitarian Universalism because I understood it to be a faith that would honour and affirm my pursuit of truth and meaning. UUism, more specifically my church, became my spiritual home. But over the years, there have been comments or behaviours at my church and at other UU churches, I have visited that have made me wonder if I am welcome here. I am accustomed to dealing with racism in other settings but in my faith? Mine is a welcoming congregation "on paper," but poor or racialized individuals, while celebrated, rarely are made comfortable enough to stay for very long. If we're asking people to show up and not bring their whole selves, who would be attracted to that? Why would they show up? Why do I show up?

I am one of the very few visible minorities in my congregation. Other than our minister, there is little to no interest in racial justice initiatives. The lack of action/resolve on dismantling racism in our Unitarian congregations is why POC friends of mine have left the Unitarian church and why I have considered doing the same. We've lost patience with "nice Unitarians" who say they stand against racism but don't demonstrate it. When they've witnessed it, they've done little to nothing about it. For example, during a meeting, one board member referred to "Unitarian skin colour" (meaning "white"), and no one spoke up. Everything kept going. Later I heard

another Board member say something like, "Maybe some people aren't meant to belong." Wait! This place is not for everyone?? Is THAT what you mean? Hearing that made me want to leave the church!

It's frustrating to see the Canadian UU world waking up now after so many years of BIPOC UUs speaking up about their experiences. Ironically, just as the Canadian UU world is awakening to the realities of racism, there are times when I'm too tired or feel too traumatized to help white people do their work and facilitate their learning. I don't want to be the one to teach; it is not my responsibility. When asked by white people, "What can we do?" my answer is simple. Be clear about the truth of racism. Accept that BIPOC have been suffering with racism all their lives. Do your own learning and talk with other white people. Be willing to be uncomfortable.

I have to admit that I am envious of BIPOC in UU churches that have committed to the ongoing work of truth-telling and relationship building, including adopting the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. A Black UU woman I met at a recent conference told me how she had been profoundly changed by doing racial justice work for almost 20 years. She shared with me how important it is for people of colour to do their own work to understand internalized racial oppression and institutional barriers that exist. And she went on to say that when white people do racial justice work and commit to institutional change, she's seen a profound personal transformation happen and greater community building and openness to diversity of all kinds. She reminded me that this is sacred work, and even though it's challenging, it's so worthwhile! The spiritual freedom and the spark of the possibility of this faith keep me here. I'm not going away. This is my spiritual home.

This IS my spiritual home, but...and I know I just said this...for this to be a spiritual home for **ALL** BIPOC UUs, White UUs need to do their own learning! White UUs need to talk to other White UUs. I'm talked out.

Critical mass theory tells us that a tipping point can be reached when between 10-25% of a population are firm in their beliefs,<sup>26</sup> do not respond to pressure to change them and pass their ideas on to others. Those who have grown in awareness and understanding regarding racial justice may provide that tipping point so that our congregations become truly beloved communities. A less desirable possibility is that those that resist those changes will tip us in the opposite direction.

We could not be more convinced of the importance of change within ourselves and in our congregations. In their new book, *Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism*, the authors write:<sup>27</sup>

“Until a congregation reaches a tipping point in the number of white folks in the congregation who understand the concept of white privilege, a congregation can’t really make any progress.” “Understanding white privilege” is shorthand for awakening to this country’s system of racial hierarchy. Now we use the term “white supremacy culture” to describe this system. Regardless of the language used, what matters is that congregations come to understand the histories and the present-day manifestations of racialized systems.”

The survey went on to ask respondents to comment on what more they would like their congregation to do to dismantle racism. 64% skipped answering this question. Like the one about what has changed, this question was probably more easily answered by those who have given this issue some thought, and about 300 respondents had something to say. Some who recommended doing less or taking no action offered these concerning observations:

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<sup>26</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tipping\\_point\\_\(sociology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tipping_point_(sociology))  
<https://wagingnonviolence.org/2012/01/you-only-need-10-percent-the-science-behind-tipping-points/>  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/06/the-tipping-point-when-minority-views-take-over/562307/>

<sup>27</sup> Palmer-Jones, Nancy. *Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism* (pp. 42-43). Skinner House Books. Kindle Edition.

- "I don't really see racism happening in our church."
- "They are concerned at the whiteness of our congregation but the community is white, and church-going around here is a pretty white thing to do. I don't think there is a link to us or our service and it's whiteness."
- "more worship///less social activism"
- "Start by ensuring at least one board member is from a racially oppressed group - if necessary co-opting a person"
- "To continue the emphasis is good, but more would be preaching to the choir and even rather offensive."
- "Right now, and for the foreseeable future, our focus will need to be making sure the congregation survives the fiscal crisis we will shortly be in due to COVID-19."
- "To stay away from this kind of divisive language and continue to be welcoming to everyone. Racism is real, and this is not the way to end it. You are dividing people into smaller and smaller intersectional groups fighting over who is oppressing who."
- "I think we can't do everything. My congregation is heavily involved in various major projects for social justice, but this area is not one of them. Further, while racism is a serious social concern, I don't think we have the person power to take on more projects in a coordinated way."
- "I don't attend anymore due to what seems to be an inability to modernize the thinking of the congregation. There is too much of a generational gulf, and it feels futile. The issues go beyond racism and are structural issues in our society."
- "while working with new cultures coming to our area, DO NOT forget that we were here first and our LIVES matter as well. We have welcomed others and helped them with a hand out as well as a hand up but at the displacement of our core traditions and what we hold dear and our way of doing things."

Many respondents did have advice for dismantling racism within their congregation. The most frequently cited recommendations involve further education about racism to increase awareness. While learning more about the impact of racism is an important initial response to systemic racism, education must lead to action. They offered more constructive suggestions, such as:



- “Building on the congregation's current interest in and programming about racial justice issues”
- “Be actively engaged with BIPOC organizations doing racial justice work in the broader community”
- “creating opportunities for racial justice leaders in the community to speak or be more broadly involved in worship”
- “Requiring Board members to participate in racial justice education as a condition for Board membership”
- “Look carefully for what barriers exist that may be preventing our congregation being more racially diverse”
- “Taking an active stand and providing resources to move the congregation to an anti-racism awareness. Adopted the proposed 8th Principle.”
- “It’s important to link anti-racist struggle to an analysis of colonialism and events taking place internationally. I suppose we could come to grips with church history and the use of religion as both a source of oppression and of liberation”
- "Working with a more radical framework. Moving away from neoliberalism, diversity initiatives etc., and towards solidarity, dismantling white supremacy. These as spiritual work for members as well as institutional actions"
- “It would be nice to see a Black Lives Matter Flag at the entrance.”
- "I would like the Board of Directors to take a more proactive stance on issuing statements of solidarity and mobilizing the congregation on issues of racial justice. I feel like there are some deep divides at the Board level on this theme."

Altogether, responses to this last question show that Unitarians are invested in the educational aspects of anti-racist work and that there is a growing edge toward more active anti-racism. This ever-increasing edge includes such things as adopting an 8th principle, enacting anti-racist policies, outwardly visible commitments, becoming better allies and accomplices, and more. We have already stated that while learning is a crucial part of the process, we cannot stop with education alone. Education must lead to personal transformation and systemic change to dismantle racism in our congregations, our communities, and ourselves.

## Listening to BIPOC Voices

We would be betraying the purpose of this work if we did not focus on the voices and lived experiences of those in our congregations/communities most impacted by racism. When we intentionally listened to and focused on comments made by the 88 BIPOC respondents, what emerged was a reality different from the reality of the White respondents. 33% of BIPOC respondents (compared with less than 10% of White people) said that their congregation had not been changed by doing racial justice work or perceiving that racial justice work is not a priority. Notably, the only mention of any change related to the 8th Principle was a BIPOC. They said there had been talking but no action.

Despite the limited examples of transformative anti-racism initiatives, BIPOC did mention two unique initiatives: a “Story Wisdom Team” that brings Indigenous Elders into the congregation to tell and teach stories; and a program called “Reading Race” that combines film/novel/non-fiction study, entertainment, and engaged conversation about anti-racism.

Referring to change they would like to see, BIPOC expressed a desire for:

- **Active engagement in anti-racism work** that is community-based is in solidarity with organizations engaged in racial justice work, which would increase the congregation's visibility in anti-racism work.
- **Provide educational opportunities to increase cultural competence, such as:**
  - De-centering “The West” as the principal font of philosophy and knowledge
  - Offering anti-racism training (e.g. on white fragility)
  - Learning about and engaging with Indigenous, Asian, and African history, cultures, and spirituality
  - Learning to pronounce names of non-Western/English names correctly
  - Recognizing the harm in exoticizing & tokenizing BIPOC
  - Acknowledging religion’s implication in colonization of Africa and First Nations land
- **Shift from Personal Transformation to Systemic Change**
  - Developing a plan for eradicating racism and classism
  - Incorporating anti-racism into strategic planning and

- implementation
  - Requiring anti-racism training/competence as a requirement for Board service
- **Ensure that Worship uses Cultural Diversity and Anti-Racism Lenses**
  - BIPOC speakers
  - Sermons focused on race, privilege, institutional oppression, and diversity
  - Interfaith services
- **Encourage BIPOC leadership**
- **Adopt the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle**

When we listened, BIPOC told us that they experienced racism in their congregation, which was sometimes subtle and other times overt. They told us that they saw little evidence of commitment to anti-racism in their congregation. When we listened, BIPOC shared their expectation that their congregation would move forward in solidarity with community-based groups striving for equity and racial justice. We must listen to BIPOC and honour their experience, AND we must go beyond listening. We must take action if Canadian Unitarian Universalism can offer a true spiritual home to Black People, Indigenous People, and People of Colour now and into the future.

## Summary and Recommendations

**As Canadian Unitarian Universalists, we aspire to be:**<sup>28</sup>

**Deeply Connected:** We strive to foster healthy relationships amongst and within UU communities, with the broader world and with all life.

**Radically Inclusive:** We strive to create hospitable, diverse, multi-generational communities.

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<sup>28</sup> <https://cuc.ca/unitarian-universalism/vision-mission/>

**Actively Engaged:** We strive to work joyfully for a just and compassionate society, experimenting with new forms of community.

**Theologically Alive:** We seek to be ever-evolving in our understanding, open to new knowledge.

**Spiritually Grounded:** We seek transformation through personal spiritual experiences and shared ritual.<sup>29</sup>

The Dismantling Racism Survey clearly shows that while some efforts to dismantle racism and other oppressions exist, a gap between our CUC aspirations and reality persists. This is evidenced in another gap between White Canadian UUs' understanding/awareness of systemic racism in our faith communities, and the lived realities and experiences of BIPOC Canadian UUs.

These gaps indicate that we are not living into our vision of being an inclusive, diverse, and just faith community. Sadly, many BIPOC UUs regularly experience microaggressions and other forms of racism within their congregations and our wider faith movement. Some BIPOC who are drawn to our faith leave because of this, while others choose to stay despite regularly being harmed. Most White UUs experience belonging and comfort in their congregations, while for BIPOC UUs, this experience is elusive.

Remember, Canada's population is becoming increasingly diverse; by 2035, BIPOC in Canada will make up 1/3 of the people. In many cities, where most Canadians live, BIPOC will constitute more than 40% of the residents.<sup>30</sup> To live socially conscious lives requires us to become multiculturally competent.

And, according to the Widening the Circle report from the UUA's COIC:

"Younger generations expect multicultural competency, are wary of institutions that lack authenticity with their values and expect more participatory models of shared leadership... In an increasingly secular society, religious institutions must show that they have more to offer

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<sup>29</sup>"Findings Related to the Southern Regional Lead Hiring Decision, Spring 2017", the UUA Commission on Institutional Change

<sup>30</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91-551-x/91-551-x2017001-eng.htm>

than a vague sense of community. As BIPOC make up more of the population, the need to be responsive grows."<sup>31</sup>

Without increased multicultural competency, anti-racism principles and anti-racist policies, our congregations risk becoming a refuge for those who are vested in maintaining a comfortable white-centred status quo. We can only prevent this possibility by championing and implementing anti-racism actions in our communities. This is the work that must be done beyond simply educating ourselves.

At present, neither our seven principles nor our five CUC aspirations demand that UUs actively dismantle the oppression of racism or examine how they contribute to it. Though UUs aspire to affirm and promote justice, equity and compassion in human relations, our survey results demonstrate that these aspirations for racial justice are not reflected in our communities. **For our faith to remain relevant and vital, White Canadian UUs must recognize that this harmful dissonance exists and act to redress it.**

To narrow or (dare we aspire!) eliminate the gaps described above, we recommend that we, the CUC, do the following:

1. Do the work of anti-racism **now!**
2. Listen to BIPOC Voices
3. Adopt an 8th principle as an explicit expression of our commitment to anti-racism. This can be done as a national council or as individual congregations.

*We, the member congregations of the Canadian Unitarian Council, covenant to affirm and promote:*

*“Individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and other oppressions in ourselves and in our institutions.”*

4. A willed commitment to racial justice work, demonstrated by an investment of resources at the national and congregational level. As evidenced by the THRRG program, such a commitment makes a difference. It provides hope that a similar CUC investment will

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<sup>31</sup> Widening the Circle

manifest in increased racial justice initiatives at the congregational level.

- a. Create an anti-racism curriculum for White Canadian UUs that includes:
  - Understanding implicit and unconscious racial bias
  - White racial identity (whiteness)
  - The history and ongoing presence of racism in Canada
  - Statistics and data on the inequality experienced by BIPOC
  - Identification of the ways that racism shows up in our congregations both systemically and interpersonally
  - Stories of Canadian BIPOC UUs
  - Actions that White people can take to dismantle racism in their congregations and beyond
- b. Assemble and disseminate anti-racism educational and worship materials for congregations.
- c. Create a best practices guide for Canadian UU congregations and develop a program similar to the Welcoming Congregation program designed for LGBTQ++.

The promise of our faith is a spiritual home in which all can live authentically, seek meaning, and foster interdependence. To manifest this promise, we must address the racism and bias in our congregations and communities, both for the times we are in and for future generations. **Doing the spiritual work of anti-racism will allow us to build resilience and remain relevant.** Doing the spiritual work of anti-racism will create the beloved community of which we dream.

## **A Final Note from the DRSG:**

We know that there is no way that this report is perfect. (Perfection is not something to which we aspire, as it is a characteristic of white supremacy culture.<sup>32</sup>) We did our best in good faith, within the limits of time, resources provided, and our abilities. We offer it to you, our faith community, motivated by a deep desire to see a change in ourselves and our congregations/communities.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html>

# **Appendices**

## **Appendix A - Preliminary Report**



## Appendix B - The 8th Principle



# EIGHTH PRINCIPLE

The preamble to the current 7 Principles reads:  
We, the member congregations of the Canadian Unitarian Council, covenant to affirm and promote:

We have presented in this report a possible revision of the 8th principle for the Canadian context.  
“Individual and communal action that accountably dismantles racism and other oppressions in ourselves and in our institutions.”

For background and more information about the 8th Principle as promoted within the Unitarian Universalist Association, visit: <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>

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**Appendix C - Resolution**

## Appendix D - Glossary

May 2021

This glossary was created by the CUC's DRSG and, as a work in progress, has been updated and amended for the purposes of this report. It is intended to be helpful in creating a shared and ever-evolving understanding of racism and its impact on our congregations and on us as individuals.

**AAVE** - African American Vernacular English<sup>33</sup>

**Ally Cookies** - Praise or other rewards for "not being racist." Usually sought out by people with white privilege performing optical allyship.<sup>34</sup>

**Anti-Blackness** - Defined by Merriam-Webster as being opposed to or hostile towards Black people. Anti-Blackness or anti-Black racism can be found all around the world.<sup>35</sup>

**Appreciative Inquiry (AI)** - A worldview and a process for facilitating positive change in human systems, which assumes that every human system has something that works right – things that give it life. AI begins by identifying this positive core and connecting to it in ways that heighten energy, sharpen vision, and inspire action for change.<sup>36</sup>

**Asian** - A pan-continental description of a person who has origins in the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, as well as Native Hawaiians and Pacific islanders. It may also be inclusive of those of Middle Eastern descent.

**Avatar** - For our purposes, an avatar is a fictionalized profile or personality that is 'discovered' in true stories. Avatars are helpful in understanding a collective narrative by representing themes identified across the diversity of

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<sup>33</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>34</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>35</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.centerforappreciativeinquiry.net/more-on-ai/what-is-appreciative-inquiry-ai/>

personal stories provided.

**BIPOC** - Black people, Indigenous people, or people of colour - A shorthand for referring to all who do not identify as White.<sup>37</sup>

**BIPOC Caucus** - A racially mixed group, meeting together to understand and confront the effects of internalized racist oppression and to experience themselves as a collective working together to dismantle racism.<sup>38</sup>

**BIWOC** - Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color<sup>39</sup>

**Black** - Often used as a collective term that identifies people of the African diaspora.

**Blackface** - Wearing dark makeup to caricature a Black person. Its origins can be found in American minstrel shows of the nineteenth century, where white actors wore dark face paint to depict racist caricatures of enslaved and free Black people on stage.<sup>40</sup>

**Blackfishing** - The use of artificial tanning and makeup by people with white privilege to make their skin look darker and give the impression that they are of African descent. A modern form of blackface.<sup>41</sup>

**Cisgender** - A term for people whose gender identity matches the biological sex they were assigned at birth.<sup>42</sup>

**Colonialism** - A practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism — such as in the case of Canada

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<sup>37</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.crossroadsantiracism.org/wpcontent/themes/crossroads/PDFs/Racial%20Identiy%20Caucus%20Strategy.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>40</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>41</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>42</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

— is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land.<sup>43</sup>

**Colourism** - Prejudicial treatment is given to darker-skinned Black people, and People of Colour and preferential treatment is given to lighter-skinned Black people and People of Colour. A term coined by author Alice Walker in her book *In Search of our Mothers' Gardens*. Walker defined colorism as the "prejudicial or preferential treatment of same-race people based solely on their colour."<sup>44</sup>

**Colour Blindness** - The idea that one doesn't see colour and that one does not notice a difference in race. Or if you do, that you don't treat people differently based on those differences. However, in erasing a person's race, you erase the person.<sup>45</sup>

**Critical Mass Theory** - In social movements, it refers loosely to any theory about how interdependent decisions accumulate into collective action. It is widely used to refer to any context in which things change after a certain number of people get together or enter a setting.<sup>46</sup>

**Cultural (M)s Appropriation** - A modern type of colonization that involves the stealing of cultural practices, spiritual traditions, speaking styles, etc., by the dominant culture from a marginalized culture.<sup>47</sup>

**Cultural Appropriation** - A modern type of colonization that involves the appropriation and sometimes commercialization of cultural practices, spiritual traditions, hair and dress fashion styles, speaking styles, and other cultural elements. Cultural appropriation happens when there is an imbalance of power and privilege - a dominant or privileged culture appropriates from a nondominant or marginalized culture. Cultural

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadianheritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>

<sup>44</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>45</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>46</sup>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm059#:~:text=Abstract,Marwell%20and%20Oliver%20>

<sup>47</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_appropriation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_appropriation)

appropriation does not work the other way around. BIPOC cannot be culturally appropriate from White people because BIPOC does not hold collective power and privilege over White people.<sup>48</sup>

**Cultural Identity** - A shared culture; a collective with a shared history and ancestry.

**Digital Blackface** - In the digital world, the use of emojis, GIFS, and memes featuring Black people by people who hold white privilege.<sup>49</sup>

**Discrimination** - An action based on prejudice. Everyone has prejudice, and everyone discriminates.<sup>50</sup>

**Equity** - Fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life.<sup>51</sup>

**Gaslighting** - Gaslighting is a form of persistent manipulation and brainwashing that causes the victim to doubt her or himself and ultimately lose her or his own sense of perception, identity, and self-worth. ... Gaslighting can occur in personal relationships, at the workplace, or over an entire society.<sup>52</sup>

**Indigenous** - Refers specifically to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit living in (what is now called) Canada.<sup>53</sup>

**Intersectionality** - The acknowledgement that people's lives are shaped by their multiple and overlapping identities and social locations, which, together, can produce a unique and distinct experience for that individual or group, for example, creating additional barriers or opportunities. (A term

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<sup>48</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>49</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>50</sup> Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, 2018

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/es/node/10948>

<sup>52</sup> Psychology Today (April 30, 2017)

<sup>53</sup> Government of Canada Heritage - Strategy 2019 - 2022

coined by law professor and civil rights advocate Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw.)<sup>54</sup>

**Macroaggression** - Large scale or overt aggression toward those of another race, culture, gender, etc. The clear, obvious, stark and overwhelmingly, public displays of verbally aggressive slights. Perpetrators are usually unaware that they have engaged in an exchange that demeans the recipient of the communication.<sup>55</sup>

**Marginalization** - The process of relegating or confining to a lower or outer limit or edge of social standing. (Nathaniel Granger)<sup>56</sup>

**Microaggression** - The everyday slights, indignities, put-downs and insults that people of colour, women, LGBT populations or those who are marginalized experience in their day-to-day interactions with people. (Derald Sue) Real or perceived everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs or insults that communicate negative or hostile messages to marginalized or perceived marginalized people. (LearnLiberty.org)<sup>57</sup>

**Misogynoir** - A term coined by African American feminist scholar, writer, and activist Moya Bailey to describe misogyny directed specifically toward Black women. The intersection of sexism and anti-Black racism.<sup>58</sup>

**Optical Allyship** - The visual illusion of allyship without the work of allyship. Also known as performative allyship or ally theatre<sup>59</sup>

**Partnering** - Establishing a long term relationship based on mutual trust and teamwork and on sharing of both risks and rewards<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/page/better-way-forward-ontarios-3-year-anti-racism-strategic-plan>

<sup>55</sup> <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/macroaggression>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.saybrook.edu/unbound/marginalization/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/microaggressions/65321>

<sup>58</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>59</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>60</sup> Business Dictionary

**People of Colour (POC)** - Persons who do not consider themselves White<sup>61</sup>

**Personal Identity** - The features of an individual that form their value proposition, their dignity and self-image, as well as their self-respect and/or distinct personality.

**Prejudice** - Pre-judgment about another person based on the social groups to which that person belongs. All humans have prejudice; we cannot avoid it.<sup>62</sup>

**Race** - A socially constructed classification of human beings based on identified or perceived characteristics such as the colour of skin and informed by historical and geographic context. It is not a biological classification. It is often the basis upon which groups are formed, the agency is attained, social roles are assigned, and status conferred.<sup>63</sup>

**Racial Justice** - A commitment to challenging racial discrimination, barriers to equity and xenophobia wherever they appear.

**Racialization** - The process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as ethnicity, language, economics, religion, culture, politics.<sup>64</sup>

**Racism<sup>1</sup>** - Racism occurs when a racial group's collective prejudice is backed by the power of legal authority and institutional control and is a system that functions independently from the intentions of individual actors.<sup>65</sup>

**Racism<sup>2</sup>** - All-encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an

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<sup>61</sup> Cambridge dictionary

<sup>62</sup> Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, 2018

<sup>63</sup> <https://prezi.com/myremguekp7o/understanding-identity/>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/en/resources/glossary-a-terms-en-gb-1/item/22873-racialization>

<sup>65</sup> Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, 2018



unequal distribution of privileges, resources and power between White people and people of colour. (Hilliard, 1992)<sup>66</sup>

**Racism<sup>3</sup>** - Racism is any individual action or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify discrimination.<sup>67</sup>

**Racism** - An institutionalized system of economic, political, social, and cultural relations that ensures that one racial group has and maintains power and privilege over all others in all aspects of life. As such, racism is measured by its economic, cultural, sociological, and political outcomes rather than its intentions (i.e., its effect on both racially and ethnically marginalized groups and racially and ethnically dominant groups).<sup>68</sup>

**Racist language** - Any communication of beliefs that a particular race is superior to another.

**Settler Colonialism** - A term used to describe the history and ongoing processes and structures whereby one group of people (settlers) are brought in to replace an existing Indigenous population and control their lands through the imposition of a new governmental and legal system.<sup>69</sup>

**Socially Constructed Identity** - An identity that is 'imposed' based on having shared characteristic features to which particular values are also ascribed. This identity reflects how society views and treats particular individuals based on such factors as race, gender and sexual orientation.

**The Circle Way** - A structure for deep conversation and wise outcomes based on a methodology founded by Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea in 1992 and fully expounded upon in their 2010 book, *The Circle Way: A Leader in Every Chair*. The Circle Way is the preferred and recommended structure and methodology that *Me and White Supremacy* book circles

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<sup>66</sup> <https://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/viewFile/249/116>

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/btwwda/workshop7/racism>

<sup>69</sup> <https://globalsocialtheory.org/concepts/settlercolonialism/>

should follow for working through Me and White Supremacy in group settings.<sup>70</sup>

**THRRG** - Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Reflection Guide; the CUC's program and curricula<sup>71</sup>

**Tipping Point** - The point at which a series of small changes or incidents becomes significant enough to cause a larger, more important change.<sup>72</sup>

**Tokenism** - Defined by Oxford Dictionaries as "the practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to do a particular thing, especially by recruiting a small number of people from under-represented groups in order to give the appearance of sexual or racial equality within a workforce." Tokenism occurs when BI-POC are used as props...to give the visual appearance of diversity, or to expect a BI-POC to discuss or work on all matters related to racism, or to prove a lack of racism because a BI-POC is present.<sup>73</sup>

**Tone Policing** - A tactic used by those who have white privilege to silence those who do not by focusing on the tone of what is being said rather than the actual content. Tone policing does not only have to be spoken out loud publicly. People with white privilege often tone police BIPOC in their thoughts or behind closed doors.<sup>74</sup>

**Trauma Porn** - Any type of media – be it written, photographed or filmed – which exploits traumatic moments of adversity to generate buzz, notoriety or social media attention.

**Truth, Healing and Reconciliation (Canada)** - A truth-telling and

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<sup>70</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>71</sup> <https://cuc.ca/social-justice/truth-healing-reconciliation/>

<sup>72</sup> Definition from Google Dictionary.

Note that 'tipping point' has a problematic history. "In general use, it was almost entirely in reference to the propensity of white families to move out of an area when a certain percentage of the neighbourhood was composed of black families." See: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/origin-of-the-phrase-tipping-point>

<sup>73</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>74</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

reconciliation process as part of an overall holistic and comprehensive response and acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by Aboriginal people and the need for continued healing. It is a profound commitment to establishing new relationships embedded in mutual recognition and respect that will forge a brighter future.<sup>75</sup>

**Voluntourism** - The trend and business of volunteer tourism, where people with privilege from Western countries travel to do charity volunteer work in countries

across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Voluntourism has been criticized for perpetuating white saviourism.<sup>76</sup>

**White** - Belonging to the group of people with skin that is pale in colour, who come from or whose family originally came from Europe<sup>77</sup>

**White Apathy** - A feeling of apathy, indifference, unconcern, detachment, dispassion, and disregard about racism by people with white privilege.<sup>78</sup>

**White Centering** - The centring of whiteness and White people, white values, white norms, and white feelings over everything and everyone else. The belief, whether conscious or not, that whiteness is "normal" and BIPOC are "other."<sup>79</sup>

**White Exceptionalism** - The belief that people with white privilege are exempt from white supremacy. The belief of being "one of the good ones."<sup>80</sup>

**White Feminism** - A feminism that focuses on the struggle of white women. It is feminism that is only concerned with disparities and oppression of gender (usually

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<sup>75</sup> <http://www.trc.ca/about-us/our-mandate.htm>

<sup>76</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>77</sup> Cambridge dictionary

<sup>78</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>79</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>80</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

cisgender) but does not take into account disparities and oppression of other intersections that are just as important, including race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.<sup>81</sup>

**White Fragility** - A state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves, including the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviours such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviours, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.<sup>82</sup>

**White Gaze** - The white supremacist lens through which people with white privilege see BIPOC. The white gaze also describes how BIPOC are defined, limited, stereotyped, and judged in the white imagination, usually to the detriment of BIPOC.<sup>83</sup>

**White Privilege** - A phrase coined by Peggy McIntosh in her 1988 paper "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies" and defined as follows: "I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was meant to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes compass, emergency gear, and blank checks."

(<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>)<sup>84</sup>

**White Saviorism** - A colonialist idea that assumes that BIPOC need White people to save them, that without white intervention, instruction, and guidance, BIPOC will be left helpless, and that without whiteness, BIPOC, who are seen and treated as inferior to people with white privilege, will not survive.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>82</sup> Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, 2018

<sup>83</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>84</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>85</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

**White Silence** - Occurs when people with white privilege stay complicitly silent when it comes to issues of race.<sup>86</sup>

**White Superiority** - The erroneous, violent, and racist idea that people with white or white-passing skin are superior to and therefore deserve to dominate over people with brown or black skin. A set of institutional assumptions and practices, often operating unconsciously, that tend to benefit White people and exclude people of colour.

(<https://www.blacklivesuu.com/teach-in-resources>)<sup>87</sup>

**White Supremacy** - White supremacy is best understood as an ideology, a belief system, or even a pathology,\* not an action or effect or even a culture.

White supremacy is not inherently true, as White people are not inherently supreme. In fact, that false assumption or belief that White people are supreme can be understood as the defining part of that ideology.

That false belief is then used to forcibly unify Europeans and inspire aggression toward "non-whites," with the purpose of establishing a racial caste system.

White supremacy is the ideology; white assimilation and aggression are the actions; white domination is the outcome. (Summary by Cir L'Bert, Jr)<sup>88</sup>

**Whitesplaining** - A condescending tone and a paternalistic assumption that a person of colour doesn't know enough to accurately articulate their own experience.

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<sup>86</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>87</sup> Layla F. Saad, *Me and White Supremacy Workbook*, 2018

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening/distinctions-definitions>

## Appendix E - Resources

### **UUA's Commission on Institutional Change**

#### ***Widening the Circle of Concern***

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening>

#### ***Findings Related to the Southern Regional Lead Hiring Decision, Spring 2017***

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic/widening/appendix-i>

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### **Articles about Policing and Racism**

#### ***Complaints of police mistreatment of Indigenous people led to no disciplinary action***

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/sq-complaints-indigenous-1.5302269>

#### ***Police brutality continually treated like a 'one-off' in Canada, says Desmond Cole***

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-june-1-2020-1.5592953/police-brutality-continually-treated-like-a-one-off-in-canada-says-desmond-cole-1.5592954>

#### ***Protesters rally against anti-black, Indigenous racism in Toronto***

[https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-protesters-rally-against-anti-black-indigenous-racism-in-toronto/?fbclid=IwAR0euL3rVO78FhWRIJ1jC-RFT4azLTdlaPcMRF\\_FalvQiQKdrXBFB5BEqKc](https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-protesters-rally-against-anti-black-indigenous-racism-in-toronto/?fbclid=IwAR0euL3rVO78FhWRIJ1jC-RFT4azLTdlaPcMRF_FalvQiQKdrXBFB5BEqKc)

#### ***Can this BC. First Nation's partnership with police offer a path for peace and justice elsewhere***

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-can-this-bc-first-nations-partnership-with-police-offer-a-path-for/>

#### ***NB police shooting of Indigenous woman leads to questions on***

## **'wellness checks'**

<https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/n-b-police-shooting-of-indigenous-woman-leads-to-questions-on-wellness-checks-1.4971987>

## **Toolkits for Anti-Racism Work**

### ***If You Want To Be Anti-Racist, This Non-Optical Allyship Guide Is Required Reading***

<https://www.vogue.co.uk/arts-and-lifestyle/article/non-optical-ally-guide>

### ***10 Steps to Non-Optical Allyship***

<https://www.vogue.co.uk/arts-and-lifestyle/article/non-optical-ally-guide>

### ***Considerations for Cultural Borrowing: Questions to Ask (and Answer)***

<https://www.uua.org/multiculturalism/introduction/misappropriation/23371.shtml>

### ***The Better Conversations Guide***

<https://onbeing.org/civil-conversations-project/better-conversations-guide/>

### ***11 Things You Can Do Besides Sharing Links In Face Of Police Aggression***

[https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/what-to-do-racism-Canada\\_ca\\_5ed3c1a5c5b60f1b09aa1448?ncid=other\\_huffpostre\\_pqylmel2bk8&utm\\_campaign=related\\_articles](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/what-to-do-racism-Canada_ca_5ed3c1a5c5b60f1b09aa1448?ncid=other_huffpostre_pqylmel2bk8&utm_campaign=related_articles)

### ***Black Organizations And Anti-Racist Groups Canadians Can Support Now.***

[https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/black-organizations-anti-racist-groups-canada\\_ca\\_5ed57ea1c5b6867b30853e20](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/black-organizations-anti-racist-groups-canada_ca_5ed57ea1c5b6867b30853e20)

### ***SURJ Showing Up for Racial Justice: Political Education, Toolkits, and Other Resources***

<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/resources.html>

## **The History of Racism in Canada (and as compared to the US)**

***For many white Canadians, 'reparations' is a scary word. Why some Black leaders say the time has come***

<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2020/06/27/for-many-white-canadians-reparations-is-a-scary-word-but-black-leaders-say-the-concept-goes-beyond-just-money.html>

***Is racism different in Canada?***

<https://www.macleans.ca/society/is-racism-different-in-canada/>

***Canada's slavery secret: The whitewashing of 200 years of enslavement***

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/canada-s-slavery-secret-the-whitewashing-of-200-years-of-enslavement-1.4726313>

***No difference between racism in Canada and the US, activists say***

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/no-difference-between-racism-in-canada-and-the-u-s-activists-say-1.4967681>

***Five Women who Should Be Household Names in Canada***

<https://canadianwomen.org/blog/five-women-who-should-be-household-names-canada/>



## General

***Students should not have to educate educators about racism***

<https://www.tvos.org/article/students-should-not-have-to-educate-educators-about-racism>

***Q & A with author Robin Maynard on Anti-Black Racism, Misogyny, and Policing in Canada***

<https://canadianwomen.org/blog/robyn-maynard/>

***Let's save some outrage for treatment of Indigenous people***

<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/2020/06/12/lets-save-some-outrage-for-treatment-of-indigenous-people.html>

***I don't care whether All Lives Matter is said in ignorance—it's just another example of racism'***

<https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/i-dont-care-whether-all-lives-matter-is-said-in-ignorance-its-just-another-example-of-racism/>

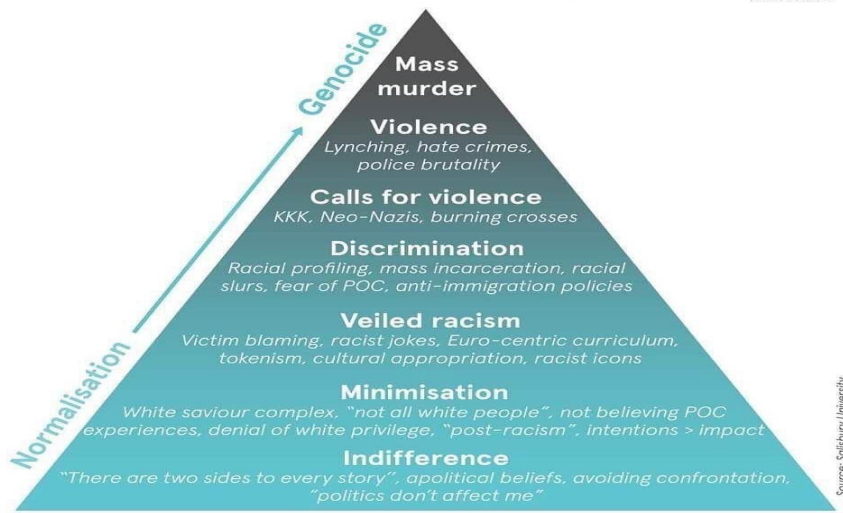
***Spiritual Allyship***

<https://theshiftnetwork.com/Path-to-Spiritual-Allyship/recording>

***Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race***

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/30/why-im-no-longer-talking-to-white-people-about-race>

# The Pyramid of White Supremacy



<https://www.equalityinstitute.org/blog/blacklivesmatter-being-actively-anti-racist>

# 15 Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture

- Perfectionism
- Sense of Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Quantity Over Quality
- Worship of the Written Word
- Only One Right Way
- Paternalism
- Either/Or Thinking
- Power Hoarding
- Fear of Open Conflict
- Individualism
- I'm the Only One
- Progress is Bigger, More
- Objectivity
- Right to Comfort

Terna Okun and Kenneth Jones,  
*Dismantling Racism Workbook*, 2001