

Report to the UUA Board of Trustees  
Rev. Dr. Tracey Robinson-Harris  
Director for Congregational Services  
September 2004

With enormous appreciation for my staff colleagues engaged in our anti racism, anti oppression work and for our collaboration, what follows is a description of some of the resources – available and forthcoming - for our congregations and their leaders.

**JUUST Change Anti-Oppression Consultancy – a collaborative effort of Identity Based Ministries, Advocacy and Witness and Congregational Services**

Designed to help congregations increase their effectiveness in anti-oppression and social justice work, the consultancy aims to meet congregations where they are, support a developmental process to build leadership, strengthen capacity, and apply anti-oppression knowledge and principles to transform congregations and the communities of which they are a part. We are now accepting applications for consultants able to commit the equivalent of 10 work days consulting with two congregations per year.

The UUA is committed to creative partnerships with our congregations, as we pursue living in Beloved Community. Our mutual task is to transform ourselves as congregations, so that we are vibrant, spirited, anti-oppressive, pluralistic communities. Our faith is best manifested through relationships that allow deep and honest sharing with one another about what matters most to us, including justice and standing strong against oppression. Such relationships involve active listening, the willingness to acknowledge mistakes, fears, or uncertainty, faith in one another's good intentions, and a desire for transformation that is stronger than the desire for safety and comfort.

**Journey Toward Wholeness Path to Anti Racism**

With Bill Gardiner's transition to a ¼ time consulting role with the Association as of October 1, his energy and expertise will be focused on support for existing Transformation Teams in districts and congregations as well as providing resources for teams that are in development.

When this transition began this past July 1, I took on temporary (9-12 months) responsibility for the Journey Toward Wholeness Path to Anti-Racism programs and resources including the Jubilee 1 (aka Jubilee World) and Jubilee 2 programs. I have offered our districts the opportunity to include a Jubilee 1 workshop "sampler" at a district wide meeting during this year in an effort to increase congregational awareness of this resource and create opportunities for Jubilee 1 trainers to meet and dialogue with more of our congregational leaders.

### **“Supporting Successful Ministries” – a collaborative effort of Identity-Based Ministries, Ministry and Professional Leadership, and Congregational Services**

UU congregations historically have seldom been able to create the conditions for success for ministers of color and Latina/o and Hispanic ministers. Of the 27 such ministers now in our ministerial fellowship, just nine have served for three or more years in a single parish; of them, only one is an African American man. The UUA’s Diversity of Ministry Team has noticed, however, that in the past two years twelve such ministers have been called or hired by UU congregations. The Team encouraged the three Staff Groups to analyze the needs of both these newly called ministers and the congregations they are serving, and glean what can be gleaned from these placements in order to inform UUA policies regarding ministerial preparation, search and settlement, and to understand how to guide congregations through a change process that involves what other denominations call “cross-cultural placements.” With four of the new ministries in the Joseph Priestley District, the planning group asked JPD to sponsor a ministers retreat and conference for ministers and lay leaders of the congregations served by these 12 ministers, tentatively scheduled for April 2005.

### **Anti Racism Anti Oppression Consulting with Elected & Appointed Leaders**

Our support for elected and appointed leaders for FY05 includes work with the General Assembly Planning Committee and with the Regional Sub-committees on Candidacy of the MFC. We will also be developing plans for a day long consultation for all newly elected or appointed leaders to be held the day following General Assembly. Consultation and support is available to other groups.

### **Multiracial Multicultural Congregations Leadership Development Resources – a collaborative effort of Identity Based Ministries and Congregational Services**

A retreat was held September 22-23, the result of the participation of staff from All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, DC, Pathways UU Church, and UUA staff and consultants at an Alban Institute workshop focused on intentionally multiracial/multicultural congregations held in October 2003. Our goal is to develop a leadership program for congregations that include multiracial and multicultural diversity in their mission, ministry and growth strategies. The program will reflect the UU community’s commitment to anti-racism/anti-oppression and multiculturalism. The September retreat will assist UUA staff and consultants in designing leadership programs for such congregations and will offer real world experiences from which our congregations and the Association can learn.

### **Anti Racist Multicultural Welcoming Congregation Project – a collaborative effort of Life Span Faith Development, Identity Based Ministries and Congregational Services**

Development of this resource is moving forward. An advisory group of 8 to 10 persons plus the UUA Staff Organizing Team is being assembled. Members will be selected from among those who attended the February consultation and others with skills and expertise in areas such as worship, religious education, curriculum

development, ministry, congregational life, anti-racism and multiculturalism, anti-oppression, racial/ethnic identity and perspectives on race, social action, and intergenerational program development. We also need the participation of persons who identify as white who are members of or working in congregations.

A consultation was held in February 2004 that brought together key stakeholders (Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus, DRUUMM, LREDA, LUUNA, UU Ministers Association, YRUU, and others) to develop a vision, goals and objectives, and ideas for specific tools that would help UU congregations become more welcoming, affirming, and inclusive of persons from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural communities. Our timeline calls for a launch of the curriculum at the Ft. Worth General Assembly followed by field tests in the congregation in Fall 2005 to Spring 2006.

### **The Social Justice Empowerment Program**

This program was designed, developed and managed by Bill Gardiner. As he transitions to ¼ time consulting, the Empowerment Program has a new home with Susan Leslie, Director for Congregational Advocacy and Witness. Plans are in the works for marketing and expanding the resources it offers to our congregations.