

Virtual UU Heritage Trip to Tulsa, OK – Curriculum

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Goal

The overall objective of this virtual heritage trip—intentionally to a destination other than Boston—is to both affirm and challenge the narrative of our faith’s history as we gain a greater understanding of the complexities of our heritage as Unitarian Universalists. We endeavor to better understand who and how we were in the world so that we may better become who and what we want to be. We see this as a critical part of the formation of UUs of all ages, and particularly for young UUs who are currently working toward understanding and developing their own theological grounding in Unitarian Universalism (as part of a Coming of Age class, or otherwise).

Learning Objectives

- Learn about the Tulsa Race Massacre
- Learn about All Souls’ founding, history, and current activities, particularly as part of the Movement for Black Lives
- Broaden knowledge and understanding of UU heritage by taking a virtual trip to Tulsa, Oklahoma, site of the 1921 “Tulsa Race Massacre” and home to the largest UU congregation, All Souls Unitarian Consider questions of accountability and other questions related to heritage by exploring connections between Unitarianism/UUism, the Race Massacre, and the century of civil rights and justice movements since 1921.

Grounding Themes & Relevant Principles

Religious heritage; U.S. politics and history; systemic racism; wealth inequality; historical narratives; reckoning, reparations, reconciliation; power of language; power of media; evil; hatred.

All of the UU Principles are relevant, particularly 1, 2, 4 & 8.

Materials (what YOU, the facilitator, need):

- Internet access and a Zoom account

- A copy of this curriculum: printed, saved as a document to keep open on your desktop, or both
- Access to the Google slide presentation that provides the 30-minute virtual trip; optional: a printed copy of the Google slide presentation (with Speaker Notes)
- A document with the norms or covenant the group has previously created, to help the group review
- Paper to write down notes/follow-up, etc.
- A few sheets of blank paper and something to write in big letters on them. On one of them, write BLACK LIVES MATTER (so that if you hold the paper up to your computer camera, folks on zoom can read what it says).
- A “Link List” and “Things to Put in the Chat” document to keep open on your desktop during the virtual meeting
 - Link List:
 - ✓ The song you’re using for start/breaks
 - ✓ Link to Google slide presentation (“the trip”)
 - Things to Put in the Chat:
 - ✓ Welcome everyone! We’ll get started in a few minutes once more people get here. ‘Til then feel free to just chill or say hi & what’s up here in the comments! Also, if you forgot paper & pen or a coffee-scented item, now’s the time to go get it!
 - ✓ I love all my friends and neighbors who ____
now go touch/grab ____
 - ✓ Grab a snack that reminds you of your heritage – kick it up a notch – then come back here at [insert time]
 - ✓ QUESTIONS:
 - Did you feel uncomfortable at some point tonight? When/why?
 - What surprised you about this story?
 - Does this change how you think about Unitarian Universalism; how?
 - Why is it important that North Americans learn this story? Why do you think so many never learned this story?
 - Why is it important that UUs learn this story?
 - What do you think were some of the root causes of the massacre?
 - Does this story remind you of anything you know about in the current news?

- What does it mean to be accountable to yourself; to other people; to (y)our faith?
 - Does this story make you think about any of our 7/8 Principles? Which ones/why?
 - What, if anything, could UUs do about this now?
- ✓ <https://www.uua.org/action/statements/reparations-1921-tulsa-ok-race-riot>
 - ✓ <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/riot-survivors-receive-payments-tulsa>

Materials (what THEY, the participants, need):

- Internet access and a Zoom account
- Paper to write notes during self-reflection time.
- An item that smells like coffee. This can be a coffee-scented candle, lotion, etc., an actual cup of coffee, or something else that smells like coffee. Also offer participants an unscented option; check with participants or parents to determine sensory sensitivities

Accommodations/inclusivity considerations

Laptops or bigger screens are strongly preferred for viewing, reading, and otherwise following along on Zoom. YouTube/Zoom captioning is not available for the CNN video embedded in the Google slide presentation.

Activities include some actions that may be difficult for those with limited physical abilities or otherwise limited mobility given their setting; be sure to suggest alternative actions and confirm that the actions are options.

To better assist those who may have a hard time following along on a virtual “trip,” Please consider posting all instructions in the chat, and also consider setting “zoom norms” about how best to communicate and share information to include everyone (e.g., one person talking at a time, no typing in chat while youth are sharing or during videos).

If you have a participant with scent sensitivities, you may wish to use an empty mug (or a mug with “your favorite beverage”) in lieu of a coffee-scented item or cup of coffee.

Part 1: Getting Ready to Travel (15 min)

1. Opening song as folx arrive (4 min)
 - a. Play song as you let people in from the waiting room
 - b. Post your own welcome into the chat (or use the one we provided in the “Things to Put in the Chat” list) and explain that we’re all just vibing for a few minutes while we wait for everyone

to arrive. Feel free to wave and still say hi during the song too! Also remind them to get paper/pen and coffee-scented item if they haven't done so already.

2. Welcome/Intro (4 min)

- a. Introduce yourself and any co-facilitators.
- b. Briefly go over any zoom norms you have, etc.
- c. Generally introduce how this trip will otherwise fit into your programming this year, or otherwise catch anyone up who may have missed other introductions on the overall concept.

d. Introduce this trip (you may use your own words).

Okay so today we're gonna be traveling all the way over to Oklahoma [start singing "OKLAHOMA WHERE THE WIND COMES SWEEPING DOWN THE PLAINNN..." then look around and say, anyone? No? Just me, okay], and, besides going to Oklahoma we are going all the way back to 1921. Any Watchmen fans here, the show on HBO that came out a year or so ago? If so, you may actually know a bit about what we're going to be learning about, sometimes known as the Tulsa Race Riot, or rather, the Tulsa Race Massacre, since it came up in the very start of that show. What no one would've seen in Watchmen or probably otherwise heard about though is how the whole thing relates to our own heritage as UUs. Today's topic is a challenging part of our history when we learn about how a famous Unitarian was actually pretty pivotal in starting the whole massacre... yeah, some pretty icky stuff. SO, we're gonna take a li'l virtual trip over there to find out some more info about all of this and then we'll think through what that means for us now!

BUT FIRST we're just gonna play a classic game with a bit of a virtual twist: reverse charades!

3. Inclusive Icebreaker (5 min): All My Friends & Neighbors on Zoom! (based on the in-person game)

- a. Have a volunteer start who says "I love all my friends and neighbors who ____ now go touch/grab ____" (copy this into the chat to help everyone remember)
- b. 1st blank: Things they do, are wearing, like, have, etc.
- c. 2nd blank: They need to go touch something somewhere else in their house (e.g. a sink, or a bottle of ketchup) or bring something back, especially if it relates to the 1st thing (e.g., if the prompt was "who read!" they bring back one of their favorite books).
- d. Alternate having 1st and last person who comes back go next.
- e. Examples:
I LOVE ALL MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS WHO HAVE UU CHALICE JEWELRY, NOW

GO GRAB A CANDLE! Or I LOVE ALL MY FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS WHO LIKE DOGS, GO PET AN ANIMAL OR FAMILY MEMBER!

4. Chalice Lighting (2 min)

a. Chalice challenge (1 min) – Announce (in your own words):

...and NOW it's time for our...wait for it, wait for it... CHALICE CHALLENGGGGEEEE!!!
Alright, y'all have 1 minute to go get 3 parts to form your own chalice: a base, a middle part, and something that lights up in the center (does not have to be a candle!) plus whatever you need to make it light (matches, batteries, charger, etc.) Bonus points if any of the parts are meaningful to you!

Option: For a new-ish group, or a group to whom you or UUism are new-ish, you might provide a chalice yourself and ask for a volunteer to share a brief version of the history of the chalice in UUism (and its connection to resisting fascism), or share your own!

b. Have youth quickly share what they came up with for chalices.

c. Then BEGIN SHARING THE GOOGLE SLIDES and have a volunteer read the chalice words (or have your assigned Fire person!). * Be sure to check off "Share computer sound" when you go to screenshare the slides, as you will be playing videos embedded in the Slides.

Part 2: The Trip (30 min)

Continue going through the Google slide presentation until the end, using Speaker Notes as your facilitation guide. The notes include scripted material and bracketed [] directions.

A printout of the slide presentation, with Speaker Notes, can be a big help. You can also choose Presenter View. You definitely will want to have practiced at least once before "the trip!" For detailed information about how to show a Google slide presentation on Zoom, see this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/g34pCscCdPU>

<Active Break> (5-10 min)

Use one or more (try a combination) of these suggestions:

1. The UU Snack Scramble: Food for your (UU) Soul!

Say, in your own words:

OK y'all so we are going to talk about everything that we just saw and heard SOON but FIRST, it's time for the – can I get a drumroll, please – THE UU SNACK SCRAMBLE! And today's snack theme is Food for your UU Soul! So, many of you may have heard of the term "soul food," which many people think of as a shorthand for all African American

cooking, but it's really the food of the deep south in the United States – what used to be referred to as the cotton belt and the black belt – that has then been transported by African-American migrants to other places in the US during the Great Migration, which was then given its name in the 40s when music and other parts of black culture were described using the word “soul” to relate to their origins in black churches. So it's not so much Southern food as it is what those who migrated away from the South created; just like many dishes in the US or Canada that are “Irish” or “Italian” in origin but not the same here as they are there. It also tends to be sweeter, spicier, and saltier than other “Southern food.” Your challenge is to take some sort of dish that reminds you of your heritage or your home and then – as Emeril would say – kick it up a notch, somehow! Make it a bit spicier or add an unusual sauce or somehow make it more YOU or more UU! When we come back we'll share what we got and how it fits the theme.

AND/OR

2. Social Justice Stretch

- a. Reach DOWN to get POWER from the GRASSROOTS
- b. Reach UP to get INSPIRATION from the ANCESTORS
- c. SWAY in the winds of CHANGE
- d. STOMP OUT INJUSTICE!

Repeat at least 3 times, faster each time, at very end, stomp injustice out 3x!

AND/OR

3. Bio/Vibe Break

Play some chill music. You can also play music after a stretch, or while they're getting their snacks.

Part 3: The Ride Home (35 min)

1. Reflection (self-small-big)

a. Self (5 min): Have them write down answers to any and all of the following (or pick your favorites, or relate to something that you've already studied as a group recently in COA or otherwise. Depending on size of group, you could also assign different questions to different youth.)

1. Did you feel uncomfortable at some point during the trip? When/why?
2. What surprised you about this story?

3. Does this change how you think about Unitarian Universalism; how?
4. Why is it important that Americans/North Americans learn this story? Why do you think so many have not learned this story?
5. Why is it important that UUs learn this story?
6. What do you think were some of the root causes of the massacre?
7. Does this story remind you of anything you know about in the current news?
8. What does it mean to be accountable to yourself; to other people; to (y)our faith?
9. Does this story make you think about any of our 7/8 Principles? Which ones/why?
10. What, if anything, could UUs do about this now?

b. Small group (10 min): Pick two of the questions and have them share their answers to those two questions (or whatever they wrote about) with just their peers, in breakout rooms of 3-4 people (or turn off facilitator screen and have them chat amongst themselves if they're a small group). Do not have youth by themselves with anyone and do not add other adults to breakout rooms at all.

c. Big group (5 min): bring the group back from the breakout rooms and ask them if they have anything that they found particularly interesting; find connections amongst conversations; develop a list of remaining questions about UUism or about this story in particular.

2. Action (10 min)

- a. What has the UUA done?
 - Share (in your own words):
One of the things about UUs is that we have this big conference every year called General Assembly, or, GA, where we get business done for the overall Association and our faith movement. There are various resolutions passed related to Unitarian Universalism and often they are related to our stance on an issue. Many of these take all year for committees to hone down the language and stuff, but one of the neat parts of this is that there is space for folx to introduce "actions of immediate witness" at the GA to make statements on more recent events, so like for example, at the 2020 GA they passed an Action of Immediate Witness to end anti-Blackness and defund the police. In 2001, one of these AIWs was put forth and approved by delegates that endorsed the recommendations of the Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, this special committee that Oklahoma itself only had finally agreed to set up in 1999 and FINALLY look at this part of their history and address it, 78 years later, when most of the survivors were of course, dead.

- Say, “Here’s the findings of the report, as included in the AIW, so at the top there you can see some of the language that they use when they frame AIWs.” Screenshare the AIW link and have youth read, then say “popcorn _____[name]” to the next reader: <https://www.uua.org/action/statements/reparations-1921-tulsa-ok-race-riot>
 - Run through the article on reparations with the group.
 - Screen share then have youth read the first two paragraphs of this article: <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/riot-survivors-receive-payments-tulsa>
 - Ask for quick responses; does this seem fair/just?
- b. What can we do?
- Group brainstorm about this.
 - Move the group toward a commitment to action. Say (in your own word): Possibilities are endless but could include bearing witness, honoring the survivors by learning more about the story and raising awareness about it to others, finding simple ways to be more intentional about pushing back on systemic racism/wealth inequality (for ex. supporting local black businesses).
3. Taking it Further & Bringing It Home (1 min)
- a. Share out a plan (day, time, and agenda) for the group’s next moves toward action and/or any further discussion the youth have expressed interest in. This can include extension activities you have already chosen to do (See Virtual UU Heritage Trip to Tulsa, OK – Extensions).
- b. Provide resources for participants/families to explore topics
4. Closing Ritual (4 min)
- a. Explain that we would like to create a special closing ritual for our time together on these “trips” that both acknowledges that we are discovering and talking about some pretty heavy things, but also recognizes that we want to leave here with hope and happiness, perhaps even laughter, recognizing that our heritage is a part of who we are, and it also does not define us, and we can each be a part of the change we seek in the world as young UUs.
- b. Form two or three breakout rooms giving 2 minutes for groups to come up with an element of a closing ritual. Examples could range from serious to silly: taking several deep breaths together while doing a specific motion with our hands; singing happy birthday to whatever pets we can get onto the screen; everyone sharing a gratitude or one thing they learned from the virtual trip, in the chat. Say, “Then we’re going to combine them or choose our favorites and that will be how we close these sessions from now on!”

Send the groups to breakout rooms, then reconvene, and do the closing they have designed.

In-Person Adaptations

Part 1 (Getting Ready to Travel)

1. Play opening songs as participants gather in your space.
2. Do your own welcome and share any norms they need to know for the space they're in (for example how to use bathroom; to stay 6 feet apart, etc.)
3. Instead of playing reverse charades, play regular charades with your group. And, still plant "BLACK LIVES MATTER" for the final round.
4. Use your own group's chalice. Set up Google Slides on a projector and have a volunteer read the words from the first slide while a different volunteer lights the chalice.

Part 2 (The Trip)

1. You may wish to somehow have them set up or otherwise decorate the space so it feels like they are in a time machine (this can include things around them and also noises). Show the google slides and videos using a projector. If no one in the group has sensory sensitivities that preclude it, have your own way of making it smell and/or taste like coffee in the space during those sensory moments (for ex. Lighting a coffee-scented candle, passing out mocha-flavored treats, etc.)
2. Have participants stretch their bodies out and move to a different spot before they watch the video together. Provide paper/pens for them to write things down during the trip.

Active Break: Lead the Social Justice Stretch in-person. Have a process for serving and eating snacks safely. If possible, have these snacks relate somehow to your local/regional heritage.

Part 3 (The Ride Home)

1. Reflection: Provide paper and pens for self-reflection. Have them count off and form small groups instead of breakout rooms. Then bring them back into a socially distant circle for big group convos.
2. Action: Have copies of the 2 UUA articles printed out for each participant.
3. Taking it Further: Have copies of the links for further research, or have a document ready to email to each participant after the meeting. Include some follow-up questions for your group or any information about extension activities or other follow-ups that you plan to do.
4. Closing: Have the group spontaneously come up with its own closing ritual with at least two elements. Explain: "We would like to create a special closing ritual for our time together on these 'trips' that acknowledges that we are discovering and talking about some pretty heavy things, yet also recognizes that we want to leave here with hope and happiness, perhaps even laughter, recognizing that our heritage is a part of who we are, yet it does not define us. We can each be a part of the change we seek in the world as young UUs." Tell them that elements of the closing can range from very silly to very serious (ideally a combination from both ends of that spectrum!)

Multi-platform Adaptations (for a group with both in-person and virtual participants)

Part 1 (Getting Ready to Travel)

1. Play opening songs as participants arrive online and gather in your space.
2. Do your own welcome and share any norms they need to know for both spaces that they're in (for example zoom norms; how to interact with each other in different space; how to use bathroom; to stay 6 feet apart, etc.) Encourage virtual participants to have their own snacks available.
3. Instead of playing reverse charades, play regular charades with your group. Have options messaged to you and also written down on paper in-person. Have volunteers in-person who can be seen on camera act it out, or use Fullscreen to have volunteers online act them out. And, still plant "BLACK LIVES MATTER" for the final round.
4. Use your own group's chalice in-person AND get your teens online to do the "chalice challenge." Set up Google Slides on a projector and have a volunteer in-person read the words from the first slide while a different volunteer lights the chalice.

Part 2 (The Trip)

1. Have in-person participants stand up and move to a different spot before they watch the video together. Provide paper/pens for them to write things down during the trip and remind virtual participants to have their own. You may wish to somehow have the in-person space set up or otherwise decorated so it feels like they are in a time machine. Show the google slides and videos using a projector to your in-person participants that are simultaneously cast to your virtual participants. Have your own way of making it smell and/or taste like coffee in the space during those sensory moments, with virtual participants having and using their own.

Active Break: Lead the Social Justice Stretch so that participants can follow along both online and in-person. Have a process for serving and eating snacks safely in-person while virtual participants are encouraged to go get their own. If possible, have these snacks relate somehow to your local/regional heritage.

Part 3 (The Ride Home)

1. Reflection: Provide paper and pens for self-reflection for in-person youth. Have them count-off and form small groups. Have virtual participants stay as one group or go off in breakout rooms depending on total number. Have them all come back together for the group reflection, if that is possible based on your setup.
2. Action: have copies of the 2 UUA articles for each in-person participant. Screenshare for virtual participants.

3. Taking it Further: Have prepared printouts (or plan to email the document) with the links for further research, and include some follow-up questions for your group/their families as well as information about extension activities or other follow-ups that you've already planned. Copy this same information into chat for virtual participants.
4. Closing: Invite the group to on-the-spot come up with its own closing ritual with at least 2 elements. Have virtual participants come up with one element together that they can provide (for example bringing their pets to the screen then having everyone sing Happy Birthday to their pets) and have in-person folx come up with their own too (that everyone can do, including those virtually, for example, taking deep breaths all together).

Explain that we would like to create a special closing ritual for our time together on these "trips" that both acknowledges that we are discovering and talking about some pretty heavy things, but also recognizes that we want to leave here with hope and happiness, perhaps even laughter, recognizing that our heritage is a part of who we are, and it also does not define us, and we can each be a part of the change we seek in the world as young UUs. Examples can range from very silly to very serious (ideally a combination from both ends of that spectrum!)