

Mosaic Makers: Leading Vital Multicultural Congregations

What Is Mosaic Makers: Leading Vital Multicultural Congregations?

Mosaic Makers is a leadership development initiative designed to equip UU leaders to minister effectively in a multicultural world, from welcome to worship, membership to leadership, spirituality to social justice. Mosaic Makers is a program of the Multicultural Leadership Institute.

Mosaic focuses on four areas of ministry:

1. Worship – worship that exhibits commitment to excellence, professionalism, authenticity, cultural integrity, and intergenerational inclusion
2. Congregational Culture – welcome, culturally inclusive hospitality, intergenerational community, clear paths of belonging, and deep engagement
3. Leadership – diverse, inclusive, cross-cultural, intergenerational, and ongoing learning
4. Justice Ministry – relational, spiritually grounded, contextual, embracing of larger community, and praxis-reflection-praxis centered

Who Is Mosaic Makers For?

Mosaic Makers is designed for congregations *intentionally* on the journey toward building multicultural community. It is for leaders – professional and lay -- whose congregations have made the explicit commitment to building multicultural ministries and communities rooted in social justice. Note that multicultural ministries is not about “browning the pews;” it’s about ministering in the context of a larger multicultural community – class, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation/identity, gender and gender expression, ability, and the intersections of these (social) identities.

Multicultural Ministry is not a solo act. This is not a job that the staff or volunteers can do apart from each other. Multicultural Ministry is shared ministry/team leadership. Commitment is needed from staff and lay leaders.

Leadership Team – Religious Professionals and Lay Leaders

Ministers (Parish and Community)
Religious Educators
Governance Teams
Office Administrators
Volunteers
Music and Worship Directors
Committee Leaders
ARAOMC Leaders
And more...

Background – Mosaic Makers emerged from a Multicultural Growth Consultation in 2011 involving 8 UU congregations committed to intentional multicultural ministries in dialogue with each other. Ministers of those congregations participated in a two-day meeting where they identified the guiding principles that have shaped the evolution of Mosaic Makers: including experiential learning, relationship with leaders on the same path, sustained engagement, and shared leadership – professional and lay. In addition, they identified four “pillars” essential to starting, living into, and sustaining multicultural ministries and communities: Worship, Leadership, Congregational Life (now called Congregational Culture), and Justice Ministries.

The first Mosaic Makers Conference was held in partnership with All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, DC in 2012 and involved 12 congregations invited because of their participation in the UUA’s Diversity of Ministry Initiative and UU congregations with demonstrated commitment to building multicultural commitment to building multicultural ministry and communities.

The second Mosaic Makers Conference was held in partnership with All Souls UU Church/Tulsa, OK and attracted 120 UU leaders from 16 congregations.

Here's the programmatic lay of the land. In addition to stellar presenters, staff members of the host congregation and of MGW took on the role of faculty as teachers and mentors. The chaplain tended to the spiritual needs of the community and led a team of dedicated and caring volunteers.

Then, after the full weekend, ministers gathered for a day to continue reflecting, sharing, and learning.

Presenters and faculty include:

Rev. Dr. Rob Hardies and Rev. Dr. Susan Moore, All Souls Church Unitarian, DC
Rev. Dr. Marlin Lavanhar and Rev. Tamara Lebak, All Souls Unitarian Church, Tulsa
Rev. Gerald L Davis and Ms. Vanessa Adams-Harris, Church of the Restoration UU, Tulsa
Rev. Liz Lerner Maclay and Rev. Dr. Leon Dunkley, UU Church of Silver Spring, MD
Rev. Fred Small and Rev. Dr. Lilia Cuervo, First Parish Cambridge, MA
Rev. Dr. Eric Law, Executive Director, Kaleidoscope Institute
Macky Alston, Senior Director of Auburn Media and Communications
Dr. Mark A. Hicks, Angus McLean Professor of Religious Education, Meadville Lombard Theological School
Rev. Gordon R. Dragt, Minister Emeritus, Middle Collegiate Church, NY and author of "One Foot Planted in the Center, the Other Dangling Over the Edge"
Rev. Dr. Miguel A. De La Torre, Professor of Social Ethics and Latino/a Studies, Iliff School of Religion
Evan Christopher, clarinetist and composer based in New Orleans

Future of Mosaic Makers

Exciting news! In the next three years Mosaic Makers will expand to engage more UU congregations and leaders through General Assembly, regional gatherings, and interfaith partnership, specifically with the Leading Edge Multiracial Multicultural leadership conference sponsored by Middle Church in New York's East Village.

Quotes from Past Participants

Participants were encouraged to imagine what Beloved Community might look like and what their respective congregational or ministerial settings might reflect.

Often, we think of our ministries around diversity in isolation, only seeing our congregation and our own ideas, without sharing and learning from each other.

The conference provided a space to share freely and honestly as well as to push each other and allow ourselves to be pushed to do more, recognizing that social justice work must be done in partnership and with accountability to stakeholders.

We entered as different pieces of a whole. We left with one heart, and a shared mission. We left united. We became the mosaic.

Direct experience in multicultural community is essential to motivating and supporting multicultural leadership development.

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Mosaic Makers is a leadership development initiative of the Multicultural Leadership Institute established by Janice Marie Johnson, D. Div., Multicultural Ministries and Leadership Director.