

OUTLINE FOR WIDENING THE CIRCLE OF CONCERN (WTCOC) TASK FORCE
PRESENTATION TO THE UUCB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

August 4, 2021

In 2017, UUA charged the Commission on Institutional Change with conducting an audit and analysis of systemic racism and white supremacy culture in the UUA. The Committee's goal was to support "long-term cultural and institutional change that redeems the essential promise and ideals of Unitarian Universalism." The publication of the Widening the Circle of Concern book, was the result of that audit and analysis.

In 2020, UUCB's WTCOC Task Force was formed to study the Committee's book, with the goal of making recommendations to our congregation with regard to broadening and deepening our anti-racism, anti-oppression work.

In this brief presentation to the Board on 8/4, the Task Force will give an overview of our process to date and provide an introduction to our full report. The report, which is in its final stage of completion, will be sent in its entirety to the Board later in August in preparation for a more in-depth discussion at the 9/1 Board meeting.

Here is the outline for the 8/4 presentation.

- ◆ Opening Remarks
- ◆ Introduction of Task Force Members
- ◆ Overview of Task Force History and Process
- ◆ A Sample of Members' Vision Statements*
- ◆ Closing Comments
- ◆ Q & A and Discussion

The Task Force thanks the Board for this opportunity to preview the work of the Task Force.

In Beloved Community,
The WTCOC Task Force of the UUCB Board of Trustees

*Please see complete list of members' Vision Statements on next pages.

WIDENING THE CIRCLE OF CONCERN

Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change

VISION STATEMENT FROM UUCB TASK FORCE MEMBERS

The members of the Task Force, Widening the Circle of Concern, imagined what UUCB might be like, look like and feel like if the recommendations of the WTCOC task force were adopted. This “radical visioning/dreaming project” produced profound statements of a future UUCB whose Circle of Concern had been deeply widened. Members of the Task Force: Susan Blair, Victoria Bowen, Rev. Michelle Collins, Suzette Anderson-Duggan, Lynne Henderson, Helen Tinsley-Jones, Albert Kueffner, Elaine Miller, Lonnie Moseley, Melissa Rosales, Cordell Sloan.

YOUTH

SUZETTE ANDERSON DUGGAN. My vision is that of a “church” that is limitless and timeless. It is a space of spiritual succor that is so full of what it is — a polycultural, polylingual, polcreative, and pan-denominational force for good within and beyond our walls that challenges us to engage with that which might be beyond the margins of our comfort. That the momentum for this work — anti-racism and anti-oppression on the one hand in tandem with radical inclusivity on the other hand — becomes internalized as to tip the scales toward justice, healing, and reparation. And because of our vision and our work to make it a reality, our children - babies, tots, pre-teens, teens, and young adults - will go out into the world secure in who they are as they branch out beyond their beloved home congregation.

LONNIE MOSELEY. The Family Ministry table will be on display with materials that can be picked up and taken away by children; and activities list given to parents.

LONNIE MOSELEY. Coming-of-Age Youth will become members of UUCB after their Coming-of-Age ceremonies and programs designed to support finding their paths. Family Ministry will be in close partnership with Welcoming Team to ensure collaboration and consistency.

CONNECTIONS

SUSAN BLAIR. We welcome new individuals and families through our doors who seek what we seek: a welcoming and inclusive community where they can offer their talents and receive what we have to give. As members of UUCB, we all assume the joyful task of making each other and new folks feel part of our community.

SUSAN BLAIR. We find ways to serve our greater community, through volunteering opportunities, involvement with our Good Neighbor Program recipients. We regularly sponsor and participate in activities in the community that reflect our commitment to diversity, anti-racism and social justice.

SUZETTE ANDERSON DUGGAN. Over the next five years, UUCB builds strong connections with at least five other local congregations.

HELEN TINSLEY-JONES. We enthusiastically build alliances with community groups and joyfully share our UUCB land.

MELISSA ROSALES. In my dream version of UUCB, I see people of all types, happy and whole, healed from being in community together; where all feel truly welcomed and feel that they can have a home with us if they want one. I see us as a congregation with an unwavering commitment to building a true “heaven” on earth, where no one wants, no one hurts for long, and all feel loved. We will have gone through storms together, and times that will have tested our commitment, and tested it HARD. This UUCB community is weathered but resolute in purpose.

MELISSA ROSALES. And we will be just one of many connected communities that are also getting into “good trouble” and doing the good work of building the world we wish to bring into being

MELISSA ROSALES. We are joyful because we know that we aren’t in this alone; we have friends we care for and who care about us. This UUCB of the future is a place where we can be honest with each other when we fall short, and where all of us have a genuine desire to continually grow into the best versions of ourselves.

ELAINE MILLER. We collaborate with other denominations, and make use of programs from other denominations, seeing that people who have different religious beliefs have much to offer.

ELAINE MILLER. We connect with Black and Brown neighborhoods, doing advocacy and activism around issues that affect Black and Brown people, partnering with churches that have Black and Brown people, working on projects together, that benefit Black, Brown, and marginalized people. We offer low or no-cost meeting space to non-profits benefiting Black, Brown & marginalized people.

CORDELL SLOAN. Learn from and inform other churches. Model. Also build expertise for engagement with non-church organizations. Organize Coordinate and collaborate on larger goals.

EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION

LONNIE MOSELEY. The members of UUCB, they will have a grounded understanding of how to be anti-racist, anti-classist and religious-inclusive--through on-going sermons, presentations, adult programs, films, readings, and conferences. As recommendations are approved by the Board, there will be common activities in which all members will participate and will be perpetuated as ongoing activities.

LONNIE MOSELEY. There will be obviously placed signs of the statements of who we are and our commitment to care for each other and the community. The Welcome table will have forms and materials in English and Spanish about Unitarian Universalism. There will be an educational hand-out of how we “act” together at UUCB. The tablecloth of the Welcome Table will have graphics of the major religions or other designated wording – large enough for initial impact, e.g., “We welcome you in the fullness of who you are.”

SUSAN BLAIR. We offer and participate in ongoing education programs on anti-racism, reparations, history from different (non-white) perspectives through classes, chalice circles, workshops, youth programs.

ELAINE MILLER. We offer ongoing cultural competency education - making sure that Black, Brown & marginalized people are not subjected to ignorant remarks and microaggressions here – a safe space. Our programs include U.S. history from non-white perspectives, for all ages, like the OWL sexuality program, but for anti-racist, non-white-centered intelligence. Compelling idea: "We have changed within and without."

CORDELL SLOAN. My vision/dream is that the UUCB Congregation and Administration understands how minds are entangled by the lifetime of malicious teaching that our society uses to lead us astray of the truth. That our church catalogs the lies that poison the minds of people. That UUCB develops content and teaching remedies that make it possible to, with a broad scope, reveal and instill the truths that will guide our collective journey to healing.

ACCOUNTABILITY

MELISSA ROSALES. My dream is that we will continue our work with Widening the Circle of Concern, and make it an ongoing, permanent piece of UUCB. This work, set before us by the association of our faith, says that "anti-oppression work is a theological mandate." We are charged with creating and supporting (quote) "long-term cultural and institutional change that redeems the essential promise and ideals of Unitarian Universalism." (end quote) We, at UUCB, seek to widen the circle so that all will feel truly held in love and belonging.

MELISSA ROSALES. My dream is that UUCB will adopt the 8th principle of Unitarian Universalism which reads:

"We covenant to affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

HELEN TINSLEY-JONES. Our bonds with one another both gently hold and fiercely challenge us.

HELEN TINSLEY-JONES. We realize that "social justice" is a verb, calling us to fight for racial equity.

SUSAN BLAIR. We, as members of UUCB, having embraced the 8th Principle, continually look within ourselves and to others with compassion and respect and with a vigilance to stay on the path of justice and equity in our church and our community.

LONNIE MOSELEY. All programmatic meetings, after the Chalice Lighting reading, will ask the question, "Who is NOT in the room of this meeting?" This repeated question throughout UUCB leadership will help guide decisions, create new understandings and find itself being asked at home and in other communities.

LONNIE MOSELEY. A conflict resolution group will have been created made up of diverse members of the Congregation so that no person of color, no gender identified woman, LGBTQIA+ member will seek conflict resolution with the UUCB administration or Board without a support person of their choice to be present with them.

LIVING OUR VALUES

LYNNE HENDERSON. My vision is that we will all be more conscious and aware, and therefore the whole church atmosphere will be one of listening and learning from each other on an ongoing basis, particularly listening to those who speak less or feel in any way outside. The ideas and values will then be so pervasive that we will just continue to grow and be increasingly inclusive and interdependent in ways that will benefit everyone.

ALBERT KUEFFNER. My vision for the future is that white supremacy in our denomination will have ended because its members will **A.** Hearken to the words of George Floyd: “I can’t breathe!” and “Mama!” And **B.** Nurture White grassroots with fertile Black soil. **C.** In that regard, teach White people what Black people already know: a) come from a proactive first-person perspective, b) promote your point of view and want others to promote theirs in a public conversation wherever people gather, inside or out, and c) find and keep a common rhythm when rapping with others.

MELISSA ROSALES. We will move from just becoming aware of the white supremacy systems that America was founded on, to start actively tearing down those systems of oppression; within our church, within our faith and within our local communities. We will join the call for reparations, and work for healing and change. I dream that we will rebuild this world in love and justice.

HELEN TINSLEY-JONES. We expand our comfort with sitting with discomfort, thereby inviting personal and congregational transformation.

LONNIE MOSELEY. UUCB will have committed that every new person entering our doors will be greeted with warmth and care. Our congregants will know what and what not to say to newcomers who are drawn to our power of love on the hill.

RESOURCES

LONNIE MOSELEY. UUCB will have large pictures of members on its walls—representing the diversity of our congregation regarding gender, age (with permission for images of youth), race, ethnicity and sexual preferences. Images from our Social Justice work, e.g., Our Good Neighbor Organization recipients, will be visible. Images of our campus as looked at through the lens of the Ohlone people. Information about all activities will be easily accessed.

ARTS & CULTURE

VICTORIA BOWEN. I envision our buildings and campus full of life! I see activists, young and old, working together to impact the world. I see activists coming up the hill to find a safe place to engage in social justice, to find what they need--from nutritious snacks--to art supplies to free wi-fi, where they can confer and create. I see an environment safe from microaggressions and classism .

SUSAN BLAIR. We have diversified our music program to regularly include other churches, faiths and a broad range of reflective, inspiring, joy-filled music.

REV. MICHELLE COLLINS. My dream is that that EVERY member of UUCB understands what microaggressions are and how to challenge and disrupt them when they see them happen in their daily lives.

ELAINE MILLER. We have changed within and without. We are a more welcoming and less white-centered congregation.

SUZETTE ANDERSON DUGGAN. All the cultures of the world are our canvas when we think of ways to incorporate dance, movement, storytelling, music and visual arts into our services.

LONNIE MOSELEY. Music at UUCB will continue to represent the widening circle as our Music Director continues to find music that speaks to the diversity of the congregation. Congregants will be encouraged to submit to our Music Director, music, YouTube videos of music that align with the monthly worship theme. Adult Exploration programs will align with the Music Department to make deeper dives into the sacredness of music and its ability to help us change states and open more to the musical diversity of our communities.

LONNIE MOSELEY. UUCB's campus will be known to the community organizations as a possible host for their large meetings. Our congregants will volunteer to help with such hosting and connection. We will not be just a rental venue for community and religious groups who need our spaces—but present and visible to the community.

WORSHIP

VICTORIA BOWEN. I see areas protected from the activities, where people who need to rest can go to rest, where people who need quiet can contemplate and reflect, where people who need resources or pastoral care can find those, too.

ELAINE MILLER. We hear sermons from, and experience lay leadership of people of all descriptions. We are presented with weekly updates during the Sunday Service about race – good news – bad news – biography – music & arts.

LONNIE MOSELEY. Inside the Sanctuary where we Worship, there will be placards of quotes of connection and love from Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Atheism, Humanism, and Earth-based. Every newcomer will see some representation of their “paths” and understand the Unitarian Universalism does not dictate the path but guide people along their paths to UUism's first principle, “Affirming the Dignity and Worth of Every Person.”