

## UCE Covenant Group Guide

### Why Do We Need the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle?

#### Opening Words:

White people tend to be visitors to the struggle for racial justice, ones that aren't forced to be there but can choose to come in and leave whenever they like. People of color reside in the struggle for racial justice by virtue of their race. As people who are constantly in the struggle, people of color have the right to make claims on what they find okay and not okay, what they see as helpful and not helpful.

~ Rev. Aisha Ansano  
Affiliated Community Minister  
First Parish, Malden, MA

In the excruciating space that lives between seeing and naming, and hearing and changing, we pray: *"All of us need all of us to make it."*

~ Rev. Theresa I. Soto  
Senior Minister, First Unitarian  
Church, Oakland, CA

**Check-in:** How is it with your spirit?

#### The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle

*We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 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"*

#### Questions:

1. What does Beloved Community mean to you?
2. Are the 7 Principles enough to dismantle white supremacy culture and address racism? If so, why have these issues persisted within the UUA and our congregation?
3. How might the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle add to the process of dismantling white supremacy culture and addressing racism?
4. The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle calls for "... actions that *accountably* dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." What would accountability mean in our UCE community and in our individual behavior?
5. If one believes in the 7 Principles, in Beloved Community, and in the anti-racism, anti-oppression work in which UCE is involved, isn't that enough?

6. UCE is a congregation that is predominantly white with a minority of members and friends who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color. In this context, why is it important to adopt the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle?
7. What does it mean to belong to a congregation or Association that espouses an 8<sup>th</sup> Principle? Is it necessary to define who we are?

**Closing Words:**

Shirley Chisholm was asked why she, a Black woman, was running for president: "You don't have a chance. Why are you doing that?" And she said, "Because I am in love with the America that does not yet exist," and that's how Unitarian Universalism is also. I'm in love with the Unitarian Universalism that does not yet exist. But I have to hold both the love for that thing and the love for the reality. It does not yet exist. It will probably not exist in my lifetime. I don't think it will in that of my children, but I can't deny my love for it. You know, wanting to be there in that struggle. That's why I'm fighting.

~ Rev. Dr. Natalie Fenimore  
Minister for Lifespan Religious  
Education  
UU Congregation at Shelter Rock  
Manhasset, NY