

**Unity Unitarian Church  
Saint Paul, Minnesota**

**Dismantling Racism – Becoming an  
Actively Anti-Racist Institution**

**2009 – 2010 Annual Report  
on Institutional Progress**

**Presented to the  
Board of Trustees and the Executive Team  
of Unity Church-Unitarian**

**CHURCH YEAR: September 1, 2009-  
August 31, 2010**

**Prepared by the Anti-Racism Leadership Team (ARLT)**

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## Table of Contents

<b><i>Introduction: Assessing Progress on the Anti-Racism Initiative</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
Significant Steps and Evolving Roles – Background.....	3
The Ends Statements: Living In to/up to these statements?.....	4
ARLT relationship and communication with the Board of Trustees.....	4
ARLT relationship and communication with the Executive Team and Staff.....	5
Commitment to education and discussion of privilege and systemic racism .....	5
<b><i>Part One: “We Can Do Better” Becoming an Anti-racist Institution —</i></b>	
<b><i>Observations and Recommendations</i></b> .....	<b>6</b>
A Climate for Transformative Change .....	6
Recommendation 1: Establish Formal Lines of Communication between the Anti-racism Leadership Team, the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Team .....	6
Recommendation 2: Assign staff to Unity’s anti-racism initiatives .....	7
Recommendation 3: Commit to Training .....	7
Recommendation 4: Coordinate Opportunities for Discussing and Learning about Race and Racism... ..	7
<b><i>Part Two: Anti-Racism Team Life and Activities</i></b> .....	<b>9</b>
New Organizational Structure .....	9
Working Groups.....	9
Team Activities .....	10
<b><i>Part Three: Anti-racist Lens Applied to Activities during the 2009-2010 Church Year</i></b> .....	<b>12</b>
Worship Services .....	12
Highlights from <i>CommUNITY</i> , the church’s newsletter.....	12
Additional activities promoted in <i>CommUnity</i> .....	14
Community Outreach Ministry .....	15
Wellspring Wednesday Events .....	15
Parish Hall Art .....	16
This Week At Unity (insert in Order of Worship) .....	16
<b><i>Appendices</i></b> .....	<b>17</b>
Appendix A: Proposed Activities of the Executive Team Related to Forging an Intentionally Anti-Racist Identity .....	17
Appendix B: Community Outreach and Ministry Team feedback to ARLT 2010.....	18
Appendix C: Hiring/Vendor policies.....	20
Appendix D: Continuum on Becoming an Actively Anti-Racist Institution .....	21
Appendix E: Characteristics of Anti-Racist Institutions .....	22

## **Introduction: Assessing Progress on the Anti-Racism Initiative**

In August 2010, members of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team attended the monthly meeting of Unity's Board of Trustees. Team members told the board that the team felt "alone and burdened." In this report we hope to clarify by providing tangible examples, experiences, and impressions of the ARLT over the past church year.

The ARLT has now spent its first full year as an entity chartered by the Board of Trustees. In presenting an Annual Report in this new capacity, it is our intention to present a "State of the Church" report through an anti-racist lens, focusing on the status of anti-racist initiatives explicit in Unity's Ends Statements. This report includes our auditing of church life from an anti-racist perspective, examining Board of Trustees meeting documents, worship services, outreach programs, religious education, and *CommUnity* newsletters. To indicate the broad range of opportunities and activities at Unity Church related to race and racism, we provide an extensive list, but we focus our report on conclusions and recommendations.

### **Significant Steps and Evolving Roles – Background**

In 2008, Unity Church Unitarian – the congregation, executive leadership, and the Board of Trustees – undertook significant steps to put into policy its commitment to becoming an actively anti-racist institution. The board initiated and oversaw an authentic, inclusive process to develop a new set of governing Ends Statements meant to guide church life over the next five years. In those statements, explicit directives to establish anti-racist policy and practices and to promote racial healing in the "Beloved Community" of Unity Church took a primary position of importance. The board also voted to establish the Anti-Racism Leadership Team as a chartered element of institutional governance. The purpose of chartering the team was meant in large part to ensure a formal role and relationship of the team with church leadership to provide monitoring, feedback and advice towards reaching Unity's goals of transformative change.

During this past year, the ARLT has worked to refine understanding of its role – a role that includes responsibility for monitoring and reporting on institutional progress and life through an anti-racist lens; for offering advice and working to facilitate efforts to promote conversation and education around white privilege and dismantling systemic racism; and for communicating internally and externally on all of these activities. As we refined the team's role, we were able to focus our efforts and gain clarity about a long-held concern and frustration for the team:

How does a small volunteer group working independently of church leadership and programming staff take responsibility for the organization's transformation to an anti-racist institution?

Looking back, we now realize the folly of framing the question in those terms. It is shortsighted and probably egotistical to think a committee has that kind of impact. This work is truly the responsibility of the whole church. Leadership, the Board, Religious Education, Outreach, and

membership all hold the opportunity, energy and power to transform. ARLT efforts must be limited to authentically advising, holding up the anti-racist lens and reporting on activity, and helping to facilitate learning and discussion.

The result of this clarification for the team has been the ability to put more focus and energy on our monitoring, assessing and advising capacity. The ARLT is looking less at its own strategic plan and more at the progress of the church in fulfilling its Ends Statements, a shift we feel is appropriate and overdue.

### **The Ends Statements: Living In to/up to these statements?**

Heather Hackman, a faculty member at St. Cloud State University, presented a set of workshops at Unity Church, and led discussions using the visual metaphor of systemic racism in society as a moving walkway. Inequality and privilege in society relentlessly move forward, and while we may attempt to move off or against that walkway, when we stop or slow down the motion continues to carry us in the wrong direction.

After significant strides and an undeniable willingness and energy to become an anti-racist organization on the part of Unity Church, in the past year and a half, too few tangible efforts have been undertaken and followed through to prevent backwards motion. In reviewing “The way forward” section of our 2008-2009 Annual Report, we’ve seen little or no action on recommendations we made that aimed to help implement the anti-racist goals in the Ends Statements.

### **ARLT relationship and communication with the Board of Trustees**

According to the charter, it is the role of the ARLT to:

- Advise the Board of Trustees in creating policies about institutional practices to further the church in living out its commitment to anti-racism and racial healing in covenant with people and communities of color.
- Assess and report annually to the Board of Trustees, the Executive Team, and the congregation on the progress being made in the journey toward becoming an actively anti-racist institution in covenant with communities of color.
- Regularly scan for best practices with regard to transforming our institution to one that is actively anti-racist.

In documents and in numerous conversations in and outside of Board meetings, the ARLT has asked for a formal process or method for keeping communication open and consistent. The Board has been open to discussing ideas and inviting ARLT members to attend meetings. However, no formal process or method has been developed. The ARLT requested a response to its findings and recommendations presented in last year’s ARLT annual report (that discussed the church year September 1, 2008 - August 31, 2009), but no response has come. Following the August 2010 Board meeting, an intention to carry on discussion and form a working committee was expressed. No progress has been made.

As the church continues in the ambitious “Unity Tomorrow” process, the ARLT finds it inexplicable that the team has not been included in an official capacity, either for advice, feedback or monitoring. This was no doubt an oversight, yet it serves as an example of the lack of an authentic process to utilize the team in its chartered purpose.

### **ARLT relationship and communication with the Executive Team and Staff**

According to the charter, it is the role of the ARLT to:

- Work with the Executive Team to support the implementation of these (institutional anti-racist) practices and related programming.
- Shape and maintain shared responsibility for creating an institutional environment that supports anti-racist accountability.

For more than two years, Rob Eller-Isaacs and Leon Dunkley have intermittently attended monthly meetings of the ARLT. Their participation is extremely valuable, helping the team to gain insight on church operation and life. In some instances, the ARLT and Executive Team members have shared advice, and have shaped direction and planning together. However, schedule conflicts over the past half year have made it impossible for either Rob or Leon to attend ARLT meetings. Furthermore, neither Rob nor Leon serves as a formal liaison to the ARLT. In a formal relationship, there could be regular reporting on Executive Team activity, or responsibility for implementing ARLT initiatives and/or programming suggestions, or both. In 2006 the ET met with the ARLT on one occasion for the purpose of reviewing church activity through an anti-racism perspective. This process has never been made an ongoing practice. At the time of writing this report, a similar meeting is scheduled.

### **Commitment to education and discussion of privilege and systemic racism**

According to the charter, it is the role of the ARLT to:

- Promote/organize opportunities for congregants to understand the systemic nature of racism and to engage in transformational racial healing.

Our ultimate goal is to put the ARLT out of business. In order for this to happen, Unity Church needs to continually offer ways for members and friends of the church to deepen their understanding of systemic racism and how it injures all of us. The goal of the model we operate under is to organize and educate enough of the people and elements of Unity Church to make change natural and inevitable.

But a plan with physical and financial support for ongoing education and discussion has not yet emerged. It's our understanding that Board members or Unity employees are not asked to attend training in the analysis of racism. In the past several years, the planning, recruiting, and publicizing of anti-racism training programs run by the UUA and/or MCARI has been the sole responsibility of the Anti-Racism Leadership Team. While this may be appropriate, it is a job beyond this small group of volunteers, is not proving to be efficient, and suggests lack of support.

## **Part One: “We Can Do Better”**

### **Becoming an Anti-racist Institution — Observations and Recommendations**

#### **A Climate for Transformative Change**

There is no denying the philosophical and spiritual acceptance and passion within Unity Church for the work to dismantle racism and strive to become an anti-racist institution. Self-examination and ongoing dialogue are the first crucial steps to making significant change, and Unity Church has made these efforts. From the pulpit, in the halls, in programming and through a variety of internal and external communications and activities, racial justice and healing is discussed, embraced, confronted. Examining church life through the anti-racism lens reveals evidence of and opportunity for change and progress. The groundwork has been laid over the past several years to create a climate for true transformation.

The explicit anti-racist goals in Unity’s Ends Statements represent a significant institutional accomplishment. But the difficult part comes in formulating policies and procedures that constitute anti-racist practice and make it routine. Unity, like many other institutions, has struggled to identify the policies that would implement anti-racist aspirations, and that would transform those aspirations into regular institutional practice.

Unity does not seem to have formal, tangible anti-racist procedures and practices in place. The ARLT recommends the following steps as the most urgent and beneficial for the Board and Executive Team to pursue.

#### **Recommendation 1: Establish Formal Lines of Communication between the Anti-racism Leadership Team, the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Team**

Efforts to informally establish practices of communicating and/or reporting between the ARLT and leadership remain inconsistent and ineffective. The Team requests opportunities to interact, but those in leadership and governance rarely if ever seek input from the ARLT.

We recommend that the Board of Trustees and Executive Team report formally to the ARLT on progress on the anti-racism goals within the Ends Statements. The ARLT can help in structuring how this is done. Communication could be in writing or could include regularly scheduled (annual?) meetings.

We recommend that the ARLT continually monitor Board discussion and action in order to provide observations and advice through an anti-racism perspective. Monitoring might not be in person, but could involve presenting minutes and other documents to the Team and scheduling frequent (quarterly?) time for discussion of anti-racism during Board meetings. Additionally, the ARLT should have a member or designated Board member in attendance at meetings on the Team’s behalf.

**Recommendation 2: Assign staff to Unity’s anti-racism initiatives — put this work in job description(s)**

Presently, staff support for the ARLT seems to be similar to work with church program teams and community outreach groups. Staff support is often very good, but workloads are full, and the ARLT must be persistent and actively pursue follow-through. If anti-racism initiatives were analogous to outreach and programming, giving volunteers autonomy would be appropriate, but anti-racism work lives at the core of the institution and its transformation, and demands more attention.

We recommend that work to become an anti-racist institution be among the designated responsibilities of one or more staff members. We recommend that a single member of Unity’s Executive Team or staff be responsible for serving as a liaison to the ARLT. However, responsibilities for anti-racism reach beyond offering support to the ARLT, and must coordinate efforts on behalf of the entire church. As stated above, eventually the ARLT should disappear as it is replaced by routine institutional practices. We believe that implementation of anti-racist policies and practices will require formal designation of staff resources and accountability.

**Recommendation 3: Commit to Training**

A stated goal of the MCARI/Crossroads Dismantling Racism model—and of social change organizing in general—is to train enough members of an organization to achieve a “tipping point” for making change inevitable. There is no specific goal, but the ARLT believes that Unity should be actively seeking to train more members and regular attendees.

However, with questions about “the MCARI model” and with the difficulty of securing funding from the UUA, we observe Unity’s commitment to anti-racism training and education waning.

We recommend that all those in Unity’s leadership and governance should participate in anti-racism training. MCARI training is particularly relevant as it focuses on institutional transformation rather than personal change, but we welcome other kinds of anti-racism/anti-oppression training as well.

We recommend that the Board establish simple but clear expectations for who should receive an agreed-upon level of training, in a timely manner.

We further recommend that funding and staff support be designated to ensure that anti-racism trainings are available for church members, and that broad participation is encouraged.

**Recommendation 4: Coordinate Opportunities for Discussing and Learning about Race and Racism**

The ARLT and the Racial Justice Ministry Team, animating our missions, seek to provide ongoing opportunities for discussion, learning and extending Unity’s involvement into the community. We’ve discovered that communication and coordination between the teams will be necessary to maximize our efforts and coordinate our plans. Similarly, the church is in need of coordinated plans for programming involving racism, racial justice and community involvement.

On several occasions in the past year, Unity has scheduled multiple and conflicting events related to racism. The audience for these events was forced to choose among them. Recently, Unity also scheduled community outreach programming that conflicted with an important conference on race and racism. At this time there are no designated anti-racism programming “slots” in, for example, the Wellspring Wednesday schedule. Although excellent anti-racism programming does occur, we’re not aware of how it may or may not be part of a coherent and concerted effort.

We recommend a more cohesive and purposeful approach. We believe that attention to race and racism, and to opportunities to learn about race and racism, should be a fundamental consideration. All of us within Unity Church can become hampered by ignorance, reticence, or defensiveness. We all benefit from education about the past and the present, skills training, coaching, group support, and specific encouragement on how to be constructively anti-racist.

Ideally, there would be a variety of opportunities available to Unity congregants. We would like to see a clear anti-racism theme in the educational and spiritual development programming offered each year. Some possibilities might be:

- "Race: The Power of an Illusion" film series, with facilitated discussions.
- Use the Speak Out workshop format from Teaching Tolerance.
- Host a forum featuring the "Traces of the Trade" documentary and speakers.
- Offer a workshop designed to help people develop clarity about action steps they can take in everyday life.
- Work with other organizations to offer a variety of approaches to learning about racism.
- Program intergenerational film nights with discussion
- Propose a “Unity Church Reads” year, in which everyone is encouraged to read a chosen book. Throughout the year, services, events and discussions will be organized with this book as the framing device.
- Look into ways to initiate and support groups of people who are committed to living more intentionally as an anti-racist and/or who are alert to opportunities for congregants to take an anti-racist action step and finding ways to bring that forward.
- Set up a newsboard with regularly updated ideas/issues/actions/articles.
- End-of-year gathering/celebration for everyone who has participated in any of the activities or events provided.
- Literary Ministry could include more specific reflections on anti-racism.

## **Part Two: Anti-Racism Team Life and Activities**

In the first month of the Unity Church year (September 2009) the ARLT focused on two pressing matters, the health of the team, and the Annual Report. Assignments for the Annual Report were made quickly; attention to the team's health required more consideration. In the previous six months five new members had joined the Team, presenting an unprecedented challenge to the Team's ability to incorporate new members. Alana Howey, Allen Giles, Sarah Pradt, Mari McCauley, and Segundo Velasquez joined incumbent members Sherman Eagles, Drew Danielson and Pauline Eichten.

The ARLT decided that it needed to set aside time to discuss and evaluate the Team's activities, functioning, and general health. The Team held a Retreat day in September 2009 to address these issues and to plan for the year. At the Retreat the team adopted three strategic directions:

- Explain, expound and celebrate the place of Anti-Racism in the institutional identity of Unity Church.
- Elaborate the place of Anti-Racism in the vision of Unity's future.
- Identify ways for congregants to continue to achieve the future vision and engage those people willing to help.

### **New Organizational Structure**

At the retreat in the Team also adopted a **new structure** intended to promote greater efficiency and allow greater growth and connection with the Team's mission. The new structure would also affect the way the team handles its workload and delegates responsibility.

The structure consisted of an "at large Team Coordinator" who would be the designated person of record for all inquiries and notifications, and who would be responsible for setting the content for agenda at meetings. The structure also called for the creation of three subgroups, each having an area of focus for which that subgroup will create goals and objectives. Each subgroup is autonomous, but receives advice and feedback from the whole group. Each subgroup was encouraged to collect members from outside of the team to help with the work and planning. Finally, each group will have a "lead" person responsible for convening and reporting the sub group plans and activities.

### **Working Groups**

The three working groups are:

**Assessment** (Alana Howey and Sherm Eagles)--Develop assessment tools, do continual monitoring during the church year, seek out best practices of other anti-racism groups regarding assessment.

**Education/engagement** (Allen Giles, Mari McCauley, Sarah Pradt)--Support the Executive Team in anti-racism programming; organize opportunities for congregation to understand the systemic nature of racism and to engage in transformational racial healing; scan for

best practices of other anti-racism groups regarding education, analysis and congregation engagement.

**Communications** (Drew Danielson, Pauline Eichten)--Communicate team activities to congregation and community and celebrate congregational activities that increase Unity's capacity to be an effective partner in dismantling systemic racism.

### **Team Activities**

The Assessment Group proposed questions for the Congregational Survey asking for feedback on how well Unity Church provides:

- a) Opportunities for racial healing,
- b) Opportunities for working with people of color or communities of color
- c) Activities that demonstrate Unity's commitment to working with people of color and communities of color.

Questions that the ARLT developed grew from the Ends Statements. Questions were asked in such a way that disparities in replies could be assessed based on racial identification. With this being the first year of data collection a baseline has been established to which future measurements can be compared.

Nearly 100% of survey respondents participated in the additional questions related to race. Of those who participated in the survey, 96, or 25%, identified themselves or a member of their family as persons of color ("a non-white household") and 286, or 75%, identified themselves and all family members as white ("a white household").

"Non-white households" *somewhat agreed* with the statement "there are adequate opportunities for racial healing" – they had a mean score of 3.98 on a 6 point agree/disagree scale, where a 4 indicates "somewhat agree." This is a slightly lower score than the 4.27 mean score registered by "white households" when asked whether in the last 12 months they "have grown in understanding of racism and awareness that their racial identity conveys privilege." Both "non-white" and "white" households *somewhat agree* that "they can authentically relate across racial boundaries" (mean scores of 4.26 and 4.27, respectively).

Significant opportunity remains for Unity to provide activities related to race, racism, and communities of color. Both "non-white" and "white" households *neither agree nor disagree* (mean scores of 3.65 and 3.56, respectively – 3.5 is the midpoint of agree/disagree scale) with the statement "in the last 12 months you have been involved in activities that you believe demonstrate Unity's commitment to working with people and communities of color."

Written comments reflected a wide range of opinions about Unity's anti-racism work. Many were grateful for opportunities to grow in their awareness of white privilege and internalized oppression, and expressed appreciation for this growth in consciousness as an institution. Others stated a dislike of the model of anti-racism Unity has adopted, and some were offended to be asked these questions. Some think that Unity's racial makeup is the best reflection of how

anti-racist the church is. Many expressed a need for Unity to be more active and visible in the community on this issue.

In late **October**, the Team participated in a **Restorative Justice Circle** proposed by Rob Eller-Isaacs for the purpose of addressing or presenting an opportunity for healing and correct misunderstandings that may have occurred among Unity congregants.

Unity Church was a sponsor of the 2009 **“Overcoming Racism” Conference** held at William Mitchell College of Law in **November**. Over 300 people attended the conference. Former Board Chair Carol Bauer and ARLT members Pauline Eichten and Allen Giles presented a workshop called “Reshaping Institutional Identity” describing Unity Church’s ongoing journey to become an anti-racist religious institution.

Team members participated from **February through June** in the planning and organization of the **Beyond Our Walls Tour**. This activity was intended as a structured visit to neighborhoods near Unity: Rondo, Summit University, Aurora/St. Anthony, Frogtown and Selby/Dale. The tour presented the opportunity to meet local activists and leaders, tour gardens and other sites, and learn more about other cultures in neighborhoods near Unity Church.

On three successive Wednesdays in **March**, as mentioned above, Dr. Heather Hackman, a faculty member at St Cloud State University, offered a series of programs called **“Navigating the Complex Terrain of Race.”** The ARLT created a forum for those interested in continuing a dialogue on the issues Dr. Hackman raised. The group had several meetings.

On **May 23, 2010**, the team held a **planning summit** intended to lay out a road map for programming for the congregation for the coming year. The hope was to develop a format that could be reproducible in future years. Brainstorming that drove the planning summit included asking the following question:

If Unity Church is to live up to or in to our Ends Statements, what strategies are needed in order for the following to take place?

- deepening congregational understanding
- making a commitment to racial healing
- developing sensitivities to become effective allies of People of Color

The ARLT Charter directs that the size of the team must be up to nine but no fewer than seven members. Sherman Eagles and Segundo Velasquez resigned from the team, leaving the team with only six members. The ARLT is currently **seeking new members**.

## **Part Three: Anti-racist Lens Applied to Activities during the 2009-2010 Church Year**

We reviewed services, projects, and communications, looking for the five themes in the anti-racist lens that ARLT continually develops:

1. Acknowledgement of white privilege as a reality in our world.
2. Support for the “whole self” at Unity Church, referring to the idea that we are all wounded or imperfect. Our hope is that our church community will become one in which people know that they are welcome here as they are, with their woundedness, their anger, and their failures as well as with their talents, strengths and accomplishments.
3. People of color recognized as spiritual leaders and sources of wisdom.
4. Direct references to anti-racism work, and anti-racist action.
5. Unity’s involvement in the community outside of its walls.

### **Worship Services**

Each Sunday the **words of welcome** specifically invite people into our community, especially those who are often left out in religious community. Specific reference to race, and to the gifts and wounds of all, offer welcome each week.

**Readings** came from a wide variety of sources, but many times the background of the author remains unclear. Music came from a variety of cultures, and there was a write-up of each composer in the order of service. This information was more often found in September-January than later in the church year. Some hymns and anthems sung by Unity’s choir and ensembles included themes of racial justice. Texts for some anthems were included in the order of service, and helped to convey the context and meaning of the piece.

**Sermons** reflect our ministers’ and guest ministers’ strong awareness of racial injustice and their conscious efforts to educate, inform, and put into religious context our calling to work for justice and peace. Most sermons include references to our connections to each other and frequently specifically address our spiritual need for anti-racist work.

This past year included the investiture of the **Racial Justice Ministry Team**, occurring during the **November 1st** church service.

Recipients of the **Sunday morning offering** consistently include groups providing services to underserved groups within our community. There was strong emphasis on empowering communities. Ministers regularly drew explicit and strong connections between our spiritual work and our action in our communities and world.

### **Highlights from *CommUNITY*, the church’s newsletter**

Overall there was little use of photography to that would allow people to see examples of “people like me.” No people of color were represented in photos as new members of Unity

Church. The **October** newsletter included pictures of the Rev. Abhi Janamanch, a native of India, who is serving a UU congregation in Clearwater, Florida. The **November and December** issues had a picture of the New Orleans pilgrimage group which illustrated diversity.

Karen Hering wrote essays on the **monthly worship themes** during the past year. “Beloved Community” was referenced on several occasions, without explanation of the phrase. Hering’s essay in the **October** issue, addressing the theme of Sacrifice, referred to a “journey toward justice” and described us all as “immigrants with the need to learn to sacrifice the sure ground of the injustices we know too well and risk uncertain terrain as we travel toward the new land of beloved community.” In the **December** issue, illustrating the theme of Incarnation, Hering wrote, “the holy is incarnate everywhere and in everyone, especially wherever our eyes may have moved on too quickly.” Hering cited Taoist teachings, especially those of Lao Tzu.

In the **February** issue on Love, Hering cited the work of bell hooks; the essay defined love in the context of our natural connection to each other and the requirement to look beneath our differences. Hering posited that love calls us to combat the “lovelessness of oppression in the world.” In her essay on Brokenness in the **March** issue, Hering wrote, “When we come together in religious communities, we all carry brokenness within us — the wounds of personal loss as well as countless hairline fractures caused by oppression’s larger fault lines running beneath our world. Can we bring the brokenness into conversation?” In the **May** issue, illuminating the theme of Hope, Hering observed, “Perhaps we’re working to uproot an oppression established over centuries or seeking a reconciliation that is stubbornly resisted.”

**Worship Theme Resources** came from a variety of genres and cultures. The movies *Stand and Deliver*, *Glory*, *Get on the Bus*, and *Kundun* specifically dealt with racial tensions. Recommended literature that reflects something other than white Eurocentric thinking included authors Malcom X, Martin Luther King, and bell hooks. Titles included *The Autobiography of Malcom X*, *The Strength to Love* by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teaching of Rumi* by William C Chittuck, *General Theory of Love* by Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon, and *Leading Lives that Matter*, edited by Mark R Schwen and Dorothy C. Bass.

At a **February** Wellspring Wednesday, the library team promoted a discussion of the book by Marv Davidov and Carol Masters, *You Can’t Do That: Marv Davidov, Non-Violent Revolutionary*. In the **September** issue on Vocation, the Ministry with Youth and Children promoted the books *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez* by Kathleen Krull, *The Tortilla Factory* by Gary Paulsen, and *Wangari’s Trees of Peace* by Jeanette Winter.

The ministerial team writes the **Just Words** column. The **March** issue written by Rob challenged the congregation to consider how Unity Church-Unitarian should grow. He quoted Dr. Diana Eck: “In a world divided by race and by religion and by ideology, the very presence of [the Unitarian Universalist faith] committed to the oneness of God, the love of God, the love of neighbor and service to humanity is a beacon.” Rob asked, “Are we willing to be changed by what we’ve started?”

A column by a member of the **Board of Trustees** appeared in most issues. In the **November** issue, Barbara Ford reminded us to challenge ourselves in “our own development as seekers of beloved community.” Carol Bauer reflected on her experience at the conference “Overcoming Racism: Why Is It So Hard?” in the **December** issue. She was invigorated by the feeling that Unity animates the idea, “if we can imagine it, we can create it.” Board chair Laura Smidzik wrote in the **January** issue, “A governance board’s primary relationship is with the ‘moral owner’ described in our governing documents as ‘those who yearn for the Beloved community and see Unity Church-Unitarian as an instrument for its realization.’”

The monthly articles by Unity’s Hallman Ministerial Intern, Lissa Gundlach, did not reference privilege or anti-racism issues.

#### **Additional activities promoted in *CommUnity***

The ordination of Jacqueline Duhart, Unity’s former Hallman Ministerial Intern, and a person of color, was promoted in two issues of *CommUnity*.

The newsletter promoted the film *Journey to Freedom*, a documentary by Martha Waitsill Sharp about UUs who left their own children behind and risked their lives to rescue others’ children from the Nazis during WW II.

Unity Church-Unitarian’s Annual Pilgrimage to New Orleans on March 6th was promoted in several issues. The group was pictured in the **November** and **December** issue.

Ken Green reported on his activity as Unity’s representative on the board of the Summit-University Planning Council in the **November** issue. In the article Green described neighborhood concerns related to the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit project.

The “Guest at Your Table” program, which supports the social justice work of the UUSC to provide clean water and disaster aid around the world, as well as to stop genocide and torture, was encouraged. An update on activities specifically addressing work in Haiti was reported in the **April** issue.

In her *Music Notes* column in **November**, Ruth Palmer quotes Alberto Grau, “It is time to show, with more power and strength, that our choral family contributes, through music, to break down the artificial barriers [that are a] product of politics, different ideologies, religious differences, and racial hatred that separate human beings.”

The need for hosts for two visiting members of our **UU Holdeen partners in India**, Vidayak Sansad was solicited in **February**. The March children’s musical, Lulu Pickle: a Circus Tale was promoted in the **February** issue. The play was perhaps obliquely about race: the central character, a girl growing up in a circus community of clowns with painted faces, felt left out because she was not a clown and did not have her face painted. She found self-worth and acceptance.

The ARLT contributed articles in December, March, and May. In **December**, the team reported on the *Overcoming Racism* conference at which the team presented in November. Unity's journey in working to dismantle racism was the main focus of the presentation. In **March** the team discussed the "Navigating the Complex Terrain of Race," a Wellspring Wednesday event, and promoted the White Privilege Conference April 7th-10th in LaCrosse, WI. The team also recommended an article in Minnesota History magazine outlining the operations of the Ku Klux Klan in Minnesota. The next month, in **May**, Sarah Pradt, a member of the ARLT, reported on attending the White Privilege Conference.

Church youth were invited to participate in "A Night on the Street," an April event in which area youth groups raise money and awareness for homelessness.

### **Community Outreach Ministry**

Mano a Mano operates under the guiding premise that "groups of committed individuals can reach across national boundaries to make a real difference in the lives of others." Mano a Mano regularly reported on its activities throughout the year.

Ray Wiedmeyer wrote of his work with the Restorative Justice Ministry Team in the **November** issue of *CommUnity*. He elaborated on a vision of *beloved community* and how we include all as we make mistakes. He describes "beloved community" as a "piece of cloth... the social fabric that connects us all. When harm is done... the social fabric is ripped...we are all affected." Ellen Green discussed her awareness of white privilege with her work with an Ojibwe prison inmate in the **February** issue, and reflected on the richness of sharing a relationship with the woman she came to know. Unity members were invited to participate in the Amicus walk to express support for incarcerated individuals September 19th. Several opportunities to participate at different levels were offered.

The Center for Victims of Torture explained their work in the **November** issue.

The need for tutors at *Barack and Michelle Obama Service Learning Elementary School* was reported in **November**. "Education of our ethnic minority students is the biggest challenge facing our St. Paul Public Schools." "This is an opportunity to help students realize their full potential, thus contributing to the healthy future of our communities and making all our lives a bit richer in the process." Items needed by the school were solicited in **February**.

The work of Project Home and Unity's involvement with Project Home in the month of May was explained in depth in the **April** and **May** issues.

### **Wellspring Wednesday Events**

Other events not previously mentioned are listed here.

- Kirsten Fischer presented "Religion and the U.S. Founding: History as Ammunition in the Culture Wars" in **September**.

- Eleazar Fernandez came in **October** to speak about use of the mind and spirit to “recreate ourselves, anew, freer from constraining prejudice.” Bill McGrath did a presentation on “What I Saw During 28 Days in the West Bank.”
- “Sacred Sounds of Haiti and New Orleans” was the topic of discussion by Unity’s Outreach Ministry to New Orleans in **March**.
- “Transforming Conversation/Transforming Philosophy” was presented by Dr. Joia Lewis Turner in **April**, discussing what it means to be together across lines of difference.

#### **Parish Hall Art**

**October** artist Laurel Gregorian wrote in her artist’s statement: “we need to preserve what little remains of our wilderness and the diversity of all creatures and people.” Emel Sherzad, the **March** artist, was born in Afghanistan and currently lives in St Paul. He describes the main themes of his art as “shattered identity and adaptability.”

#### **This Week At Unity (insert in Order of Worship)**

In addition to the above events, the “Overcoming Racism” conference held at William Mitchell College of Law was promoted in **November**.

The Racial Justice Team invited attendance at Penumbra Theatre’s regional premiere of *Black Pearl Sings* in **March** with a plan to meet for coffee and discussion following the performance.

The Chicago Children’s Choir visited in **May**, staying with host families from Unity, and performed a concert at Unity.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Proposed Activities of the Executive Team Related to Forging an Intentionally Anti-Racist Identity**

The Executive Team's annual work plan is built around the church's End Statements. For the church year 2009–2010, the plan contained proposed activities that align with, or have the potential to advance, the ARLT's mission: to lead the church in developing and living out an intentionally anti-racist identity in all aspects of church life.

Excerpts from **Ends Statements (2009-2013)** and work plan

*Within*

**1. The people of Unity Church – Unitarian have a deeply meaningful, transforming, liberal religious experience which includes:**

**d. Lifelong opportunities for growth, learning, engagement and racial healing;**

- Foster an appreciation of self-awareness as foundational for anti-racism work. **Rob**
- Plan for a Unity-based civil rights pilgrimage in 2011. **Leon**

*Among*

**2. Unity Church – Unitarian is a radically hospitable, spiritually vital and supportive community where:**

**a. People of all ages feel welcome and connected across identities including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, politics and education;**

- Ensure that the tension between the church's specific identity and universal embrace is embedded in the Vision 2020 conversation. **Rob**
- Engage One Ummah (Beth Zemsky) in broad-based training in the inter-cultural competence model to prepare our congregation to be credible partners in positive community change. **Rob**

**c. Shared ministry is actively encouraged and the circles of power, opportunity and access are intentionally widened;**

- Train staff members and key members of their programs to identify and encourage people to move more deeply into leadership and shared ministry. **Barbara**
- Improve and enhance both our internal and external communication technologies, including the website. **Barbara**

*Beyond*

**3. Unity Church – Unitarian is a visible leader and partner, making a positive impact in our neighborhood and in the world through:**

**a. A commitment to anti-racism and racial healing in covenant with people and communities of color;**

- Convene planning team for neighborhood phase of Community Visioning Project (narrative authority). This will hopefully generate engagement amongst neighbors and inform how we can be a leader and partner, and make a positive impact. **Rob**
- Implement an inter-cultural competence model to our anti-racism educational work (to complement the MCARI training.) **Rob**
- Create a film series for the community to deepen conversations on race and citizenship. (Co-sponsored by neighborhood churches on the Summit University corridor). **Leon**

**b. Advocating in the public arena for liberal religious values in response to prejudice, injustice and oppression;**

- Active cooperation with UUA initiative "Standing on the Side of Love." They are hoping to pilot a multi-UU-congregational project here in the Twin Cities that will touch marriage equality, immigration **Janne**
- Evaluate and strengthen the advocacy dimension of the Community Outreach programs. **Rob**

## Appendix B: Community Outreach and Ministry Team feedback to ARLT 2010

In the fall 2010, the ARLT solicited feedback from Unity's Community Outreach and Ministry Teams. The ARLT asked two questions:

- How do you think Unity's stated goal of becoming an anti-racist institution has shaped or affected your work on your Community Outreach Team or workgroup in the last year?
- What support would you like to have from the church and/or the Anti-Racism Leadership Team in this area?

Conversations were held with the Restorative Justice Team, the Affordable Housing team, and Mano-a-Mano. Not all members of each team were present during the discussions, and not all chose to participate in the survey. There were a total of eleven written responses. One response shared that early ARLT work had helped that individual to be more aware of what can and should be done in community outreach work. Other responses indicated that the ARLT either had no impact on their work (6 responses) or that they were unaware of their team's connection to the goal (4).

Two individuals from the Restorative Justice team indicated a desire to have the ARLT assist with getting Unity members more engaged in community events and with people outside of the church. Several responses wanted more information about what ARLT might offer in terms of support for work connected to anti-racism.

Other teams responded in writing in the following ways:

### Library Team

1. *When choosing adult and children's books for Unity Libraries, we keep this goal in mind, and try to select books for adults and kids that support this goal. For example, we just purchased a book that is more expensive than we typically spend on a single purchase, but it is an important work in the area of UU's and anti-racism: "The Arc of the Universe Is Long: Unitarian Universalists, Anti-Racism, and the Journey from Calgary" by Leslie Takahashi-Morris.*

*In the children's library, we started a "Diversity" collection, with children's picture and non-fiction books about all kinds of people, and bought one of the best books on race for children, "Let's Talk About Race" by Julius Lester. In other subject areas, such as "Family" and "Religion" I have been collecting books about all kinds of families and religions from all over the world. Perhaps our goal is broader than anti-racism, in that we want kids to have access to materials about all kinds of diversity in the world.*

*Also, the editorial board of the literary journal has had some interesting discussions around race due to a few of the submissions; while we know the authors are not intending to be racist, we try to be sensitive to anything that could be construed as such or that may be somewhat ambiguous, not just to Unity members but to anyone in the world who has access to purchasing the journal through Amazon.*

2. *In the library, we are always open to book or resource suggestions from teams who are more knowledgeable in the area than we might be. The literary journal has a department called "Community Outreach Stories" and we would welcome some submissions that might highlight or make more personal your work.*

### **Children's Ministries**

1. *In the Religious Education program, we have curricular lessons and activities that address race in developmentally-appropriate ways. There have been no explicit changes to these curricula in the last year. Tower Club chose to focus on homelessness as an issue for part of last year, a problem which has inherently race-related dimensions.*
2. *Racism as a topic becomes most developmentally appropriate at the Junior High age (grades 6, 7 and 8) and older. If the ARLT were to propose, plan and execute education or advocacy events with young people, Junior High or Tower Club (High School) would benefit most from that investment. Even though I have education and training in anti-bias/anti-oppression education, I don't currently have time/space in my workload to create a new curriculum or plan any events. I would cheerfully support the ARLT in any efforts to plan activities that support Unity's commitment to becoming an anti-racist institution.  
If any Civil Rights/ARAO pilgrimages are being planned (I think I've heard discussion), focused recruitment of youth will offer an important learning activity to the next generation of our faith's lay leaders.*

*Kerri A. Meyer, Director of Religious Education*

### **Music Ministries**

1. *Conscious awareness of the anti-racist work has alerted me to offering a wider range of varying ethnic music when possible, hoping that greater exposure always fosters greater understanding. Giving proper credit and historical background is also of more importance.*
2. *I feel comfortable with this and just look forward to your continuing work!*

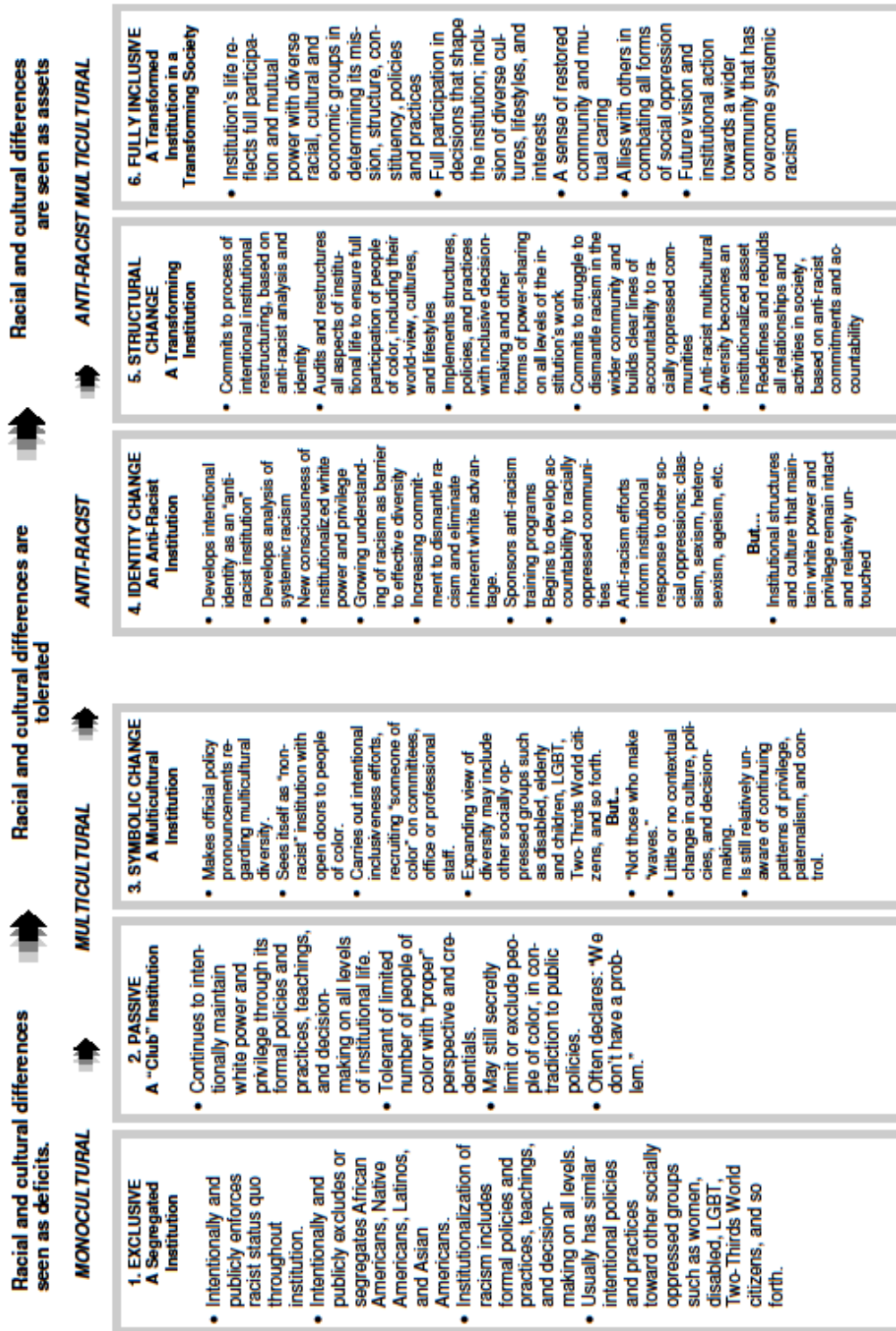
*Ruth Palmer, Director of Music*

**Appendix C: Hiring/Vendor policies**

The ARLT assumes that Unity has anti-discrimination hiring processes in place, and recommends that Unity conduct a vendor audit using the certificate programs already developed at the municipal and county levels.

## Appendix D: Continuum on Becoming an Actively Anti-Racist Institution

# Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution



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## Appendix E: Characteristics of Anti-Racist Institutions

### Transforming Institutional Values: Revisited

Robette Ann Dias, Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training

AS AN EMERGING ANTI-RACIST /ANTI-OPPRESSIVE INSTITUTION, Crossroads has been working to establish and articulate the principled place on which we stand. This process allows us to define emerging anti-racist *Transforming Values* we introduced nearly two years ago.\* It also provides the opportunity to reflect on and identify the 'traditional' white institutional values we all struggle to shed - especially when remembering that the all-too-familiar values were established when institutions were legally mandated to be racially segregated.

<p><b>Either/Or Thinking:</b> Right/wrong, black/white, male/female, etc. Forces out diversity; complies with rigid ways of being. Power consolidated &amp; maintained with select few 'right, good, white, male' against which all else is measured. Creates myth that it is efficient for everyone to be the same.</p>	<p><b>Both/And thinking with a bias toward action:</b> Acknowledges that multiple realities/ myriad ways to 'do' institutional life exist. Purpose: work through differences to find solutions that move toward anti-racist goals. Bias toward action means not allowing conflict to paralyze us into indecision and immobility.</p>
<p><b>Scarcity Worldview:</b> Budgets reflect finite resources &amp; become excuse for limiting activities. Creates environment rife with 'knee-jerk' reaction of "No - we don't have enough money for that." "No" becomes automatic answer to innovation, anti-oppression and liberation. Cannot be mission-focused when default setting is 'No'.</p>	<p><b>Abundant worldview that uses resources responsibly:</b> If we operate from premise of "We have an abundance of power, how do we want to use that power?" then questions about resources begin to shift. What we understand to be resources begins to change, and how we use resources is transformed.</p>
<p><b>Secrecy Mode:</b> Information is power; when it is distributed on a "needs-to-know" basis, power is also unequally distributed. Secrecy controls power; it is almost always destructive - leads to dishonesty and triangulation. Secrecy destroys trust. Confidentiality gets confused with secrecy; "confidential" decisions are often in reality carried out in secret as a way to maintain the power status quo.</p>	<p><b>Transparent communication &amp; decision making that guard personal integrity:</b> Inclusive processes take longer to come to consensus, but once a decision is made, implementation is quicker. Confidentiality (not secrecy) is important to transparent communication, allowing individuals to make mistakes and recover from them without being scapegoated or demonized by the institution.</p>
<p><b>Individual Action:</b> Isolates and sets people up to compete with one another. Compartmentalized activities increase competition, creating a redundancy of activities -- similar functions cannot be combined/shared. When focusing internally on competing for resources, mission and relationships with the world outside the institution are lost. Individual achievement nurtured by white culture undermines ability to work for a larger whole.</p>	<p><b>Cooperation &amp; Collaboration that nurture individual creativity:</b> Maintaining a spirit of cooperation &amp; collaboration bound by a collective perspective/commitment to the analysis of racism allows institutions to stand in the midst of diversity with integrity and respect. Individual creativity happens in the parameters of an accountable, responsible relationship with the rest of the community.</p>

#### *In Summary*

THE POWER ANALYSIS OF RACISM MAKES CLEAR the fundamental dynamic of institutional racism: that institutions are not, and have never been, accountable to People of Color. What is needed are new values that are outward-oriented with an overarching bias toward effectiveness. The need for these values begins to emerge when institutions reach a critical mass of members who are claiming an anti-racist identity and where there is a growing awareness of the need to be accountable to anti-racist People of Color.

*Transforming Values* create an institutional environment that makes accountability to People of Color and other socially oppressed groups possible.