A COMPANION GUIDE FOR

The Selma Awakening:

How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism

INTRODUCTION

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is unequivocally committed to being an antiracist, anti-oppression, multicultural organization, and has been making statements to this effect since 1942. Nevertheless, only modest headway has been made in fulfilling this aspiration. This is not for lack of effort; rather, it reflects the difficulty of the undertaking. To continue on, and perhaps even accelerate, our "Journey Toward Wholeness," we must know our history, because, as George Santayana wrote, "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

Good intentions have not led the UUA to success. However, as we move forward, self-knowledge may indicate which directions have been fruitful and which have not. If Unitarian Universalism is to attract more people of color, Unitarian Universalists in our congregations, as actors in the world, must develop the capacity to be self-critical. We will also have to proclaim to the world that we take our commitment to diversity seriously and yearn for the transformation that it will bring.

Euro-Americans need a supportive, non-blaming environment in which to see, explore, and come to terms with how they, too, are wounded by racism; how they unconsciously perpetuate a congregational culture that is less than welcoming to people of color; and how they might work constructively with the anxiety that emerges when they are faced with change. This program seeks to create such an environment by examining one of our movement's achievements: its involvement in the civil rights campaign in Selma during 1965.

GOALS

- Become familiar with the story of Unitarian Universalist involvement in Selma, Alabama, in spring 1965.
- Explore how UU congregations, including your own, responded to the civil rights movement in general and to the events in Selma in particular.
- Nurture the capacity to be self-critical by comparing your congregation's past engagement with civil rights to its present engagement with multiculturalism and anti-racism, in order to envision what your next steps regarding these might be.
- Clarify and integrate your personal response to the issue of race as it affects your congregation.
- Develop skills in doing local historical research (both documentary and oral history) as a method of understanding your congregation's current culture, remembering that the present always reflects the past.
- Contribute to the study of the civil rights era within Unitarian Universalism by sending documents pertaining to your congregation to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.
- Make and articulate a commitment to diversity.

SIZE

A group of eight to twelve participants is ideal for this program. If there are fewer than eight, the assignments will become burdensome; if there are more than twelve, there may not be enough time for each member to share and fully participate. If the program is oversubscribed, offer it

again next term.

LENGTH OF SESSIONS

Each session is structured to run between ninety minutes and two hours. The times noted are approximations, and the time actually needed will reflect, among other factors, the group's size and whether you build in a break**.**

PROGRAM LENGTH

The basic program runs for five weeks but can be expanded by adding the supplemental sessions. Shortening the program or turning it into a weekend workshop is not advised. The assignments are central to the program and they take time to complete.

TARGET AGE

This program is designed for senior high school students to adults.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Selma Awakening is a history of Unitarian Universalism's civil rights activism in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Selma represented a turning point for Unitarian Universalists. In answering Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call to action, the denomination—including over 25 percent of its clergy—shifted from passing earnest resolutions about racial justice to putting lives on the line for the cause.

The book traces the long history of race relations among the Unitarians and the Universalists leading up to 1965. In exploring events and practices of the late nineteenth century

and the first half of the twentieth century, it reveals the disparity between these two denominations' espoused values regarding race and their values in practice. Yet in 1965, UU activism in Selma—involving hundreds of ministers and the violent deaths of Rev. James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo—put Unitarian Universalism in authentic relationship with its proclaimed beliefs.

The Selma Awakening not only provides a new way of understanding Unitarian Universalism's historic engagement with race, it offers a welcome opportunity to think deeply about the legacy of this engagement in our congregations and denomination today.

This program often references the book but, except for the leaders, reading the book is not required for participation. Nevertheless, doing so will significantly deepen the participants' understanding and should be strongly encouraged.

ABOUT THE COMPANION GUIDE AND PROGRAM

This companion guide is made up of five sessions that roughly follow the organization of the book. The program can be expanded by including one or both of two supplemental sessions. It is suggested that sessions be held weekly or biweekly because of the research assignments required for two of them (see below). This is a process of *engaged* learning, and thus it requires more time of participants—and is more emotionally challenging—than the usual workshop series. Participants should not expect to show up and have information poured into them, or that the program will be solely self-referential, requiring them to consult only their own experiences and opinions. The research that participants will be asked to do is critical to the program, and it is important that every member of the group accept an assignment. At the conclusion of a successful workshop, all participants will feel they have contributed and will have been seen by

others as fully engaged. If someone cannot or does not wish to fully participate, the leaders should invite that person to register at another time, when they are able to do so.

Because of the amount of work required of participants and leaders, and the particular challenges of facilitating this program, it is recommended that there be co-leaders. The registration process should include a conversation with one of the leaders. Leaders should distribute as many of the major assignments as possible at the time of registration. In any case, the assignments for Session III should be distributed before the class begins and those for Session IV no later than the end of Session I. Leaders should regularly send follow-up emails reminding participants of their assignments, with details, the due date, and an offer to consult.

In order to create an atmosphere in which feelings can safely be explored, this program relies at times on a covenant agreed to by leaders and participants. A session will often begin with a simple question about how the participants feel about the material before moving into a discussion. Some initial questions are meant to elicit short answers that prevent participants from quickly distancing themselves from their emotions and objectifying the experience, rather than learning from sometimes difficult feelings.

Special attention should be given to the thoughtful inclusion of people of color. While racism wounds all Americans, the ways people of color encounter racism are obviously different from how Euro-Americans experience it. Nurturing a safe environment for people who have been marginalized will require something which may seem contrary to Unitarian Universalist culture. What they volunteer about their experience *must not* be questioned. Rather than challenge the reality they have experienced, seek to listen even more deeply. If they are willing, explore it further, using questions like “How did you feel?” “What was that like?” “What do you do when that happens?” The questions need to be open-ended and to convey inquisitiveness and

compassion. If the group has built enough trust, and it seems appropriate, a leader may ask, "What is it that Euro-Americans have experienced that leads them to react with incredulity? Can we identify how the two groups' experiences differ?"

Much of the learning at Selma came through powerful emotions, shared hardship, and new relationships. The aim, in a very small way, of some of these exercises is to make room for feelings and what they can teach. Singing, a powerful form of emotional expression, was the lifeblood of the civil rights movement. If leaders are comfortable doing so, they should lead singing often; if not, identify someone in the group who is comfortable (perhaps a member of the choir) and ask that person to lead singing where it is built into the program—and, as the spirit moves, even where it is not. The potential for learning increases when people are invited to step outside their comfort zones.

The size of the group will determine how long each person can speak. Procure one-, two-, and three-minute timers or use the timer on a smartphone. When a person's time is up the participant hands the timer on to the next person. Chalice lighting words, a reading or recording, questions, silence, or individual reflection will often precede a broader discussion of thematic questions. Before the closing words are said, each person will be encouraged to say something they learned in the session.

EXPECTATIONS OF LEADERS

- Fully acquaint yourself with the curriculum.
- When possible, speak individually with participants as they register for the program, in order to outline the goals and expectations.
- Communicate assignments to the participants as far in advance as possible.

- Regularly send follow-up emails about assignments to participants, with details, due dates, and an offer to consult.
- Work to create and hold the gathering as a safe learning environment for everyone.
- Note when you feel an inner resistance to an exercise, then do it anyway. *Do not* drop an element because it involves movement, emotion, or singing. Taking risks and stepping outside one's comfort zone were crucial to the work done in Selma.
- Send copies of the documents and other historical material collected by participants to Meadville Lombard Theological School, 610 South Michigan Ave., Chicago IL 60605, Attn: Selma Collection.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

- Commit to attending every session.
- Abide by the class covenant.
- Take on a research assignment and present it to the class.
- Fully participate in class activities.

PARTICIPANT ASSIGNMENTS

The importance of completing these assignments should be discussed with potential participants as a part of the registration process. The assignments for Session III should be given before the program begins; the Session IV assignments should be distributed at the end of the first session. Each of these seven assignments, including additional details, can be found formatted as a handout in Appendix II.

Session III Assignments

1. Read records of your congregation's activities between February and September 1965. Look at newsletters, sermons, minutes of board meetings, and reports from the board, the social action committee, and the minister. What appeared and what was said? Summarize anything to do with Selma or the civil rights movement, and identify a few pertinent passages to share with the class. (If you find no relevant materials or there is no mention of Selma, this is also an important historical fact.)
2. If your congregation has a printed or published history, consult it as well. If there is a church historian or archivist, ask that person about other relevant materials.
3. Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your presentation. Also, make copies of all the materials you find, with careful notes on their sources, so that they can be sent to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.
4. Check the Skinner House companion resources website where this curriculum is located: www.uua.org/companionresources. In spring 1965, the UUA Commission on Religion and Race sent a questionnaire to all Unitarian Universalist congregations inquiring about their response to Selma. If your congregation responded to the questionnaire, a summary of its response can be found under "Congregational Responses to Selma."
5. Check the index of *The Selma Awakening* to see if the congregation or its minister (in 1965) is mentioned. Also look for mentions of your congregation or its minister in local newspapers during the month of March 1965.
6. Prepare a five-minute presentation on the congregation's or the minister's activities. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your

presentation. Also, make copies of all the materials you find, with careful notes on their sources, so that they can be sent to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

7. Interview congregation members of long standing, particularly any who may have gone to Selma. Interviews can be done in person, by phone, or over the Internet. Ask what they remember about how Selma affected them and how the congregation responded. Also ask about how others in the area responded to Selma and to the actions of the congregation.
8. Tell them you will be summarizing the interview for the class you are taking and ask if they would like a copy of the summary. Also ask if you can record the interview for the congregation's record and for the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.
9. Prepare a five-minute summary of the interview. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your presentation.

This assignment can be done by more than one person. If one or more program participants participated in the civil rights movement themselves, do the interview in class and allot it additional time.

Note: If your congregation did not exist in 1965, look at local newspapers from that time and talk to individual members or community leaders who were around during those years. If your congregation is a spin-off from another congregation that existed in 1965, speak to its archivist and minister.

Session IV Assignments

10. First, investigate the racial, ethnic, cultural, and class makeup of your congregation. Unitarian Universalist congregations often do not track how diverse they are and in what way, or how this diversity may have changed over time. Also investigate the racial, ethnic, cultural, and class makeup of your board, ministry, and staff, and how these have changed over time. Ask the congregational administrator, religious educators, minister, church historian, and longtime members for their impressions. The people who will be most finely attuned to this are people of color themselves. Write down what you are told and then estimate the amount and type of diversity.

    Some people may say, "I don't know, because it doesn't matter." This is a sign of unaware racism. It may mean the person is uncomfortable talking about race and ethnicity and therefore finds it easier to pretend that these issues do not make a difference. But the situation people of color find themselves in because of their race or ethnicity does affect them. Do not argue; simply tell the person about the class. When you report your findings to the group, describe the conversation.

    Second, investigate the racial, ethnic, geographic, historical, and economic characteristics of the neighborhood your congregation is located in. Determine its name, its typical or majority population, and whether most members of the congregation live in it or come from elsewhere (and if so, from where).

    It is important to know whether your town was a "sundown town." There were tens of thousands of such communities outside the South. If there are few people of color in your neighborhood and congregation, such a history may help explain why. See "Was

Your Town a Sundown Town?" by James Loewen: www.uuworld.org/life/articles/90579.shtml.

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your presentation.

11. Research the racial and ethnic makeup of the congregation's religious education program. Speak with the congregation's religious educator. Ask what curricula and programs are used, for children and adults, that expose the congregation to multiculturalism and promote antiracism; what successes and struggles the religious education program has in regard to diversity; how racially and ethnically diverse the program is; and whether it is more diverse than the congregation as a whole. (If the answer is yes, ask why.)

    Talk to a parent of color or one who has adopted cross-racially or cross-ethnically. Tell them about the class you are taking and that it involves comparing the current situation with the past. What is their impression of the religious education program's makeup and content?

    Walk through classrooms and look at how pictures, books, and other materials speak to or support multiculturalism. Look at who the teachers, volunteers, and other role models are.

    Prepare a five-minute presentation about your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

12. Investigate how your congregation addresses multiculturalism, inclusivity, and antiracism in the context of worship. Find out what hymnals your congregation has (e.g., *Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey*, *Las voces del camino*, others) and which of them are commonly used. Compare *Singing the Living Tradition* with *Singing the Journey* and

note the differences.

Research the past six months to two years' worth of orders of service to see which hymns are actually sung, which are sung most often, and whether they reflect diversity. Do the same for the sermon topics, music other than hymns, guest speakers, and readings.

Describe your congregation's worship style. Does the music tend toward classical, folk, contemporary, or rock genres? Are the sermons and reflections contemplative, intellectual, liturgical, or lively? Is the emotional tone of gatherings friendly or cool?

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

13. Research what social responsibility projects and alliances the congregation has been engaged in during the past five years that address issues relating to multiculturalism, inclusivity, and discrimination.

    Talk to the chair of the social action committee and the minister, and ask about their experience of the congregation's interest in, or resistance to, these issues. If the congregation has a historian or archivist, ask that person about the ways in which the congregation has been engaged in social action over the years, and whether any of these have been particularly contentious. Also check the back issues of the church's annual report.

    Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback regarding both this program's strengths and places where it could be

fruitfully modified. Additional questions and readings will also be gratefully received. Please send to Mark Morrison-Reed: markmr4@excite.com.

Session I—What We Say We Believe

Approximately 105 minutes

Preparation

- If your congregation regularly uses a particular unison affirmation, have a copy available.
- If your congregation has developed a mission statement, have a copy available as well.
- Check your congregational bylaws for any passage regarding diversity, discrimination, or inclusivity, and have a copy of these passages available.
- Gather together any other statements or resolutions the congregation has made about diversity, discrimination, or inclusivity. Have copies available.
- Have copies available of the General Assembly resolutions from 1942, 1966, 1997, and 2013. (See Appendix IV.)
- Review the recent UUA General Assembly Resolutions regarding inclusivity, diversity, and discrimination. (See Appendix V.)
- Review the first chapter of *The Selma Awakening,* "What Unitarian Universalists Said," pp. 1–22, and also pp. 196–99.
- Review assignment details outlined in the program introduction.
- Three days before the class begins, email program participants to remind them of the day, time, and location.
- Have name tags available with a variety of colored markers. As participants arrive, instruct them to artfully write their first names.
- Have copies of the sample covenant available for the participants to discuss. (See Appendix III. The commitments are numbered to make them easier to identify and

discuss.)

- Have ready a chalice, matches, markers, and timers.
- Post a blank piece of newsprint on the wall, or set up a flip chart.

Chalice Lighting Words

"River Call"

Between rocking the boat

and sitting down;

between stirring things up,

and peaceably going along,

We find ourselves

here,

in community.

Each called

from many different

journeys,

many different

life paths,

onto this river road.

Some are here
because the rocking of
the boat
has been too much:
too much tumult,
too much uncertainty,
too much pain.

Some are here with questions
about where the boat is going;
how best to steer it;
where this journey ends.

Others are here
as lovers of the journey,
lovers of life itself.

Here in front
beside
behind

each a passenger;
each a captain;

doing the best we can.

"Rest here, in your boat,

with me," the river calls;

"Listen to how I flow,

the sound of life coursing all around you."

Let the current

hold you,

let the current

guide you;

the river that gently flows

through your soul,

whispers:

"Come, let us [gather]."

—Manish K. Mishra-Marzetti

Introduction (*10 minutes*)

- Introduce yourself as leader of the group.
- Go around the circle and ask participants to say their name while pointing at their name tag and giving a one-word description of themselves.
- Go around a second time and ask each to offer one sentence about why they came.

- Outline the program: time, date, format, intent, and the list of research tasks participants will be asked to take on. Hand out Appendix I. Ask for, and answer, any questions.
- Ask if there are questions participants want to see addressed during this program. Write down on the newsprint any that are offered and save them to consult in Session IV.

Covenant (*10 minutes*)

- Introduce the idea of a group covenant. Explain that this program encourages open, heartfelt sharing of stories, experiences, and questions, and that the purpose of the covenant is to guide being in relationship in a way that allows participants to be vulnerable without being hurt.
- Hand out the sample covenant and ask participants to review it.
- Ask for questions about the covenant and discuss them. You may need to explain what cross talk is and why it impedes deep, appreciative listening.
- If a change to the covenant is clearly desired, write it down and suggest that the group live with the covenant in its current form for the first session, and that the leaders will rework it during the week. Do not let the session be hijacked by this discussion.
- Ask participants to recite the covenant in unison.

Sample Covenant

We, the members of this class, make the following covenant with one another:

1. We will take responsibility for our own spiritual development and respect the spiritual journeys of others;
2. We will speak from our own experience and not engage in cross talk;

3. We will listen deeply to one another and share time to allow space for everyone who wants to speak;
4. We will honor what is shared here and hold each other's stories with care and respect;
5. We will treat one another with respect, caring, and acceptance, without judgment or the need to advise or fix other participants;
6. We will honor each other's boundaries and our own;
7. We will commit to addressing and resolving conflicts in a respectful way;
8. We will commit to attending the full program, except for extraordinary circumstances, and to fully participating;
9. We will carry through with the commitments we make to this class and will ask for help when it is needed; and
10. We will hold one another and ourselves to the promises made in this covenant.

—Michelle Collins, First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, Delaware, adapted

Exploration

Part I—Values Espoused by the UUA (*35 minutes*)

Within Unitarian Universalism the events that took place in Selma, Alabama, in 1965 are significant because they provided an unprecedented opportunity for Unitarian Universalists to bring their behavior in line with the values the denomination had been proclaiming; that is to say, at that moment the denomination came closer to practicing the values it had been espousing for decades. It is striking that, despite their good intentions, Unitarian Universalists found it difficult to put these values into practice, especially in their own congregations. This exercise focuses on

what Unitarian Universalists *said* in order to use it as a counterpoint to the later exploration of what they *did.* It does so by looking at resolutions from four eras.

- Hand out the 1942 "Resolution on Race Relations," the 1966 "Consensus on Racial Justice," the 1997 resolution "Toward an Antiracist Unitarian Universalist Association," and the 2013 responsive resolution "Deepen Our Commitment to an Anti-oppressive, Multicultural Unitarian Universalist Association."
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the 1942 resolution and another to read the 1966 statement. Compare the two. Briefly note the context in which each was written (one during World War II, the other during the civil rights era). Ask participants: What do you see as the similarities and differences between these two justice statements? What surprises you about each?
- Now ask someone else to read the 1997 resolution "Toward an Antiracist Unitarian Universalist Association." Ask: How is this resolution similar to and different from the earlier ones? What was the context in 1997?
- Finally, ask someone to read the 2013 responsive resolution "Deepen Our Commitment to an Anti-oppressive, Multicultural Unitarian Universalist Association." Ask: How is it similar to and different from the earlier resolutions? What was the context in the UUA and the world in 2013? How did tone, vocabulary, and understanding change over the years? Review for the class some other recent UUA resolutions, especially those mentioning multiculturalism, immigration, and anti-Muslim prejudice.

Part II—Values Espoused by Your Congregation (*35 minutes*)

This exercise investigates what values have been explicitly stated by your congregation, in

covenants, mission statements, board resolutions, and other documents, in regard to multiculturalism, discrimination, and antiracism.

- With those values in mind, have one person read aloud the unison reading most often used by your congregation. Another should read the congregation's mission statement. A third should read anything that is in the congregation's bylaws about discrimination or inclusion. A fourth should read any other statements or resolutions the congregation has made about diversity, discrimination, or inclusivity. Instruct the readers to pause for one minute between readings to give the participants an opportunity to reflect on what the readings are saying. If there is nothing in one of these categories, note that out loud to the class.
- Go around the circle, giving participants one minute each to answer the questions: What did you hear? And what did you feel?
- Ask: What do these statements tell us about our congregational values? List answers on the newsprint or flip chart. Save this list to refer back to in Session IV. If the congregation has made no explicit statement about inclusivity, ask: What can we surmise from that?
- Discuss how the articulation of your congregation's values compares to those of the UUA General Assembly. The AUA and UUA resolutions charge their congregations to act. Has your congregation responded concretely? If so, in what way? If not, what is your best guess about why not?
- Summarize the discussion. Add that during the next two weeks the group will explore what some individuals, the UUA, and your congregation did in response to Selma. The class will try to determine how the congregation put its values into practice. It will then

ask how the congregation is practicing its values now, fifty years after Selma.

Wrap-up (*15 minutes*)

- Brainstorm a list of longtime church members who were around in 1965. If any are class participants, they will be interviewed in Session III; otherwise, decide who will ask to interview which of them. Review the other assignments that are due in the third and fourth weeks of the program and identify who will accept responsibility for each.
- Offer to meet with participants individually after the session to suggest where to look for information and how to complete the assignments.
- Ask each participant to speak briefly to something they learned or felt this evening that they will take along with them.

Closing Words

A long battle is ahead.

A few dramatic incidents;

The blood of martyrs will not end the war,

Nor make the crooked straight.

What is needed is courage,

But also a quiet, continual persistence,

And unremitting, relentless pressure.

—Angus Cameron, UUA Board member, March 14, 1965

Extinguish the Chalice

Session II—Why Did They Go and Would You?

Approximately 110 minutes

Preparation

- Familiarize yourself with the two audio recordings and the equipment on which you plan to play them. The recordings can be found here: www.uua.org/companionresources.
- Review assignment details in the program introduction.
- Read background in *The Selma Awakening,* especially pp. 187–213. Pay special attention to the motives of those who went, how the experience changed them and contrast that to its impact on the UUA at large. Review Appendix VI, "UU and Civil Rights Timeline," and make copies of it for participants.
- Send a reminder email to all participants stating the date, time, and location of the next class.
- If you know a woman who was active in a Unitarian Universalist community in 1965, ask her to come to this class to speak and answer questions about what went into her decision to go (or, more likely, not to go) to Selma. Prepare some questions for her, and allow extra time in the session for this interview.
- Have ready a chalice, matches, sticky notes, markers, timers, and a copy of *The Selma Awakening.*
- Have available copies of *Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey*, or the sheet music in Appendix VII and be prepared to lead singing.
- Post a blank piece of newsprint on the wall, or set up the flip chart.

Chalice Lighting Words

Selma was a transforming experience. Some of us would call it religious, others would call it radicalizing. Again, we would differ on our definitions; after all, we are UUs. But no matter how we would parse and define it, Selma changed our lives.

—G. Robert Hohler, Executive Director, UUA Laymen's League

Flew to Selma from Boston with James Reeb

Introduction (*5 minutes*)

- Welcome the group and, if necessary, return to and finalize the group covenant.
- Ask if anyone has thoughts or feelings about last week's session that they would like to share.
- Briefly introduce the second session. You might say, "Last week we explored the values Unitarian Universalists have espoused about racial justice over the last seventy years; this week we will consider how those values were put into action in 1965."

Exploration

Part I (*10 minutes*)

- Read the telegram Martin Luther King Jr., sent from Selma. (See *The Selma Awakening,* p. ix.)
- Invite the participants to write, on a sticky note, one or two words about how they felt while listening to the telegram. (Insist on one- or two-word responses. Using more words indicates the person has retreated to the comfort of intellectual analysis. For people who

made the decision to go, the feeling came first and the rationale second.) Then have each person stand to read their response and stick it on the newsprint or flip chart.

- Give a little historical background, drawing from *The Selma Awakening,* pp. 93–98, or other UU sources. Distribute Appendix VI, "Unitarian Universalism and Civil Rights Timeline."

Part II (*25 minutes*)

- Listen to Jack Taylor talk about why he went to Selma, then ask, "What would you have done, and why?" Give participants two minutes in silence to reflect, then ask that each person make a personal statement, i.e., "I would have . . ." Remind the group to listen open-heartedly to one another, striving to understand rather than evaluate. After everyone has spoken, summarize the themes that emerged.

Part III (*25 minutes*)

- Carl Ulrich was a member of a small group of ministers who were arrested for simply walking through a white neighborhood. Hundreds of such groups similarly walked and were arrested. Listen to the letter Carl Ulrich sent his siblings upon his return from Selma. Ask and discuss: Why did this minister go? What had the biggest impact on him? Were the risks taken and sacrifices made worth it?
- James Hobart was among those who, like Ulrich, were arrested. He said,

  Not only were there too many to fit in the court room, there were too many to fit into jail cells. Their [*the police's*] *answer was to march us all several blocks to a Black community center, where we were held while the authorities decided our*

fate. We crowded into the room, some standing, some sitting on the floor. Soon there was singing. Singing was as necessary as breathing in the civil rights movement!

Invite the class to stand and sing "We Shall Overcome" (no. 169 in *Singing the Living Tradition*), "When the Spirit Says Do" (no. 1024 in *Singing the Journey*), or "Spirit of Life/Fuente de amor" (Appendix VII). (See *The Selma Awakening,* pp. 129 and 160.)

Part IV (*20 minutes*)

- Ask a participant to read from *The Selma Awakening,* p. 155, the three paragraphs beginning with "When Dana Greeley . . ."
- Discuss: Unitarian Universalist women went to Selma, and even more went to Montgomery; nonetheless, the UU participants in Selma were overwhelmingly male. Why was this the case? (See p. 262, footnote 290.) What was it like to be a woman in 1965? What were the various pressures women experienced then that they do or do not still experience today? What do racial and gender-based oppression have in common, and how are they related?
- If you have arranged for a woman to speak about her thoughts and actions in 1965, have her do so now. Interview her with the questions you have prepared, as appropriate, and invite participants to ask questions as well. Allow extra time for this interview.

Wrap-up (*10 minutes*)

- In a sense, Selma was about loyalty to one's principles and one's friends. Go around the circle and ask: When you consider the American scene today, is there any cause that grips

you such that, if there were a specific call to action over a clear act of injustice, you would respond to that call and take the action it identified? What would that cause be, and why? If you have responded to such a call, why, and what action did you take?

- Ask each participant to speak briefly about something they learned or felt this evening that they will take along with them.
- Review assignments for the following week's exploration, which will focus on what the congregation did or did not do regarding Selma.
    - Assignment 1: One participant should read sermons and church records for March and April 1965, summarize anything to do with Selma, and identify a few pertinent passages to share with the class.
    - Assignment 2: One participant should check the Skinner House website and *The Selma Awakening* to see if either mentions their congregation, and if so, what it reports about the congregation's activities. If there is a church history, the participant should check whether it mentions Selma.
    - Assignment 3: Participants who are interviewing longtime congregation members should report whether those interviews have taken place yet.

Closing Words

Life is a precious gift of nature, to be lived at its best, to be enjoyed and wisely used. . . . Those who grapple courageously with the event of life will get more joy out of living. Those who so appreciate life and are living on the high plane are ready to die at any time. The death of the individual is the price we pay for being, but the eternal life stream flows on from generation to generation.

—Lewis A. McGee

African-American Unitarian Universalist and Selma participant

Extinguish the Chalice

Session III—What Did Your Congregation Do?

Approximately 110 minutes

Preparation

- Familiarize yourself with the recording of Gene Navias and the equipment on which you plan to play it. You can find the recording here: www.uua.org/companionresources (Also see *The Selma Awakening,* pp. 115–17.)
- Soon after Session II, check with each participant by email or phone regarding their progress on the research assignments due for Session III. Encourage them and offer suggestions if they are having difficulty. Use this as an opportunity to remind them to prepare a five-minute presentation, and also to bring to class the materials they have collected and give them to you, so they can become a part of the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.
- Have ready a chalice, matches, markers, timers, and newsprint or a flip chart.
- Have available copies of *Singing the Journey*, and be prepared to lead singing.

Chalice Lighting Words

In congregations, affiliated organizations, districts and in the denomination's offices and annual meeting, the focus moved outward and for a time, at least, this religious movement was deeply engaged with civic life and was in the yeasty and very messy ferment of social change. We stepped out into the unknown.

—G. Robert Hohler, Executive Director, UUA Laymen's League, adapted

Flew to Selma from Boston with James Reeb

Introduction (*5 minutes*)

- Welcome the group and ask if the participants feel their covenant has been honored, and if they feel heard and respected.
- Ask if anyone has thoughts or feelings about last week's session that they would like to share.
- Briefly introduce Session III. You might say, "Last week we heard what it was like to go to Selma and what went into making that choice. This week we will explore how this congregation responded to Selma and compare it to several others."

Exploration

Part I (*45 minutes*)

- Have participants present their research into the congregation's response to Selma. They should share what they found in newsletters, sermons, and interviews and respond to questions. Allow five minutes per person.
- Lead a discussion of these findings. Ask: Given what you know about this congregation, why did it respond in the way it did? Do you think it would react differently now? If so, why? End the discussion by summarizing what the participants uncovered.

Part II (*20 minutes*)

- Listen to the story that Gene Navias, the UUA religious education consultant, tells about his visit to the congregation in Savannah, Georgia. Afterward, ask: What did the children learn from the adults' actions? What do you think it felt like for the adults in that

congregation to go to the African-American church that afternoon? Why did they go? How were the people in the Savannah congregation different from those who went to Selma? In what ways was the Savannah congregation similar to and different from what our own congregation was like then?

Part III (*30 minutes*)

- Read aloud the following letter, which was sent to the UUA by a member of the UU congregation in Shreveport, Louisiana (see *The Selma Awakening*, p. 166).

May 9, 1965

Shreveport, Louisiana

Dept. of Social Responsibility,

. . . I am enclosing [a] copy of the article I "dared" to write for our newsletter. I felt, with a few others, that more tribute should have been given to James Reeb than we did.

I understand on April 25 while I was in San Antonio the editor, Larry Gionet, preached one of the all-time hateful sermons from our pulpit including running down James Reeb.

I find the general feeling or rather lack of feeling for humanity in our fellowship so disturbing in these days when the UUA is calling upon us to help that I expect to become inactive next year. I hope to find other outlets where I may live my beliefs and I think I am discovering some other sources for good will in our community.

Mrs. W. C. Pease

Vice Chairman

- Discuss: Under these circumstances, would you have left your congregation? Why or why not? Get a few responses and then read aloud this email from Russ Pease, Mrs. W. C. (Helen) Pease's son:

> *My Mom, Dad and the other young Turks . . . had already fought battles to advance in the direction of ministerhood only to be rebuffed and outmaneuvered by the old guard. Of course, Shreveport and the whole South was still rigidly segregated. . . . I do remember that Mom and the other pro-minister folks had desperately tried to pull the church out of that mindset. I recall that the pro group had actually de facto established another whole group within the church that met without the old guard. It was called the Servetus Society. . . .*
>
> *Mom and Dad actually did leave the church, just plain worn out from beating their heads against that old guard brick wall. As I recall, they remained inactive with All Souls until sometime around 1970–71, maybe later, and only rejoined when a whole new, younger group starting attending the church. That group radically changed the course for All Souls.*

- Does knowing the larger context change anything? Have you ever felt like leaving your Unitarian Universalist congregation? Why, and why didn't you? What does it take to hold a congregation together when it is deeply divided over a social or theological issue? As a

steward of the institution, what do you see as your role when conflict threatens the Beloved Community?

- Invite the class to stand and sing "Meditation on Breathing," no. 1009 in *Singing the Journey*.

Wrap-up (*10 minutes*)

- Review assignments for the following week's exploration, which will focus on what the congregation did or did not do regarding Selma.
- Go around the circle asking participants to express a feeling about what they have learned over the last three weeks, using two words and an expressive movement.

Closing Words

"Prayer for Living in Tension"

If we have any hope of transforming the world and changing ourselves,
we must be
bold enough to step into our discomfort,
brave enough to be clumsy there,
loving enough to forgive ourselves and others.

May we, as a people of faith, be granted the strength to be
so bold,
so brave,
and so loving.

—Joseph M. Cherry

Extinguish the Chalice

Session IV—What Our Activities Reveal about What We Really Believe

Approximately 115 minutes

Preparation

- Regardless of how much progress program participants previously indicated that they have made on their research assignments, send an email reminder soon after Session III. Unless their work is done, there will be *no* content around which to build Session IV.
- Have ready a chalice, matches, markers, timers, newsprint or a flip chart, and a copy of *The Selma Awakening.*
- Consult the list of questions, if any, that participants identified in Session I that they wanted to have addressed. If any of these have not been addressed in the program so far, prepare your responses or a group discussion to address them.
- Have ready the list of espoused values from Session I, in a format suitable for posting.

Chalice Lighting Words

In this place of peace, may we find hope.
In this place of connection, may we find community.
In this place of rest, let us feel the unrest of our hearts that
calls us to address injustice.
In this place made sacred by memory, let us each feel
ourselves part of the new that grows from the old.
In faith and with hope we light this chalice.

—Leslie Takahashi

Introduction (*5 minutes*)

- Welcome group.
- Ask if anyone has thoughts or feelings about last week's session that they would like to share.
- Briefly introduce Session IV. You might say, "Last week we explored the way this congregation and others responded to Selma. The goal of this session is to summarize the current situation in our congregation vis-à-vis race, multiculturalism, and inclusivity. It will focus on Unitarian Universalist values *as practiced.* We will discover these by looking at worship, religious education programs, engagement in social responsibility, congregational location, demographics, and leadership."

Exploration

Part I (*50 minutes*)

Have the participants report on what they discovered about how congregational and UUA-espoused values (as examined in the first session) are actively practiced in their congregation. Ask and discuss the following questions:

- What are the racial, ethnic, and economic demographics of the congregation, its board and leadership, and its neighborhood? Have they changed over time? In what ways?
- What is the racial and cultural makeup of the religious education program? Is it more diverse than the congregation at large? Why? How do the curricula and programs, for

children and adults, expose the congregation to multiculturalism and promote anti-racism? Does the diversity in our religious education program lay a special responsibility on the congregation? How do we support mixed-race and cross-culturally adopted children? And how do we support their parents, whose upbringing in the dominant culture probably has not prepared them to recognize—much less help their children with—some of the challenges they will face? Should this be seen as an opportunity our congregation could build upon?

- How are multiculturalism, inclusivity, and anti-racism addressed in the context of worship? What hymnals and hymns are used? What choral repertoire and readings? How do sermon topics and worship style reflect these concerns?
- What kind of social responsibility projects and alliances have the congregation been engaged in during the last five years that address issues of multiculturalism, inclusivity, and discrimination?
- Ask: Of what you have heard, what most surprised you, and what most disturbed you? Have participants sit in silence with those questions for two minutes. Then ask the questions again and invite responses without cross talk or comment. Use the timer, allowing each person two or three minutes depending on the size of the group.

Part II (*55 minutes*)

Begin by briefly summarizing the information gathered by the program participants.

- Ask: Setting aside intentions, what does the data tell us about our congregation's values in practice? List responses on newsprint or a flip chart, and compare this list to the list of espoused values from the first session. In what ways are they congruent and in what ways

different?

- Ask a participant to read from *The Selma Awakening,* pp. 63–64, beginning with "Delving . . ." and ending with ". . . apprehensive." Ask: What, if anything, has changed over the last fifty years, and how do you feel about those changes? Have participants sit in silence with those questions for two minutes. Then ask the questions again and invite responses without cross talk or comment. Use the timer, allowing each person two or three minutes.
- Explain: We are going to look into what it is like for a person of color to walk into our congregation today. First, we will do a quick exercise aimed at conjuring an empathetic mindset. Ask: In one or two words, how often do you think about your race? Give participants thirty seconds to think, and then go around the circle for short responses. Allow no elaboration. Next, ask: How often do you talk about race with family and friends: daily, weekly, monthly, a couple times a year, never? Allow another thirty seconds and then go around the circle as before.
- Ask: What did you notice about people's answers? Since this is just to set the scene for the bulk of the exercise, keep the discussion brief. Close this section by explaining that not talking about race is part of "white privilege." Because whiteness works to Euro-Americans' advantage, they feel no need to be aware of it. Ask the group to bear that in mind as it considers the question: Given what we have uncovered, when a person of color walks into this congregation what message does the reality, as opposed to the verbiage, give? Go around the circle for initial responses and then allow discussion. If there are people of color participating in the group, give them the option of speaking first, last, or as the spirit moves them, and when they speak allot them more time than others.

- Address any questions that were posed by participants in Session I that have not been addressed in the program so far. Either respond to these questions or facilitate a discussion around them.

Wrap-up (*5 minutes*)

- Explain that the final week's exploration will focus on how change occurs and what that could mean for your congregation. All that participants need to bring are their dreams and commitment.
- Ask: As you leave, what do you take away with you from today's session? Go around the circle, having participants respond with one or two sentences.

Closing Words

Ask not what the world needs.

Ask what makes you come alive.

Then go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.

—Howard Thurman

Extinguish the Chalice

Session V—What Next?

Approximately 100 minutes

Preparation

- Have ready a chalice, matches, timers, markers, newsprint or a flip chart, and a copy of *The Selma Awakening.*
- Have available copies of *Singing the Living Tradition,* and be prepared to lead singing.
- For Part II, "Acting Outward," write "Envision our congregation as you would like it to be" at the top of a flip chart or sheet of newsprint. Underneath, write the following questions: "What has changed?" "What could you do to begin that change?" "What would it require of you?"

Chalice Lighting Words

I do not wish to breathe another breath
If it is not shared with others.
The breath of life is not mine alone.
I brought myself to be with you
Hoping that by inhaling
the compassion, the courage, the hope
found here
I can exhale
the fear, the selfishness, the separateness
I keep so close to my skin.

I cannot live another moment,

At least not one of joy,

Unless you and I find our oneness.

Somewhere among each other

Somewhere between the noise

Somewhere within the silence

Of the next breath.

—Kristen Harper

Introduction (*5 minutes*)

- Welcome the group.
- Ask if anyone has thoughts or feelings about last week's session that they would like to share.
- Briefly introduce Session V. You might say, "Last week we explored the ways this congregation has, and has not, practiced its values in regard to multiculturalism, inclusivity, and antiracism. This week will focus on how change occurs and what that can mean for us as individuals and for this congregation."

Centering Inward (*35 minutes*)

Part I

Explain that this section is structured like an ordinary covenant group, with a reading, a question to consider, silence, and parallel reflections. It is intended to move participants from self to

community and from reflection to action.

Read aloud to the class:

Are We Living in a Post-racial World, Yet?

We get good at what we practice. Research now tells us very clearly what distinguishes amateurs from experts—it's the amount of time they spend practicing their craft.

To become exceptional, you must do two things. First, you must practice with intention—you have to aim to become very good. If you set out just to know how to do something or do it "good enough" then that is how good you will become. To become expert, you have to envision yourself as a master of your craft.

Second, you must practice a lot and consistently. Studies show that amateurs practice about three times a week for about an hour per sitting. Those who develop into experts put in three hours a day almost seven days a week. They become consumed with their craft.

In addition, there is a magic number. Becoming an expert demands about ten thousand hours of practice! That's twenty hours a week every week for about ten years.

The notion of intentional practice also applies to how we become the beloved community. It's not enough to just say that we are post-racial, we have to practice being post-racial.

> It is said that if you're not on the court, you're not in the game. We have to put in the time on and off the court.
>
> —Xolani Kacela

Ask: In your own life, what practices have you *consistently* followed as preparation to be a champion of multicultural, antiracist transformation? What differences have these practices made in your life? If you cannot identify such practices, how does that feel? Have participants sit with these questions in silence for three minutes. Then repeat the questions and go around the circle, asking each person to respond aloud. Remind participants to avoid cross talk and judgment.

Acting Outward

Part II (*45 minutes*)

- Read from *The Selma Awakening,* pp. 215–16, from "Their experience was visceral . . ." to ". . . than marching for civil rights." Invite a couple of brief responses.
- Say in your own way: Change is often incremental. Many little changes in attitudes and persistently working for a particular cause build commitment. Regarding race, ethnicity, and multiculturalism, what little changes in the life of our congregation would prepare it to reach a tipping point?
- Post on the wall the newsprint you wrote up before the session began, or set it up on the flip chart, and read it to the group. Have them sit with these questions in silence for three minutes. Repeat the questions, then go around the circle asking each person to share a response. When everyone has spoken, ask: Did anyone hear a particular theme or

consensus?

Wrap-up (*15 minutes*)

- Summarize what you heard today and your sense of what came out of five sessions spent together. Share a thought about what leading the class has meant for you and thank the class members for participating.
- Go around the circle a final time, inviting participants to complete these sentences:

  "From this program I take with me . . ."

  "And I commit to . . ."
- Invite the class to stand and sing "'Tis a Gift to Be Simple," no. 16 in *Singing the Living Tradition.*

Closing Words

"A Prayer for Those Who Pray and Those Who Don't"

For those who pray and those who don't,

For those who believe there is some ultimate power that listens and can affect the world,
And, for those who believe that it is only through the power and love of our own hearts that we make a difference,

We pray to ourselves, to each other, to God, Goddess, Spirit, the Great Mystery of the Universe that is beyond our understanding as well as our naming,

Within each of our hearts is a yearning, a yearning for something better for ourselves, for each other, for the world.

That is our prayer.

Beyond the personal prayers of our hearts, we share the collective prayers of humanity, prayers for love and justice, mercy and solace, respect, compassion, and peace. Universal prayers manifest in the values we cherish.

Prayer is the seed, the guide, the vision, the direction. But our hands must to build a better world and our feet must walk the paths that lead to a universal, loving, respectful human community.

Let us pray, and then, let us begin the work, once again.

—Susan Manker-Seale

Extinguish the Chalice

Supplemental Sessions and Resources

The following two sessions can be used in a variety of ways:

- Either one could be offered in advance of the program as a way of attracting participants.
- They could be combined and turned into a workshop to precede or follow the program.
- One or both could be added at the beginning or end of the program as additional sessions, or perhaps inserted between Sessions II and III.

Supplemental Session I—Eyes on the Prize

Approximately 100 minutes with discussion.

Preparation

- Get a copy of *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years,* Episode 6, "Bridge to Freedom."
- Make sure you have equipment on which to show the DVD and that you know how it works.
- Be prepared to lead singing or find someone who can assist you.
- Have ready sticky notes, markers, and timers.
- Have copies of *Singing the Living Tradition* available.
- Familiarize yourself with the life and work of Henry Hampton. The following resources will be helpful:
    - *Darkening the Doorways: Black Trailblazers and Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism,* by Mark D. Morrison-Reed (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2011), pp. 170–72.
    - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eyes_on_the_Prize
    - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Hampton

Chalice Lighting

At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.

—Albert Schweitzer

Opening Words

"Labyrinth"

Walk the maze

within your heart: guide your steps into its questioning curves.

This labyrinth is a puzzle leading you deeper into your own truths.

Listen in the twists and turns.

Listen in the space of openness within all searching.

Listen: a wisdom within you calls to a wisdom beyond you and in that dialogue lies peace.

—Leslie Takahashi

Program

Introduce the session by saying that the group will be watching the episode of *Eyes on the Prize* that focuses on Selma. Before watching the DVD, however, it is helpful and interesting to get a sense of each participant's own experience of Selma in March 1965, if they were alive and remember, or what they learned about it later, and what questions they may have about Selma. Selma has become an emblematic event in the history of the United States, part of the American myth. Ask: Why is this so? What is the role of myth, and how is the myth different from what really happened?

- Start by asking if anyone was there, then ask what people remember from March 1965. Then ask those who are too young to remember or were not yet born to tell what they know, have heard, or have learned about Selma. Ask: Does anyone have questions about Selma that they hope to get answered? Decide beforehand how much time you want to give to this part of the program. Summarize what was said and what was asked.

- Introduce the DVD by telling of Henry Hampton and his role at the UUA, where he served as associate director of information. Read this comment by G. Robert Hohler, executive director of the UUA Laymen's League, who traveled from Boston to Selma with Henry Hampton and James Reeb:

  > *Henry Hampton, who walked that same bridge* [*as Hohler and Reeb*] *two days later in support of the marchers, captured this moment for all time in his powerful documentary,* Eyes on the Prize. *He told me that Selma had given him a mission: that he had to tell the story of the civil rights movement through the eyes of people like the ones who had the courage to face such slaughter. He said Selma had changed him. He was not alone.*

- Watch *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years,* Episode 6, "Bridge to Freedom." It runs 60 minutes.
- When the DVD ends, wait one minute and then ask: In *one* word, how does it leave you feeling? Have each participant silently write the word on a sticky note. When all have done so, have each in turn stand to read the word and post the note on the wall. Follow that by asking: What surprised you the most? Did the video answer some of the questions you had or raise even more?
- As time is available, facilitate additional discussion in one or both of the following ways:
  - Ask each participant to silently choose a hero or heroine from the documentary and imagine sitting and talking with this person. Ask each of them to finish the sentence "I admire you because . . ." and to think of the one question they would most like to ask this person. Use some of their responses as the basis of further conversation.

    - Events in Selma are, in part, responsible for bringing the United States to where it is today, with an African American as president. Ask: Do we have a collective responsibility to that past struggle? Is what remains to be done ours to do? What of voter rights and voter suppression, immigration rights, and the rights of the incarcerated?

- Thank the attendees for coming and remind them about the next class or, if appropriate, about the upcoming program.
- Invite everyone to stand and sing "We Shall Overcome," no. 169 in *Singing the Living Tradition.*

Closing Words

Go your ways
Knowing not the answer to all things,
Yet seeking always the answer to one more thing
than you know.

—John W. Brigham

Supplemental Session II—Interview Congregation Members

This session can be used as a way to expand Part I of Session III, "What Did Your Congregation Do?" thus dividing Session III into two sessions.

Invite someone or several people who were in Selma in 1965 or involved elsewhere in the civil rights movement to tell their own story or the story of what your congregation did. You may wish to get permission to record the interviews for the congregation and for posterity. Please send copies to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School, with written permission from the interviewees saying the material may be used and quoted in study and research in the future.

Preparation

- Invite one or more people to come to the class to share their story and be interviewed by the participants.
- Ask the interviewees if you can record the interview. Also ask if they would rather take questions while they are telling their story or afterward.
- If you have permission to record the interview, familiarize yourself with the recording equipment.
- Choose opening and closing words and develop an overall plan for the evening (see below).
- In Session II, brainstorm a few questions with the members of the class.

Program

Begin with opening words, then offer an introduction that includes a way for the class members to introduce themselves. Thank the person or people being interviewed. You will want to ask the interviewees to describe to the class their own life situation in 1965. Then let them run with it. Have a few wrap-up questions in mind (e.g., “In hindsight, what was the impact of Selma on your life, the congregation, and American culture?). Thank them again, ask the class if any member would also like to share words of appreciation, then offer closing words.

Other Resources

For background, history, and workshop activities:

- "A Good Man's Death: The Rev. James J. Reeb, March 11, 1965" (PDF, 16 pages), from *The Martyrs: Sixteen Who Gave Their Lives for Racial Justice,* by Jack Mendelsohn (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), www.uua.org/documents/reebjames/good_mans_death.pdf
- "Letter from Selma," by Scott Helman. A *Boston Globe* article and video on James Reeb's murder and the FBI's recent reopening of the case, http://tinyurl.com/jamesreeb
- A recording (MP3) of Martin Luther King's eulogy for James Reeb, http://img.uua.org/misc1965/mlk.mp3
- "So Nobly Started," by Christopher L. Walton. A *UU World* article about the life of Reeb, his place in Unitarian Universalist history, and his role in the U.S. civil rights movement, www.uuworld.org/life/articles/2356.shtml
- "Call to Selma," Activity 4 (40 minutes) in "God's Gonna Trouble the Water—Martyrs and Sacrifice," Workshop 5 in *Faith like a River: Themes in Unitarian Universalist History,* a Tapestry of Faith adult program, www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/river/workshop5/workshopplan/activities/175796.shtml
- *Call to Selma: Eighteen Days of Witness*, by Richard D. Leonard (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2002).
- *Darkening the Doorways: Black Trailblazers and Missed Opportunities in Unitarian Universalism,* by Mark D. Morrison-Reed (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2011).
- A small group ministry program for *Darkening the Doorways*,

www.uua.org/documents/skinner/darkening_discussion.pdf

For openings, closings, and chalice lightings:

- *Voices from the Margins: An Anthology of Meditations*, co-edited by Jacqui James and Mark D. Morrison-Reed (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2012).
- The UU Sankofa Archive. This archive houses documents, biographical profiles, worship resources, and photographic images. It celebrates the lives of ministers and laity of Native American, Asian and South Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and Hispanic descent, members of the African Diaspora, and those who identify as multicultural, www.meadville.edu/unitarian-universalist-sankofa-archive.php

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I also thank Oakford Media for converting the accompanying recording to a digital format, and Michelle Collins, who developed the sample covenant.

APPENDIX I

A COMPANION GUIDE FOR *The Selma Awakening:* *How the Civil Rights Movement Tested and Changed Unitarian Universalism*

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is committed to being an antiracist, anti-oppression, multicultural organization. Yet, if Unitarian Universalism is to attract more people of color, Unitarian Universalists in our congregations and as actors in the world must develop the capacity to be self-critical. We will also have to proclaim to the world that we take our commitment to diversity seriously and yearn for the transformation that it will bring. This program seeks to explore this commitment by delving into one of Unitarian Universalism's achievements: its involvement in the civil rights campaign in Selma during 1965.

GOALS

- Become familiar with the story of Unitarian Universalist involvement in Selma, Alabama, in spring 1965.
- Explore how Unitarian Universalist congregations, including your own, responded to the civil rights movement in general and to events in Selma in particular.
- Nurture the capacity to be self-critical by comparing your congregation's past engagement in civil rights to its present engagement with multiculturalism and anti-racism, in order to envision what your next steps regarding these might be.
- Clarify and integrate your personal response to the issue of race as it affects your

congregation.

- Develop skill in doing local historical research (both documentary and oral history) as a method of understanding your congregation's current culture, remembering that the present always reflects the past.
- Contribute to the study of the civil rights era within Unitarian Universalism by sending documents pertaining to your congregation to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.
- Make and articulate a commitment to diversity.

LEADERS

- The leaders of this class are

MEETING DATES AND TIME

-

LOCATION

-

EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

- Commit to attending every session.
- Abide by the class covenant.
- Take on a research assignment and present it to the class.
- Fully participate in class activities.

APPENDIX II

Session III

What Did Your Congregation Do?

Assignment 1

Read records of your congregation's activities between February and September 1965. Look at newsletters, sermons, minutes of board meetings, and reports from the board, the social action committee, and the minister. What appeared and what was said? Summarize anything to do with Selma or the civil rights movement, and identify a few pertinent passages to share with the class. (If you find no relevant materials or there is no mention of Selma, this is also an important historical fact.)

If your congregation has a printed or published history, consult it as well. If there is a church historian or archivist, ask that person about other relevant materials.

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your presentation. Also, make copies of all the materials you find, with careful notes on their sources, so that they can be sent to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Note: If your congregation did not exist in 1965, look at local newspapers from that time and talk to individual members or community leaders who were around during those years. If your congregation is a spin-off from another congregation that existed in 1965, speak to its archivist and minister.

Session III

What Did Your Congregation Do?

Assignment 2

Check the Skinner House website resources where this curriculum is located: www.uua.org/companionresources. In spring 1965, the UUA Commission on Religion and Race sent a questionnaire to all UU congregations inquiring about their response to Selma. If your congregation responded to the questionnaire, a summary of its response can be found under "Congregational Responses to Selma."

Check the index of *The Selma Awakening* to see if the congregation or its minister (in 1965) is mentioned. Also look for mentions of your congregation or its minister in local newspapers during the month of March 1965.

Prepare a five-minute presentation on the congregation's or the minister's activities. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your presentation. Also, make copies of all the materials you find, with careful notes on their sources, so that they can be sent to the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Session III

What Did Your Congregation Do?

Assignment 3 – Interviews (This assignment can be done by more than one person.)

Interview congregation members of long standing, particularly any who may have gone to Selma. Interviews can be done in person, by phone, or over the Internet. Ask what they remember about how Selma affected them and how the congregation responded. Also ask about how others in the area responded to Selma and to the actions of the congregation.

Tell them you will be summarizing the interview for the class you are taking and ask if they would like a copy of the summary. Also ask if you can record the interview for the congregation's record and for the Selma Collection at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Prepare a five-minute summary of the interview. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the group before or after your presentation.

Session IV

What Our Activities Reveal about What We Really Believe

Assignment 4 – The Demographic Makeup of the Congregation and Neighborhood

First, investigate the racial, ethnic, cultural, and class makeup of your congregation. Unitarian Universalist congregations often do not track how diverse they are and in what way, or how this diversity may have changed over time. Also investigate the racial, ethnic, cultural, and class makeup of your board, ministry, and staff, and how these have changed over time. Ask the congregational administrator, religious educators, minister, church historian, and longtime members for their impressions. The people who will be most finely attuned to this are people of color themselves. Write down what you are told and then estimate the amount and type of diversity.

Some people may say, "I don't know, because it doesn't matter." This is a sign of unaware racism. It may mean the person is uncomfortable talking about race and ethnicity and therefore finds it easier to pretend that these issues do not make a difference. But the situation people of color find themselves in because of their race or ethnicity does affect them. Do not argue; simply tell the person about the class. When you report your findings to the group, describe the conversation.

Second, investigate the racial, ethnic, geographic, historical, and economic characteristics of the neighborhood your congregation is located in. Determine its name, its typical or majority population, and whether most members of the congregation live in it or come from elsewhere (and if so, from where).

It is important to know whether your town was a "sundown town." There were tens of

thousands of such communities outside the South. If there are few people of color in your neighborhood and congregation, such a history may help explain why. See "Was Your Town a Sundown Town?" by James Loewen, www.uuworld.org/life/articles/90579.shtml.

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

Session IV

What Our Activities Reveal about What We Really Believe

Assignment 5 – The Demographic Makeup of the Religious Education Program

Research the racial and ethnic makeup of the congregation's religious education program. Speak with the congregation's religious educator. Ask what curricula and programs are used, for children and adults, that expose the congregation to multiculturalism and promote anti-racism; what successes and struggles the RE program has in regard to diversity; how diverse the program is; and whether it is more diverse than the congregation as a whole. (If the answer is yes, ask why.)

Talk to a parent of color or one who has adopted cross-racially or cross-ethnically. Tell them about the program you are taking and that it involves comparing the current situation with the past. What is their impression of the RE program's makeup and content?

Walk through classrooms and look at how pictures, books, and other materials speak to and support multiculturalism. Look at who the teachers, volunteers, and other role models are.

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

Session IV

What Our Activities Reveal about What We Really Believe

Assignment 6 – The Congregational Worship Life and Diversity.

Investigate how your congregation addresses multiculturalism, inclusivity, and antiracism in the context of worship. Find out which hymnals your congregation has (e.g., *Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey*, *Las voces del camino*, others) and which of them are commonly used. Compare *Singing the Living Tradition* with *Singing the Journey* and note the differences.

Research the past six months to two years' worth of orders of service to see which hymns are actually sung, which are sung most often, and whether they reflect diversity. Do the same with the sermon topics, music other than hymns, guest speakers, and readings.

Describe your congregation's worship style. Does music tend toward classical, folk, contemporary, or rock genres? Are sermons and reflections contemplative, intellectual, liturgical, or lively? Is the emotional tone of gatherings friendly or cool?

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

Session IV

What Our Activities Reveal about What We Really Believe

Assignment 7 – Social Responsibility and Diversity

Research what kind of social action projects and alliances the congregation has been engaged in during the past five years that address issues relating to multiculturalism, inclusivity, and discrimination.

Talk to the chair of the social action committee and the minister, and ask about their experience of the congregation's interest in, or resistance to, these issues. If the congregation has a historian or archivist, ask in what ways the congregation has been engaged in social action over the years, and whether any of these have been particularly contentious. Also check in back issues of the church's annual report.

Prepare a five-minute presentation on your findings. Write up a summary of your findings and email it to the class before or after your presentation.

APPENDIX III

Sample Covenant

We, the members of this class, make the following covenant with one another:

1. We will take responsibility for our own spiritual development and respect the spiritual journeys of others;
2. We will speak from our own experience and not engage in cross talk;
3. We will listen deeply to one another and share time to allow space for everyone who wants to speak;
4. We will honor what is shared here and hold each other's stories with care and respect;
5. We will treat one another with respect, caring, and acceptance without judgments or the need to advise or fix other participants;
6. We will honor each other's boundaries and our own;
7. We will commit to addressing and resolving conflicts in a respectful way;
8. We will commit to attending the full program, except for extraordinary circumstances, and to fully participating;
9. We will carry through with the commitments we make to this class and will ask for help when it is needed; and
10. We will hold one another and ourselves to the promises made in this covenant.

(Adapted from Rev. Michelle Collins, First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, Delaware)

APPENDIX IV

Resolution on Race Relations
Passed at the 117th Annual Meeting, May 21, 1942
American Unitarian Association

WHEREAS: All race prejudice, particularly anti-Semitism and anti-Negro feelings and anti-Orientalism, threatens not only our national morale but also our unity as a people in this grave hour of crisis; and

WHEREAS: Such prejudice and fanaticism are fundamentally opposed to all high morality, to the spirit of true religion, and to every principle of democracy, and therefore cannot be condoned nor tolerated by a free people committed to the proposition that "All men are created free and equal"; and

WHEREAS: It must be a major concern of all religion to oppose all enemies of freedom and democracy; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the American Unitarian Association assembled in its 117th annual meeting *again voices* with solemn emphasis and profound conviction its faith in the universal Brotherhood of Man, and in the completely equality of all men before God and the Law; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the Association call upon all its member churches and affiliated organizations to implement this declaration of principle by effective action in promoting inter-faith and inter-racial solidarity through the means of

1. the practice in all their relationships of those principles of brotherhood on which the liberal church is founded;

2. special study of the sociological, psychological, and religious factors involved in racial discrimination;
3. the development of special techniques of action adapted to particular local and special conditions;
4. public commendation and support of government or other action which further racial and religious equality and brotherhood; and
5. public condemnation and effective counter-agitation against all forms of racial discrimination and religious prejudice.

CONSENSUS ON RACIAL JUSTICE
ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MAY 1966

Inasmuch as one of the purposes and objectives of the Unitarian Universalist Association, as stated in Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, is "To affirm, defend and promote the supreme worth of every human personality, the dignity of man, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships"; and

Inasmuch as the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association of 1962 affirmed that segregation and discrimination, wherever practiced, continue to be a matter of major national and international concern and reflected attitudes contrary to moral, religious and ethical commitments;

Unitarian Universalists pledge themselves to:

Work to eliminate all vestiges of discrimination and segregation in their churches and fellowships and to encourage the integration of congregations and of the Unitarian Universalist ministry, and

Work for integration in all phases in the community.

[This consensus is elaborated upon in sections entitled: Segregation and Discrimination, Racial Violence and the Administration of Justice, The Franchise (i.e. the right to vote), Education, Housing, Employment, Public Accommodations and Facilities, Federal-Aid Programs, Demonstration and Civil Disobedience, Inter-Racial Marriage and Adoption, Personal Associations and Integration of Churches and Ministry.]

Toward an Anti-Racist Unitarian Universalist Association

1997 Business Resolution

WHEREAS the 1996 General Assembly resolved that all congregations, districts, organizations, and professional and lay leaders participate in a reflection-action process throughout the 1996-97 church year using the Congregational Reflection and Action Process Guide and the Anti-Racism Assessment; and

WHEREAS our Unitarian Universalist principles call us to affirm and promote "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations" and "the goal of world community"; and

WHEREAS our history as Unitarian Universalists includes evidence of both great commitment and individual achievement in the struggle for racial justice as well as the failure of our Unitarian Universalist institutions to respond fully to the call for justice; and

WHEREAS racism and its effects, including economic injustice, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action; and

WHEREAS because of the impact of racism on all people, and the interconnection among oppressions, we realize we need to make an institutional commitment to end racism; and

WHEREAS the social, economic, and ecological health of our planet is imperiled by the deepening divisions in our world caused by inequitable and unjust distribution of power and resources; and

WHEREAS we are called yet again by our commitment to faith in action to pursue this anti-racist, multi-cultural initiative in the spirit of justice, compassion, and community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 1997 General Assembly urges Unitarian Universalists to examine carefully their own conscious and unconscious racism as participants in a racist society, and the effect that racism has on all our lives, regardless of color.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association, its congregations, and community organizations to develop an ongoing process for the comprehensive institutionalization of anti-racism and multi-culturalism, understanding that whether or not a group becomes multi-racial, there is always the opportunity to become anti-racist. Early steps toward anti-racism might include using curricula such as *Journey Toward Wholeness* for all age groups, forming racial justice committees, and conducting anti-racism workshops.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly urges all Unitarian Universalist leaders, including ministers, religious educators, leaders of associate and affiliate organizations, governing boards, Unitarian Universalist Association staff, theological schools, and future General Assemblies to engage in ongoing anti-racism training, to examine basic assumptions, structures, and functions, and, in response to what is learned, to develop action plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Unitarian Universalists are encouraged to enter into relationships of sustained engagement with all people of color with a goal of opening up authentic dialogue that may include, but is not limited to, race and racism. Such dialogue should also include how to appropriately honor and affirm the cultural traditions of all people of color.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly requests that the UUA Board of Trustees establish a committee to monitor and assess our transformation as an anti-racist, multi-cultural institution, and that the Board of Trustees shall report annually to the General Assembly

specifically on the programs and resources dedicated to assisting our congregations in carrying out the objectives of this resolution.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that in order to transform the racist institutions of our world, the General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association and all its parts to establish relationships with other international and interfaith organizations that are working to dismantle racism.

Deepen Our Commitment to an Anti-Oppressive, Multicultural Unitarian Universalist Association

2013 Responsive Resolution

Whereas, the Board-approved Ends for the Association call on the administration to move our Association toward a future in which "UU congregations and communities are intentionally inclusive, multicultural, and multigenerational"; and

Whereas, Moderator Gini Courter, in her report, and Mel Hoover, in his acceptance of the Distinguished Service Award, called upon our Association to recommit to our work in the area of antiracism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism; and

Whereas, the Unitarian Universalist Association has been engaged in a decades-long struggle to better equip us to be more inclusive across race, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and ability, as well as to have a renewed conversation about covenant; and

Whereas, those marginalized in our Association and their accountable allies continue to lead us and are need of continued opportunities to be supported in their efforts through mutual support and spiritual sustenance; and

Whereas, the need for that struggle has not abated and, indeed, has only been magnified by the demographic, economic, and geopolitical changes facing the world in which we live and offer our faith; therefore:

We call upon the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association and his staff to establish a vision for the steps needed to deepen the anti-oppressive and multicultural capacities of the Unitarian Universalist Association and its member congregations and to identify the systematic, programmatic, and financial resources needed to provide deeper support to congregations and

affiliated organizations seeking to move into a deeper anti-oppressive, multicultural understanding.

We also call on the Board of Trustees to ensure that the Board and staff-appointed, Board-appointed, and elected committees of the Association are empowered and encouraged to identify existing and new practices and structures that will lead to greater diversity among participants in the work of those committees and a greater sense of inclusion among participants, and that will provide for youth-and young adult-led efforts.

We call on the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee to assess the financial and staff resources currently devoted to this work, including those supporting organizations that empower marginalized populations, and to provide an analysis of these expenditures relative to other allocations.

These measures will ensure the deepened understanding, relationships, spiritual renewal, and practical skills necessary to move toward the Beloved Community that we are compelled to build in the name of our faith.

APPENDIX V

Oppose Anti-Immigrant Measures at the State Level (Arizona Law SB 1070 and the Like) and Hasten Federal Immigration Reform

2010 Action of Immediate Witness

BECAUSE our Unitarian Universalist Principles affirm and promote:

- the inherent worth and dignity of every person:
- justice, equity and compassion in human relations; and
- the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and

BECAUSE we welcome the stranger and we recognize our neighbor, we know that immigrants come to this nation to work hard and provide for their families. The presence of immigrants benefits the nation; and

BECAUSE WE FIND that the legislators and governor of Arizona interfered with federal interests, encroached on federal jurisdiction, and created in SB 1070 a law that would press for the deportation of our neighbors or bully our neighbors, especially people of color, and punish their compassionate friends; and

WHEREAS in 2010 the State of Arizona enacted a law—SB 1070/HB 2162—intended to identify, prosecute, and press for deportation of undocumented immigrants present in Arizona. Its provisions:

- make it a state misdemeanor to be an undocumented immigrant who is present in Arizona;

- require persons to carry proof of their lawful presence;
- require police officers, during a lawful stop, detention, or arrest, to "make a reasonable attempt" to determine the immigration status of a person if there is a "reasonable suspicion" that he or she is an undocumented immigrant;
- encourage lawsuits against agencies perceived to be insufficiently enforcing immigration laws;
- make it a criminal offense for an undocumented immigrant to “knowingly apply for work, solicit work in a public place, or perform work” in Arizona; and
- make it a criminal offense to transport, move, conceal, or harbor undocumented immigrants.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2010 General Assembly delegates oppose Arizona Law SB 1070 and the enactment of laws similar to Arizona Law SB 1070 in other states;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the delegates call on Congress to enact federal comprehensive immigration reform legislation, as previously described in our 2006 Action of Immediate Witness, “Support Immigrant Justice”;

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED that the delegates call upon the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, their individual members and friends, and affiliate organizations, to pledge themselves:

- to continue to witness against SB 1070 and its implementation;
- to support Arizona on a July 29, 2010 Day of Non-Compliance and events during the Human Rights Summer;

- to apply such economic pressure to the state as is specifically targeted to achieve repeal;
- to monitor legislation in other states and witness against any similar anti-immigrant proposals;
- to participate in voter registration and civic engagement campaigns as a prerequisite to better laws in the future;
- to call on President Obama to reassert the federal government's exclusive control over immigration law;
- to support federal legislative proposals such as the Dream Act that benefit citizens and immigrants alike; and
- to persist until humane federal comprehensive immigration reform is achieved.

Support Southern California Supermarket Workers' Struggle for Decent Wages and Benefits

2011 Action of Immediate Witness

BECAUSE our Unitarian Universalist Principles affirm "the inherent worth and dignity of every person" and call for "justice, equity and compassion in human relations" and

BECAUSE our denomination has a long history of opposing racism and sexism;

WHEREAS full-time supermarket workers in Southern California (SoCal) earn an average of less than $30,000 per year, despite the high cost of living in the area;

WHEREAS many workers get only 24 hours of work per week and therefore earn far less;

WHEREAS SoCal supermarket workers are disproportionately African-American and Latino;

WHEREAS SoCal supermarket workers are disproportionately female;

WHEREAS the 5-month strike/lockout of these workers in 2003 resulted in reductions in health insurance and pensions;

WHEREAS, despite that, the 62,000 members of United Food and Commercial Workers voted overwhelmingly on April 21, 2011, to authorize a strike against the three major SoCal supermarket chains—Ralphs, Albertsons and Von's;

WHEREAS the supermarket chains are demanding further increases in workers' payments for health insurance;

WHEREAS, by authorizing a strike, the supermarket workers acted on behalf of all workers,

courageously rejecting the Great Recession rhetoric of "shared sacrifice," which has so far meant primarily that only workers (employed and unemployed) and their families sacrifice;

WHEREAS, in 2003, the supermarket chains adopted a "national strategy," relying on profits from operations throughout the US to offset losses in Southern California; and

WHEREAS it appears likely that the workers will strike within a few weeks of this General Assembly;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2011 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association:

- Calls upon UU congregations in Southern California to support the supermarket workers in ways such as: educating our members, organizing petition campaigns and pledges not to shop at supermarkets where workers are on strike, holding demonstrations, walking picket lines, serving meals to the workers if they strike, and organizing congregations of other denominations and the community in general to do the same;
- Calls upon congregations outside Southern California to a) support the strikers in ways they consider appropriate such as: letters of support, donations to the strikers, petition campaigns, demonstrations at markets owned by the parent companies of the three supermarket chains: Safeway (Von's), Kroger (Ralphs and Fry's), and Supervalu, Inc. (Albertsons); b) collect pledges not to shop at stores owned by the chains if the workers strike; and c) urge members of the community not to shop at those stores until the strike is settled.

Protest Representative Peter King's Hearings on "Muslim Radicalization"

2011 Action of Immediate Witness

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalist Principles affirm the goal of a just community, representing unity in our multiracial world;

WHEREAS the hearings of Rep. Peter King, the Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee, which profess to present the "radicalization" of the Muslim community, have begun as of March 10, 2011, and he intends on pursuing these hearings;

WHEREAS these hearings fail to acknowledge or represent the complexity of the American Muslim community;

WHEREAS the vast majorities of the Arab and Muslim American communities are law abiding and committed citizens and residents of the United States;

WHEREAS such hearings lead to demonization of Arab and Muslim Americans and incite more hatred, racism, and division along racial and religious lines;

WHEREAS the first amendment to the Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof";

WHEREAS, on March 6, thousands of interfaith protestors demonstrated in Times Square against the "Muslim radicalization" hearings; and

WHEREAS, on May 21, a coalition of Unitarian Universalist congregations, 25 civil rights and interfaith groups, including chapters of the NY Civil Liberties Union, local mosques, and peace

activists demonstrated in front of Rep. Peter King's office in Massapequa Park, Long Island, NY;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the 2011 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association affirms multiracial unity and interfaith solidarity in the interest of world peace and calls upon member congregations to:

- urge our local congressional representatives to halt Rep. Peter King's hearings; and
- join coalitions working against the divisive idea of "Muslim radicalization" and advocating for interfaith unity.

Responsive Resolution Regarding Report of President Peter Morales

2011 Responsive Resolution

WHEREAS President Peter Morales's Annual Report referred to communities with a "spiritual hunger" that can be fed by Unitarian Universalism, he referred to the need for multicultural competence in serving these communities, and he cited the *Strategic Review of Professional Ministries*, which states in part:

"Our UUA President, Peter Morales, believes that vibrant multicultural congregations are essential for a thriving Unitarian Universalism of the future"

and

"Our ministers, religious educators and musicians must be equipped with strong multicultural competence"

and recommended that we should

"Strengthen RE and music credentialing and continuing education";

WHEREAS some fluency in a second language is one of the paths to multicultural competency (as our Latina/Latino/Hispanic colleagues have already demonstrated) and enhances our ability to engage effectively with diverse communities,

WHEREAS the 50th Anniversary of the consolidation of Universalists and Unitarians offers a powerful challenge and opportunity for our meaningful presence in the future,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly strongly urges members of congregations and religious professionals to engage in continuing education programs in the Spanish language, beginning as early as July 2011.

Approved: Rule update recognizing district's new name

Change to Rule G-13.2.1 "Establishing Districts." The change recognizes the recent decision made by the former Thomas Jefferson District to change the district's name to the Southeast District. The only change to the current text will be the replacement of "Thomas Jefferson" with "Southeast."

2013
Delegates approve Article II bylaw changes

GA delegates voted Saturday afternoon June 22, 2013 on changes to Article II—the Principles and Purposes—of the UUA bylaws. Delegates authorized changing Section C-2.3, the paragraph titled "Non-discrimination." The change deletes that paragraph, replacing it with a paragraph titled "Inclusion."

The new language is as follows:

We strive to be an association of congregations that truly welcome all persons and commit to structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation. Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities and histories. We pledge to replace such barriers with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect.

See more at: http://blogs.uuworld.org/ga/2013/06/22/delegates-approve-article-ii-bylaw-changes/#sthash.J2Gpkjcy.dpuf

Immigration as a Moral Issue

2013 Statement of Conscience

A belief in “the inherent worth and dignity of every person” is core to Unitarian Universalism: every person, no exceptions. As religious people, our Principles call us to acknowledge the immigrant experience and to affirm and promote the flourishing of the human family.

Our Sources “challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.” Hebrew scripture teaches love for the foreigner because "you were foreigners in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:33-34). Christian scripture reports that Jesus and his disciples were itinerants. When asked "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus responded with the parable of the Good Samaritan, a foreigner who treated a badly beaten man as the foreigner would have wished to be treated (Luke 10:25-37). The Qur’an teaches doing “good to...those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer that you meet” (4:36). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that “everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country” (article 13.2). Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources call us to recognize the opportunities and challenges of human migration—caring for ourselves and our families, interacting with strangers, valuing diversity, and dealing with immigration systems.

Historical Background

Before recorded history, some people migrated out of Africa and later across the world. People left their places of birth to feed themselves, protect themselves from hostile environments, or better their lives. Some people migrated voluntarily, while others were forced to migrate due to

enslavement, war, famine, marriage, or fear of persecution. Whatever the circumstances, the human family is composed almost entirely of immigrants or descendants of immigrants.

Most of the land mass on earth is now divided into nations with boundaries. Although we recognize that national boundaries are often arbitrary and disregard historical tribal boundaries and wildlife migratory patterns, we acknowledge that these national boundaries exist and that nations will protect their borders. Nations have assumed the right and obligation to protect the security and well-being of their citizens by enacting and enforcing immigration laws. Our challenge as religious people is to distinguish the moral from the immoral, supporting the former and opposing the latter. Moral immigration laws that are just and humane contribute to the public good, define the parameters of legal immigration, and restrict harmful influences such as criminal intent, epidemics, and contraband. Unfortunately, not all immigration laws are moral; some use race, class, religion, ethnicity, ability, or sexual orientation to dictate who belongs and who does not.

Underlying Factors Contributing to Immigration and Lack of Documentation

Today people leave their places of birth and migrate for the same reasons people always have—to be safe, to meet their needs for food and shelter, and to better their lives. Thus, violence, environmental change, and economic conditions often motivate migration. Acts of violence that drive people to migrate include armed conflicts, violence against women, violence related to sexual orientation and gender expression, ethnic cleansing, political persecution, and genocide. Environmental conditions that lead to migration include climate change, droughts, floods, radiation, and pollution.

Economic factors are currently the primary driving force behind immigration worldwide. Economic factors that cause people to migrate include the inability to meet needs for sufficient food and adequate shelter and the desire to better their lives. Contributors to these economic conditions include population growth, environmental degradation, globalization, and policies that address land ownership, tariffs, trade, and working conditions, many of which are continuing legacies of imperialism and colonialism.

A mechanism for regulating immigration is the issuance of visas, which are legal documents giving permission to enter and stay in a nation for a period of time. When the supply of visas is far below the demand, then pressure to enter a country illegally or overstay a visa increases. A similar pressure occurs when the length of time between applying for a permanent visa and its issuance is a matter of years. When people cannot obtain or renew visas but choose to enter or remain in a country anyway, they become undocumented immigrants.

Visas that allow multiple border crossings encourage people to visit their families knowing that they can return and work. When crossing a border is difficult or hazardous, the likelihood of returning to one's family decreases and the desire to send for one's family increases. The families of undocumented immigrants wanting to reunite with their loved ones also have no means of entering legally. A broken immigration system opens the way for illegality, human trafficking, and exploitation.

Consequences

Who migrates, how they migrate, where they migrate to, and when they migrate are central to immigration policies worldwide. While immigrants find jobs, build community, fall in love, have

children, and in other ways enrich a country with new ways of thinking and being, some people declare them unwelcome and label them—not just their status—illegal.

Lack of documentation and legal status can lead to exploitation. Work visas often require having an employer-sponsor, which can limit a person's freedom to change employment. Some employers are unable to find workers willing to do certain jobs under the work conditions and at the wages they offer. Other employers are stymied by onerous requirements to prove that they need people with certain abilities. When the number of work visas is fewer than the number of workers demanded by the economy, employers will fill the need regardless of workers' documentation.

Documented and undocumented immigrants alike are often denied the civil rights protections of citizens, paid less than citizens, labor in unsafe and unhealthy conditions, and/or are forced to work and live without pay under the threat of violence. In the United States, increased border security has resulted in undocumented immigrants crossing in more dangerous and remote areas where basic human needs such as drinking water do not exist.

Increased enforcement of immigration laws and the proliferation of for-profit detention centers have led to egregious human rights violations with little accountability or transparency. For example, immigrants in the U.S. detention system are not afforded the same due process rights as U.S. citizens, leading to unnecessarily lengthy detentions, and thus greater profits for the prison industry. These centers are poorly regulated and often overcrowded. Essential needs, including medical attention, are often denied, while more cost effective and humane measures are ignored. Immigration enforcement consumes increasingly more of the federal government's resources.

Many undocumented immigrants and their families live in constant fear of deportation. This fear affects their use of educational opportunities and health care services, and their willingness to interact with local police officers. Enlisting local law enforcement agencies in immigration enforcement violates accepted practices of community policing and erodes trust between police and the communities they serve, sometimes resulting in racial profiling of those who appear to be foreign. Deportation results in destroyed dreams and broken families—partners separated and children taken away from their caregivers or forced to return to a place they do not know. The perceived and constructed threat of those who are different has led some individuals and nations to meet immigrants with fear. Fear has become a social and political force that incorrectly labels people as "illegals," "criminals," and "terrorists."

Therefore

Our Unitarian Universalist (UU) Principles and Sources compel us to affirm that all immigrants, regardless of legal status, should be treated justly and humanely. At a minimum, a moral immigration policy would include the following elements:

- A path to legal permanent residency and citizenship
- Work visas that
    - Require the same worker protections applicable to citizens including fair wages, safe and healthful environments, and receipt of benefits
    - Do not depend on a single employer
    - Allow multiple entries
    - Permit entry into the path for legal permanent residency and citizenship

    - Provide parity between the number of visas and the work available in the receiving nation
- Timely processing of applications for visas and timely deportation decisions
- Access to the same medical care and education available to citizens
- Evaluation of human and environmental costs and benefits of proposed barriers to immigration or other changes in immigration policy
- Due process under the law, including legal representation, rights of appeal, and the right to initiate suits
- Alternatives to detention for those not considered a threat to society and humane treatment for those being detained
- Preservation of family unity, including same-sex and transgender couples and families
- Provision of asylum for refugees and others living in fear of violence or retribution
- Collaboration with source countries to address underlying issues that contribute to immigration, including trade policies.

Calls to Action

Given the consequences of immoral and unjust immigration policies, we pledge to ground our missions and ministries in UU Principles and Sources as we undertake individual, congregational, and denominational actions, such as:

As individuals, we can:

- Educate ourselves and others about human migration, immigration policies, human rights abuses that result from immigration policies, and the impact of trade and farm policies on human migration

- Learn a language used by a large number of immigrants in our communities
- Advocate for moral immigration policies
- Tour detention facilities and inquire about treatment of detainees
- Volunteer for local organizations providing aid and advocacy for immigrants
- Take direct action, such as intervening to preserve the lives of immigrants, helping them get needed medical and legal aid, refusing to report undocumented people, or reporting abuses of immigrants
- Advocate enforcement of laws that prevent employers from abusing undocumented workers
- Listen to those who have differing ideas about immigration and creatively develop approaches that take those concerns and our concerns into account
- Record stories of recent immigrants and of our own immigration histories
- Learn how to identify and report human trafficking, including labor trafficking, in our communities.

As congregations, we can:

- Cooperate with other UU congregations, other faiths, and secular groups that are focusing on immigration issues for the purposes of education and action
- Offer lifespan education, youth and young adult programming, and worship services that explore immigration issues
- Create a covenant group that focuses on immigration issues
- Adopt service projects that address issues of immigration and immigrant rights
- Participate in efforts that support the rights and dignity of immigrants

- Explore and implement ways to transform concern into action, including the possibility of providing sanctuary for undocumented immigrants at special risk
- Support and participate in advocacy efforts to change immigration laws that are not moral, including using state legislative ministries where they are available
- Coordinate experiential trips to gain first-hand understanding of border, migrant, and refugee issues; support groups that facilitate such trips, including No More Deaths and the UU Service Committee (UUSC)
- Organize visits to local detention centers, inquire about the care of detainees, and support detainees and their families
- Meet with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials and local law enforcement to oppose detention in privately-run facilities and advocate for alternatives to detention for low-risk detainees
- Fund college scholarships that are available to undocumented young people
- Offer financial assistance to undocumented immigrants seeking to obtain legal immigration status
- Take an active role in UU and interfaith organizations, including congregation-based community organizations that address the needs of immigrants such as UU Refugee and Immigration Services and Education (UURISE), Interfaith Immigration Coalition, Standing on the Side of Love, and Interfaith Worker Justice

- Call upon the immigrants who are members or friends of UU congregations to share their stories and wisdom openly
- Welcome changes as new immigrants join our congregations

- Encourage the sharing of congregants' cultural heritages and experiences to create personal bonds and enhance appreciation for the contributions of diverse cultures
- Participate in a refugee resettlement program
- Provide tutoring to help immigrants achieve English fluency and other skills
- Incorporate languages other than English into congregational life
- Conduct citizenship classes, voter-rights education, and voter registration drives that target new citizens.

At the denominational level, we can:

- Publicly witness against violations of the human dignity and human rights of immigrants nationally and internationally
- Advocate for moral immigration policies and international conventions, as well as trade, farm and other policies that alleviate the underlying causes of migration
- Support efforts to deconstruct the for-profit prison system that treats humans as commodities and fuels a culture of mass deportation and incarceration
- Share with congregations information about immigration legislation at the national level
- Advocate for expeditious implementation of national commitments made for visas to foreigners who have loyally served alongside our nation's military
- Join with other faith-based and human-rights groups working for improved national policies on immigration; these policies include labor regulations that protect undocumented immigrants at an equivalent level to that provided to citizens
- Provide curricula, resources, current information, and networking opportunities that congregations can use in their immigration education and advocacy efforts

- Support the immigration-related work of the UU United Nations Office, UUSC, and other UU-related organizations such as UURISE and the UU College of Social Justice.

Affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every person, we take up this call with joy and commitment, celebrating the creative and life-giving diversity of our world's peoples.

Condemn the Racist Mistreatment of Young People of Color by Police

2013 Action of Immediate Witness

WHEREAS, programs such as the "War on Drugs" and practices such as "Stop and Frisk" are actively used by police to harass and oppress communities of color;

WHEREAS, Michelle Alexander, at the 2012 UUA General Assembly said, "We use our criminal justice system to label people of color 'criminals' and then engage in all the practices we supposedly left behind. . . . As a criminal, you have scarcely more rights, and arguably less respect, than a black man living in Alabama at the height of Jim Crow. We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it;"

WHEREAS, this racist harassment has led to a growing number of African-American and Hispanic youth who have been mistreated and incarcerated because of police action;

WHEREAS, thousands of people have participated in mass multi-racial and multi-ethnic demonstrations seeking the ending of this racist mistreatment and violence by police;

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalist Principles provide a clear mandate to protest such treatment:

- Unitarian Universalist Principles affirm the goal of a just community, representing unity in our multi-racial world;
- Unitarian Universalist Principles affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person; and

WHEREAS, the "Stop and Frisk" practice mainly targets young people of color and treats them in a racist manner that negates their inherent worth and dignity and leads to mass incarceration at tremendous social cost:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2013 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association affirms to uphold our Principles and condemn the racist practices displayed in what Michelle Alexander describes in her book as "the New Jim Crow" and calls upon member congregations to:

- Condemn the pattern of mistreatment through practices such as "Stop and Frisk," which mainly targets young people of color in our society, which negates their inherent worth and dignity, and continues the mass practice of institutional racism in our society.

The General Assembly also calls upon member congregations to:

- Petition local, state, and federal representatives to demand an end to institutional racism in the form of practices such as "Stop and Frisk" and
- Actively demonstrate alongside others who are fighting to change the laws that allow police harassment, which results in violence against communities of color.

2014

UUA Support for "Uganda New Underground Railroad" to safely extract LGBTQ people from persecution in Uganda

Our Unitarian Universalist principles, faith and values call us to witness and advocate for human worth and dignity, justice, equity, compassion and the goal of world community.

In Uganda, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) people are being rounded up and killed at an escalating pace.

As of February 2014 a Ugandan law now criminalizes homosexuality. The penalty can be as severe as life imprisonment. Supporters who are perceived as aiding and abetting LGBTQ people can be jailed for up to seven years. According to the newly formed Quaker group, Friends New Underground Railroad (http://friendsnewundergroundrailroad.org), there have been many arrests with few emerging from the jails. University and high school students are being expelled, seminarians are being dismissed from theological colleges, people are being fired from their jobs and evicted from their homes. Lawyers are afraid to represent LGBTQ people and their allies for fear that they themselves may be prosecuted.

The Friends' New Underground Railroad is working with the Friends' "Safe Passage Fund," which was created to "provide travel funds and support to LGBTQ individuals and allies who face immediate threats of arrest, attacks, violence and persecution in countries where harsh laws have fostered a climate of extreme homophobia."

As of late June 2014, the group reports:

In two different incidents in two different locations, we've had 58 LGBT people evicted from their "safe" houses and running for their lives. This follows on the heels of suicides by two people who lost hope of getting out, and also with the names of LGBT folks who are being

hunted read out over the radio. Due to some extraordinary acts of heroism on the part of several of our conductors, the 58 are now in two separate locations (32 and 26 people respectively) and temporarily out of harm's way.

The UUA has a proud history, working with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) to rescue persecuted people in harm's way. The Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UUUNO) has been a strong voice at the United Nations on behalf of LGBTQ people in developing countries, especially since President Museveni came to power in Uganda.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the UUA General Assembly calls upon Unitarian Universalists everywhere to:

• Support the Friends' New Underground Railroad by, among other things, contributing financially to it; and
• Join with Quaker Meetings in your area to collaborate on this Action of Immediate Witness; and
• Invite the United Church of Christ and other progressive religious groups in your area to join this action; and
• Obtain and share updated information in worship services; and
• Support efforts to allow resettlement of these asylum seekers in the US.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2014 General Assembly encourages us to join with the Quakers in this movement.

What could be a better symbol of “Love Reaching Out” than to join with Quakers in support of the New Underground Railroad?

Support the "Pray for Relief" Faith Summit on Stopping Deportations

BECAUSE our Unitarian Universalist principles, faith and values call us to witness and advocate for human worth and dignity, justice, equity, compassion and the goal of world community; and

BECAUSE the 2013 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association adopted a Statement of Conscience on Immigration as a Moral Issue charging Unitarian Universalists to work in support of a moral immigration policy and just and humane treatment for immigrants; and

BECAUSE that statement specifically urges Unitarian Universalists to "cooperate with other Unitarian Universalist congregations, other faiths and secular groups" … "for the purpose of education and action;" and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has failed to move forward on meaningful legislation for immigration reform while the number of people being deported continues at the pace of over 1,000 deportations per day totaling more than two million deportations in the last five years with devastating effects on families and communities; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has declared the plight of the almost 50,000 unaccompanied immigrant children detained by United States Border Patrol this year to be a humanitarian crisis while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has reported that many of the unaccompanied children coming from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Mexico may

qualify for international protection such as refugee status; and

WHEREAS, without adequate access to legal counsel or a comprehensive approach to immigration reform, many of the same children are currently at risk of deportation back to the heartbreaking situations that caused them to migrate; and

WHEREAS, several of our interfaith partners including the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society, Church World Service, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and immigrant rights activists including the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON) have invited Unitarian Universalists to participate with them in a Faith Summit on Stopping Deportations called *Pray for Relief: Not One More Family Separated* to be held in Washington, DC, from July 31 to August 1, 2014;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2014 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls upon the member congregations of the UUA, their individual members and friends and affiliate organizations to support the Faith Summit by sending a delegation to Washington, DC, July 31-August 1 and by encouraging that delegation to consider participating in planned civil disobedience, with the goal of persuading President Obama to take executive action to stop the deportations; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2014 General Assembly encourages Unitarian Universalists to promote education within their congregations and communities by using resources provided by organizations including NDLON (www.ndlon.org), We Belong Together

(www.webelongtogether.org) and Not One More Deportation (www.notonemoredeportation.com) to respond to the crisis created by the ongoing deportations, incarceration and criminalization of immigrant communities; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2014 General Assembly encourage all the Unitarian Universalist congregations and individuals to write, call and visit local, state and national representatives including Speaker of the House John Boehner and President Obama to advocate for compassionate and fair immigration reform; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 2014 General Assembly encourages every Unitarian Universalist to find a concrete and meaningful way to reach out in love to help resolve this crisis for the well-being of us all.

53rd General Assembly

June 25–29, 2014

Link to UUA Social Justice Statements

1961 – 2013

http://tinyurl.com/uuasjstatements

APPENDIX VI

Unitarian Universalism and Civil Rights Timeline

1963 – 1965

1963

- August 28 – Approximately 1,600 Unitarian Universalists participate in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

1964

- January 23 – The Twenty-Fourth Amendment abolishes the poll tax for Federal elections.
- May 19 – Three hundred and eighty-six UU ministers petition the U.S. Senate to pass the 1964 Civil Rights Act.
- Summer – During the Mississippi Freedom Summer, thousands of college students support voter registration in the state. Over thirty-five UU students and five UU ministers participate. Since African Americans are still disfranchised, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party elects an alternative slate of delegates for the national convention.
- June 21 – Mississippi civil rights workers James Chaney, Andy Goodman, and Mickey Schwerner disappear and are later found murdered.
- July 2 – The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is signed. It bans discrimination on the basis of "race, color, religion, sex or national origin" in employment and public accommodations.
- Fall – Nearly a dozen UU ministers volunteer for the Mississippi Delta Project.
- December 10 –Martin Luther King Jr. is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

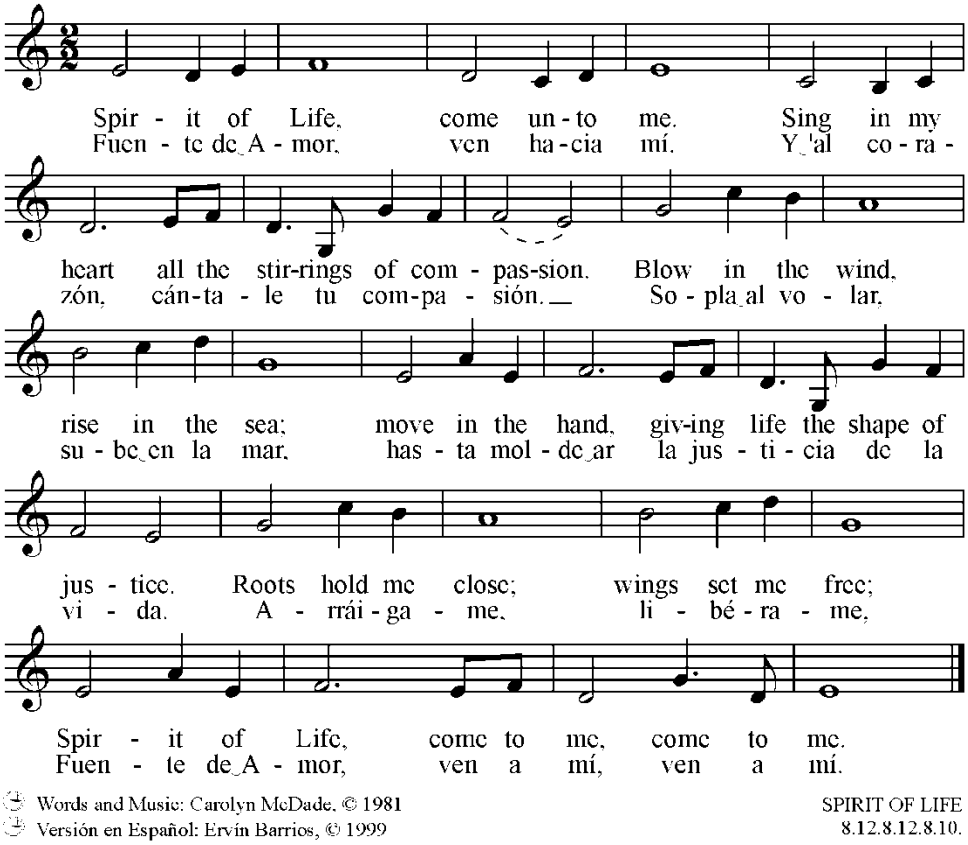
1965

- January 1 to 9 – The UUA Civil Rights Survey Team of four travels through the deep South.
- February 8 – UU ministers Ira Blalock and Gordon Gibson are arrested while protesting for voting rights for African Americans in Selma.
- February 18 – A peaceful protest march in Marion, Alabama, leads to Jimmie Lee Jackson being shot by an Alabama state trooper.
- February 26 – Jackson dies.
- March 6 – The Concerned White Citizens of Alabama march on the Dallas County Courthouse, protesting for voting rights and against police brutality. Of these seventy-two white Alabamans, thirty-six were UUs.
- March 7 – Bloody Sunday: Civil rights workers in Selma, Alabama, begin the Selma to Montgomery march but are attacked by Alabama state troopers and local police as they approach the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Many marchers are injured.
- March 9 – Sixty UUs join King in marching to the Pettus Bridge. Afterward, James Reeb, Orloff Miller, and Clark Olsen are attacked. Reeb is fatally injured.
- March 11 – Reeb dies.
- March 13 – The UUA board adjourns its meeting in order to reconvene in Selma to attend a memorial service for James Reeb. The home of Albert D'Orlando, the UU minister in New Orleans, is bombed.
- March 15 – Reeb's memorial service in Selma is held. President Lyndon Johnson introduces the voting rights bill to Congress.

- March 25 – The march to Montgomery concludes with over thirty thousand people in total. Several hundred UUs join in for the last day. Afterward, Viola Liuzzo, a white UU volunteer, is shot and killed by Ku Klux Klan members.
- March 26 to September 15 – Fifteen volunteers serve as the "Unitarian Universalist Presence in Selma."
- August 6 – The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is signed by President Johnson.
- August 11 to 15 – The Watts Riot erupts in Los Angeles.
- August 23 – Donald Thompson, a UU minister in Jackson, Mississippi, is shot but survives.
- October 20 – The murderers of Viola Liuzzo are acquitted.
- December 10 – The four assailants of James Reeb are acquitted.

APPENDIX VII

Spirit of Life/Fuente de amor



SPIRIT OF LIFE
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