

# RECOMMENDATIONS of The Anti-Racism Re-Envisioning Task Force Thomas Jefferson District Unitarian Universalist Association

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*August 2010*

As requested by the Board of the Thomas Jefferson District (TJD) in order to further its agenda of Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, and Multi-Culturalism (ARAOMC), the Anti-Racism Re-Envisioning Task Force (ARRTF) offers four general topics for consideration, with recommendations.

## **1. THE NAME**

WE THANK AND COMMEND the Thomas Jefferson District Board for ownership and leadership around the proposed district name change of 2010.

We recommend:

- a) Board support of congregational and cluster initiatives and discussion about the name, with staff, financial, and other resources to be made available.
- b) Creation of a “Financial Impact Statement on the name change which has been researched by the Treasurer of the Board of Directors (Article XIV Section 2D).”
- c) Education for congregations around best practices of democratic process at district, congregational, and national levels, so that delegates are educated about issues as well as able to respond to new information, and thus freed to vote their consciences, with the expectation that delegates are accountable to their congregations for their decisions.

## **2. ANTI-RACISM HISTORY and RECONCILIATION**

We recommend:

- a) Acknowledging each past member of the TJ District Anti-Racism Transformation Team (DARTT) with a Resolution of Thanks, and recognition of DARTT's role in moving us toward a new level. Change is slow; DARTT made a difference.
- b) Reaching out to Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM) and Latina/o Unitarian Universalist Networking Association (LUUNA), offering to host and support, financially and otherwise, a stand-alone, multi- generational People of Color gathering in the district, intentionally including youth and young adults of color. This would be a major opportunity for People

of Color to come together during the 2011 fiscal year and connect, without feeling that they are being tapped to work.

- c) Developing a task force to create an intentional plan for a series of facilitated conversations, with a goal of getting us to a place of healing and health, thus finding a greater point of commonality around ARAOMC work. We recommend providing many opportunities for these conversations to happen, in safety, as participants share freely with each other.
- d) Engaging with Southeastern Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (SEUUMA) about the need for pastoral support around brokenness among people both inside and outside of congregations, as it relates to the District's AR/AO/MC history.
- e) Commending and supporting those congregations who have made a commitment to be ARAOMC institutions.
- f) Commending and supporting those congregations who are eager to begin that journey.

### **3. THE BOARD AS PROPHETIC VOICE AND VISIONARY LEADER**

We recommend:

- a) In order to clarify intentionality, the key words of “anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism” be displayed in Board statements of who we long to be. We note that the words are not included in the Board's statements of Mission, Vision, or Ends.
- b) The Board encourage SEUUMA and ministers' clusters in the development of ritual and liturgy, as well as theological reflection, about what it means to be ARAOMC. For example: the Board might sponsor a sermon contest on the topic.
- c) The Board's custom of using ARAOMC process observation at meetings be encouraged in district committees, congregations, and cluster meetings, with training opportunities made available.
- d) The Board set the expectation that congregational leaders, district leaders, and ministers develop cultural competency.
- e) The Board give both financial and name support to local and cluster initiatives that lift up social justice issues on emergency occasions where public voice becomes appropriate. For example: the South Carolina event resulting in the full page “Standing on the Side of Love” newspaper ad.
- f) The Board be mindful of opportunities to address ARAOMC at the Charlotte General Assembly of 2011, particularly as related to the racial history of our district.

## 4. THE PRACTICALITIES OF ONGOING ARAOMC WORK

We recommend:

- a) Assuring continued funding of the TJD Social Justice Coordinator position, with preservation of the ARAOMC portfolio.
- b) Continuing to hold the Board meeting in concert with the yearly Anti-Racism Conference.
- c) Creating an ARAOMC district committee, one of whose charges might be to coordinate with a task force to facilitate the “conversations” as referenced in the third item under “Anti-Racism History and Reconciliation.” A district committee might also monitor and assess ongoing ARAOMC progress throughout the district, researching best practices, and reporting regularly to the Board with the expectation that findings would then be shared with congregations. The committee might also educate congregations about outside financial resources available for ARAOMC, including the identification of appropriate grants, as well as assistance with grant writing.

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*Respectfully submitted by the Task Force*

The Reverend Claudia Frost, Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church, Seven Springs, NC

The Reverend Audette Fulbright Fulson, Unitarian Universalist Church of Roanoke, VA

Betty Chamlee Miller, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Beaufort, SC

The Reverend Jennifer Y. Ryu, Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists, Williamsburg, VA

Dr. Leon Spencer, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Statesboro, GA

Lesley Y. Williams, All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, Durham, NC

### **THOMAS JEFFERSON DISTRICT STAFF**

Annette Marquis, District Executive

Donna Sequeira, M. Div., Social Justice Coordinator