GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF BLACK LIVES MATTER

Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.

Diversity: We are committed to acknowledging, respecting and celebrating difference(s) and commonalities.

Restorative Justice: We are committed to collectively, lovingly and courageously working vigorously for freedom and justice for Black people and, by extension, all people.

Unapologetically Black: We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black Lives Matter, we need not qualify our position. To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a necessary prerequisite for wanting the same for others.

Globalism: We see ourselves as part of the global Black family and we are aware of the different ways we are impacted or privileged as Black folk who exist in different parts of the world.

Collective Value: We are guided by the fact all Black lives matter, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status or location.

Transgender Affirming: We are committed to embracing and making space for trans brothers and sisters to participate and lead. We are committed to being self-reflexive and doing the work required to dismantle cis-gender privilege and uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women who continue to be disproportionately impacted by trans-antagonistic violence.

Black Women: We are committed to building a Black women affirming space free from sexism, misogyny, and male-centeredness.

Black Villages: We are committed to disrupting the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and “villages” that collectively care for one another, and especially “our” children to the degree that mothers, parents and children are comfortable.

Empathy: We are committed to practicing empathy; we engage comrades with the intent to learn about and connect with their contexts.

Black Families: We are committed to making our spaces family-friendly and enable parents to fully participate with their children. We are committed to dismantling the patriarchal practice that requires mothers to work “double shifts” that require them to mother in private even as they participate in justice work.

Loving Engagement: We are committed to embodying and practicing justice, liberation, and peace in our engagements with one another.

Queer Affirming: We are committed to fostering a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking or, rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual unless s/he or they disclose otherwise.

Intergenerational: We are committed to fostering an intergenerational and communal network free from ageism. We believe that all people, regardless of age, show up with capacity to lead and learn.
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS SUPPORT THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT
2015 ACTION OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS

WHEREAS, Unitarian Universalists strive for justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

WHEREAS, Unitarian Universalists have a goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

WHEREAS, allowing injustice to go unchallenged violates our principles;

WHEREAS, the Black Lives Matter movement has gained powerful traction in conjunction with recent tragic events involving, in particular, police brutality and institutionalized racism that target the black community;

WHEREAS, Tanisha Anderson, Rekia Boyd, Michael Brown, Miriam Carey, Michelle Cusseaux, Shelly Frey, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin, Kayla Moore, Tamir Rice, and Tony Robinson are just a few names of people who were recently killed by the racism that exists in the United States today;

WHEREAS, people of all ages and races are killed by law enforcement, yet black people ages 20-24 are seven times more likely to be killed by law enforcement;

WHEREAS, mass incarceration fueled by for-profit prisons and racially biased police practices drive the disproportionate imprisonment of black and brown Americans;

WHEREAS, the school-to-prison pipeline is an urgent concern because 40% of students expelled from U.S. public schools are black and one out of three black men is incarcerated during his lifetime; and

WHEREAS, we must continue to support the Black Lives Matter movement and Black-led racial justice organizations;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls member congregations to action, to become closer to a just world community, and to prevent future incidents of this nature;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly urges member congregations to engage in intentional learning spaces to organize for racial justice with recognition of the interconnected nature of racism coupled with systems of oppression that impact people based on class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability and language;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly encourages member congregations and all Unitarian Universalists to work toward police reform and prison abolition (which seeks to replace the current prison system with a system that is more just and equitable); and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2015 General Assembly recognizes that the fight for civil rights and equality is as real today as it was decades ago and urges member congregations to take initiative in collaboration with local and national organizations fighting for racial justice against the harsh racist practices to which many black people are exposed.

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE black lives matter, and a system of fair, transformative, and restorative justice that is accountable to communities is something to which each of us has a right. Unitarian Universalists and our greater society have the power to make this happen. Let’s do it!