

# **First Universalist Church of Minneapolis**

## **Recommitment to Racial Justice Resolution**

### **June 2021**

#### **WHEREAS:**

- The state of Minnesota has some of the worst racial disparities in the country;
- The murder of George Floyd, an African American man, by a White police officer in Minneapolis, the violence inflicted upon Iyanna Dior, a Black trans woman, and full ICE detention centers in Minnesota and family separation policies confirm that White supremacy culture (e.g., White-body supremacy, White guilt, White savior complex, White fragility, and White rage), structural racism, race-based immigration policies, colonialism, misogyny, transphobia, ableism and other systemic oppression remain pervasive and insidious elements of our community;
- We continue to experience the violation of the rights, territories, and bodies of Minnesota's Indigenous People, as evidenced by the disappeared and murdered Indigenous women, and the approvals of crude-oil pipelines that destroy ancient lands and threatens water supplies;
- White-identified communities and religious organizations, including First Universalist Church, have benefited from White supremacist systems of oppression, capitalist structures and anti-Blackness practices including but not limited to those related to law enforcement, policing & incarceration, environmental extraction and destruction, housing, land use patterns, health care, voter suppression, education, access to community services and resources, and economic opportunity, and whereas these truths impact our ability to live into our values;
- First Universalist Church of Minneapolis publicly declared its commitment to continuing the fight for Racial Justice through ongoing changes to the processes of the church, leadership, education, advocacy, self-reflection, and relationship-building in a Resolution approved by the Congregation on May 31, 2015;
- In that same resolution, First Universalist Church committed to addressing structural racism and Whiteness in the church through intentional efforts in every area of our ministry and work;
- The third visionary goal of the church states that "First Universalist is a multiracial, multicultural, and intergenerational faith community of mutual caring and support where people bring all of who they are and welcome each other with joy. Our sense of who we are as a community of faith is ever expanding;"

- This third visionary goal has not yet been realized, as measured by the small percentage of current members that do not identify as White (1-2 percent), and by the fact that some of our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members report experiencing our practices and services as still culturally White;
- First Universalist Church has engaged in education, training and work to learn about systemic racism and the history of White supremacy culture in America;
- Despite this education, training and work, we acknowledge that we have a long way to go before Black, Indigenous and People of Color in our congregation feel a sense of fully belonging, support and love;
- First Universalist Church has experienced success in supporting transformational change in public opinion, policies and laws as most recently demonstrated by our collective work to ensure that same sex couples have the legal right to marry and our efforts led by our Lakota elders to return the traditional name to Bde Maka Ska;
- Dismantling White supremacy requires a re-allocation of resources, reconciliation, and reparations, and it requires individual, congregational and communal sacrifice and discomfort for those with privilege;
- Our faith demands that we continue to educate ourselves and move to action to create a more just, equitable, safe, and healthy community and environment for all;

Therefore, be it resolved that First Universalist Church of Minneapolis publicly declares its commitment toward BIPOC liberation and joy, as we dismantle White Supremacy, anti-Blackness, colonization, racism, environmental destruction, and other oppressions, both in ourselves and our institutions by:

- Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse, anti-racist, Beloved Community, as envisioned by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;
- Ensuring and redefining safety in our communities for ALL BIPOC bodies and at-risk individuals and communities (especially Indigenous Women and Women of Color, immigrants, people with disabilities, gender expansive people, survivors of domestic and sexual abuse), without relying solely on police or prisons;
- Challenging and advocating for fundamental change in the criminal punishment system/prison industrial complex; unjust immigration policies and laws; voter suppression of all forms; disparities in health, education, housing, and economic policies and wherever racial disparities are present;
- Demanding fair access to the resources and healthy environments we all need and an end to violence, so that ALL people experience safety;

- Developing a deep understanding of the need for healing for ALL (both as individuals and as a collective);
- Investing in holistic strategies for addressing violence that speaks to the intersection of ALL forms of oppression through community-based initiatives/organizations;
- Humbly following the leadership of Black Minnesota leaders as well as other leaders of color and Indigenous leaders that are aligned with our theology, and refraining from performative action;
- Supporting re-allocating resources, reconciliation and reparations, recognizing that the intersectionality of racial justice, economic justice, and environmental justice is central to our goals;
- Continuing to work with and through Community Partner organizations, whose work is at the intersection of racism and economic injustice, environmental injustice, housing injustice, immigration injustice and/or other oppressions impacting BIPOC communities;
- Holding each other and our local leaders accountable (both for their words and their actions) in compassionate (though not always comfortable) ways;
- Investing our time and treasure in ways that support these goals;
- Grounding our actions in Unitarian Universalist principles, especially the [8th Principle](#);
- Engaging in continuous intentional learning, especially as we willingly engage the discomfort and self-examination that is necessary to change the White supremacist culture present in our own congregation; and
- Staying in this struggle for now, and for generations to come, because this work for racial justice and planetary survival will not be done in our lifetimes.

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**APPROVED. June 6, 2021**