

# Multicultural Religious Education Renaissance Module

## LEADER'S GUIDE



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# Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Logistics	
<b>List of Handouts</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>List of PowerPoint Slides</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>List of Leader Resources</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Session 1: Getting Started (3 hours)</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Session 2: Core Issues (3 hours)</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Session 3: Critical Reflection (3 hours and 45 minutes)</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Session 4: Taking The Work Home (2 hours and 45 minutes)</b> .....	<b>54</b>
<b>Session 5: The Transforming Community (2 1/2 hours)</b> .....	<b>64</b>

## Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the use, with permission, of the following material:

"Quest" by Rev. Kathy Fuson Hurt from *Quest: A meditation manual* (Boston: UUA, 1986).

"What the Children of Jowonio Know" from *Because We Can Change the World: A Practical Guide to Building Cooperative, Inclusive Classroom Communities* by Mara Sapon-Shevin (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2010, 2nd edition).

Lyrics from "Where Do We Come From?" (music by Brian Tate, text by Paul Gauguin and Brian Tate), Hymn 1003 in *Singing the Journey*, the supplement to *Singing the Living Tradition*.

"More White People Talking" by Katie Kissinger from "The Web" (1997).

"Diversity Wheel" (Handout 8, Identity Wheel) from *Workforce America!: Managing Employee Diversity as a Vital Resource* by M. Loden and J. Rosener (© The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1991).

Concepts from "The Dynamics of Power in Mediation and Negotiation" by Bernard Mayer from *Mediation Quarterly* 16 (1987) as cited by John Wade, Director, Dispute Resolution Centre, Bond University, Queensland, Australia in "Forms of Power in Family Mediation and Negotiation," Bond University epublication (1994).

"Systems of Linked Oppression" from *Weaving the Fabric of Diversity: An Anti-Bias Program for Adults* by Jacqui James and Judith A. Frediani (Boston: UUA, 1996).

"What Will We Be and For Whom?" by Kat Liu, from *A People So Bold: Theology and Ministry for Unitarian Universalists*, John Gibb Millspaugh, ed. (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2009).

"Who Are My People? A Black Unitarian Universalist on Selma and Ferguson" by Kenny Wiley. October 15, 2014.

"Considerations for Cultural Borrowing – Questions to Ask (and Answer)" by Judith A. Frediani (chair) and the 2003 UUA Cultural (Mis) Appropriations Ad Hoc Committee.

"Sins of Omission" by Natasha Josefowitz from *You're the Boss: A Guide to Managing People with Understanding and Effectiveness* by Natasha Josefowitz. Copyright © 1985 by Natasha Josefowitz. Reprinted by permission of Grand Central Publishing.

"My mother is white and my father is black..." (Session 4 reading) by Laura K. Warrell, a Boston-based novelist and blogger.

"When I Feel Discouraged" by Vivian Sellers, former director of religious education at the UU Congregation of Gwinnett, in Lawrenceville, Georgia

## Introduction

by Judith Frediani

James A. Banks, a primary theorist in multicultural education, has written:

*The goal of multicultural education is an education for freedom that is essential in today's ethnically polarized and troubled world. It promotes the freedom, abilities, and skills to cross ethnic and cultural boundaries to participate in other cultures and groups. It should help people develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to participate in a democratic and free society. In a word, multicultural education is education for social justice.*

Multicultural religious education is a way of seeing and thinking as well as doing. It requires us to truly open our minds and hearts to the perspectives and experiences of others. It requires the humility to see those diverse perspectives to be as valid as our own. It calls us to welcome and include the unfamiliar, those who may be outside our comfort zone. It asks us to acknowledge the realities of oppression and privilege. It means we are open to change and growth, and ultimately care more about justice than comfort.

While there are many dimensions of “multiculturalism,” this program focuses on racial/ethnic identity. Everyone has racial/ethnic identity, and this program is for everyone.

As religious leaders, you can nurture a congregational culture that:

- Welcomes, includes and appreciates cultural diversity
- Helps prepare children and youth for the multicultural realities of society and the world
- Supports people of all ages in developing positive cultural identities
- Exercises moral agency to challenge structures of social and political oppression and make a difference in the lives of others.

Co-leaders of this module can identify as white, a person of color, Latino/Latina/Hispanic, or any other ethnic identity; multiculturalism is a shared responsibility and opportunity. It *is* important that leaders be skilled group facilitators with grounding in anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multiculturalism.

Stories are at the core of everyone's identities. This module offers opportunities to share those often-transformative stories. Therefore, the group covenant and process of community building are particularly important. As with all Renaissance modules, opportunities to build skills and broaden resources are also key. Participants should leave both inspired and prepared to initiate change.

Start your reading of this module with Handout 6, Why Multicultural Education? If you share the goals and values it presents, you are the right person to begin this work.

## **Logistics**

Leader Resource 1, below, provides a sample letter to send to participants.

It is very important to provide Internet access during the sessions so that participants can explore online resources, especially when teams work on their final projects. Encourage working groups to prepare reports electronically rather than on paper and to distribute their work to the large group at the end of the module. Many leaders create a shared online folder, using Dropbox or another online service, and upload the handouts and reader guide prior to the module for participants to access as they prepare. A shared online folder is also a good place to provide Opening and Closing readings so that volunteer readers have access to them. After the module, the online folder can be a place to share final projects, photos taken during the module, and other resources. Note: Ask participants at the start for their permission to share photos, video, and participant projects.

PowerPoint slides are included in this module. You will need to plan ahead for the necessary equipment to use them. Use newsprint as an alternative to the slides if appropriate equipment is not available.

The reader for the module is a pdf of resources found on the [Module Resources page](#) of the UUA website. Participants are responsible for saving or printing their own copy of the handouts. Information about the reader and the handouts should be included in your welcome letter (see Leader Resource 1). Links are available on the [Module Resources page](#) of the UUA website.

## **List of Handouts**

### **Session 1**

- 1 Multicultural Religious Education Renaissance Module Outline
- 2 Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing
- 3 Preparation for Module Evaluation
- 4 Covenant Guidelines
- 5 People Attributes
- 6 Why Multicultural Education?
- 7 What the Children of Jowonio Know

### **Session 2**

- 8 Identity Wheel
- 9 Sources of Power
- 10 Systems of Linked Oppression
- 11 Questions for a Congregation

### **Session 3**

- 12 Approaches to Multicultural Education
- 13 What Will We Be and For Whom?
- 14 Who Are My People?
- 15 UU Case Studies
- 16 Considerations for Cultural Borrowing – Questions to Ask (and Answer)



## List of PowerPoint Slides

### Session 1

- 1 Welcome
- 2 “Come, Come, Whoever You Are”
- 3 Introductions
- 4 This module will address:
- 5 Thus we do covenant
- 6 Getting to Know You
- 7 Why Multicultural Education?
- 8 “What the Children of Jowonio Know”
- 9 Hopes, Fears, and Expectations
- 10 TED Talk
- 11 Exploring Our Identities
- 12 Who are you really?
- 13 “Where Do We Come From?”
- 14 End Session 1

### Session 2

- 15 Session 2: Core Issues
- 16 Telling Our Story
- 17 Sharing
- 18 Questions
- 19 Diversity Wheel
- 20 Diversity Wheel Questions
- 21 Privilege and Oppression
- 22 Defining Privilege
- 23 Sources of Power
- 24 Connections between Power and Privilege
- 25 Glennon Doyle Melton
- 26 #BlackLivesMatter vs. #AllLivesMatter
- 27 Find a Partner
- 28 Systems of Linked Oppression

- 29 Silences
- 30 Questions, Part 1
- 31 Questions, Part 2
- 32 Questions, Part 3
- 33 Language
- 34 Dark and Light, Light and Dark
- 35 End Session 2

### **Session 3**

- 36 Session 3: Critical Reflection
- 37 Opening Words
- 38 Approaches to Multicultural Education
- 39 Five Approaches
- 40 Contributions Approach
- 41 Addictive Approach
- 42 Transformation Approach
- 43 Social Action Approach
- 44 Cultural Change Approach
- 45 What Will We Be and for Whom?
- 46 “Process both essays.”
- 47 UU Case Studies
- 48 Cultural Appropriation
- 49 “To ‘appropriate’ culture means...”
- 50 Considerations for Cultural Borrowing
- 51 What about the holidays?

### **Session 4**

- 52 Session 4: Taking the Work Home

### **Session 5**

- 53 Session 5: Transforming Community
- 54 Practical Application
- 55 Closing

Note: If you decide to insert optional “[break slides](#)” into your PowerPoint,” the number sequence of your Renaissance module slides will shift.

### **List of Leader Resources**

- 1 Sample Welcome Letter from Leaders to Participants

# Leader Resource 1: Sample Welcome Letter from Leaders to Participants

Dear Multicultural Religious Education Module Participants,

We look forward to gathering at \_\_\_\_\_ for the Multicultural RE Renaissance Module on \_\_\_\_\_ [date]. This is a very engaging module because people are guaranteed to go home with ideas they can use right away and still have time to do lots of connecting with colleagues.

To help make this module a success, **please bring the following with you:**

- A copy of the Module reader and the handouts for the module which are available on the [Module Resources page](#) of the UUA website.
- A laptop or other device to access the Internet
- Materials for notetaking and journaling
- The prospectus for this year's religious education programming in your congregation
- A goal you have for your work in this module

You may also bring:

- A reading, song, game or brief energizer to share with the group
- A musical instrument to accompany our songs

Our dress for the time will be casual, and please note that our plan is to start promptly \_\_\_\_\_ (when–time and day of week). We will end at \_\_\_\_\_ (when– time and day of week). Full attendance is required to receive credit for the module.

With anticipation,

Leaders' names and email addresses

# SESSION 1: Getting Started

## Session-at-a-Glance

<b>Opening</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 1: Welcome and Introductions</b>	<b>25 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 2: Open Communication/Covenant</b>	<b>20 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 3: Getting Acquainted</b>	<b>30 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 4: Why Multicultural Education?</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 5: Reading – “The Children of Jowonio”</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 6: Hopes, Fears, and Expectations</b>	<b>25 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 7: Exploring Our Identities</b>	<b>45 minutes</b>
<b>Closing</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>

**Total Time: 3 hrs.**

## Goals

This session will:

- Help everyone get to know each other
- Introduce the content and flow of the module
- Encourage open, honest communication in the group
- Invite participants to articulate hopes and fears for the module
- Explore issues of cultural identity.

## Session Preparation

- Read the session. Plan how co-leaders will share leadership responsibilities for each activity, including gathering the materials you will need.

- Gather art and writing materials for the Exploring Our Identities activity. Request access to arts and crafts supplies and work space in the facility where you are holding the module.

## Opening (10 minutes)

### Materials

- Name tags
- Chalice with candle and lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
- Centering table and (optional) decorative cloth
- Slides 1-2

### Preparation

- Optional: Familiarize yourself with an adaptation of “Come, Come, Whoever You Are” (Hymn 188 in *Singing the Living Tradition*) that includes the phrase “Even though you’ve broken your vows a thousand times, Come, come again.” To see a group singing and dancing to the song on YouTube, search “Come, Come Whoever You Are Rumi’s Urs.”
- Optional: Write the words to “Come, Come, Whoever You Are” on newsprint and post.
- Optional: Copy the reading, “Quest,” for volunteers to read aloud.

### Description

Display Slide 1 as participants enter the module space. Gather the group around the centering table. Display Slide 2. Light the chalice and read aloud a translation of the Rumi poem, “Come, Come, Whoever You Are” or lead the group in singing:

Come, come, whoever you are,  
 Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving.  
 Ours is no caravan of despair.  
 Come, yet again, come.  
 Come, come, whoever you are,

Though you've broken your vows a thousand times  
Come, yet again, come, come.

Then, read aloud (or, have one or more volunteers read aloud):

*Each of us is accountable to all of us. We need to see our reflections in each other's lives, in each other's eyes. Articulations of the heart call us to build bridges of community with empathy and compassion. They call us to love boldly knowing that such living leaves its indelible footprint in the lives of others for grace-filled generations to come.*

*Each of us brings a collection of life-affirming stories. Together, we are creating, learning, and telling stories that will inform the generations. We are called to learn each other's stories, to honor the wellspring from which they come. Each story strikes an indelible chord. Each story adds to our collective story. As we create and share faith-filled stories, we affirm being integral to the interdependent web of all existence. — Janice Marie Johnson, Multicultural Ministries and Leadership Director*

Say:

Then ask: Why do you think we opened with “Come, Come Whoever You Are?”

Affirm that the lyrics are welcoming and remind us that we will make mistakes, but we must still continue to do the work.

## **Activity 1: Welcome and Introductions (25 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 1, Multicultural Religious Education Renaissance Module Outline
- Handout 2, Introduction to Renaissance and RE Credentialing
- Handout 3, Preparation for Module Evaluation
- Slides 3-4

## Description

Welcome participants to the module. Introduce yourselves (leaders). Display Slide 3. Invite participants to introduce themselves by name, congregation, size of congregation (including numbers of children and youth), and role in their congregation.

Introduce the local coordinator and invite this person to go over housekeeping details such as location of rest rooms, areas available during breaks, arrangements for home hospitality, wifi access, etc. Indicate where useful information about the meeting site is posted.

Ask participants to look at Handout 1, Multicultural Religious Education Renaissance Module Outline. Briefly review the schedule of sessions, adding specific times for breaks and meals if desired.

Display Slide 4. Introduce the module by covering what the module will address:

- The goals of multicultural religious education
- The four approaches to implementing the multicultural educational process
- Awareness of issues involved in cultural appropriation
- Promoting social structural equality and cultural pluralism
- Seeing oppressions as linked, not independent or idiosyncratic
- Exploration of issues of privilege and power
- Factors in creating a climate that invites, honors, and celebrates diversity

Ask the participants about their Renaissance Module experience. Is this module their first? Fifth? Tenth? Referring to Handout 2, briefly describe the Renaissance program and the credentialing process. Then ask participants to look at Handout 3 as you explain that Renaissance Module evaluations, for participants as well as leaders, are [online](#). It is the responsibility of the participant to submit their evaluation within one week after the module concludes. Make it clear that credit



for the module depends on timely submission of the evaluation. They may wish to use this handout for notetaking as the module progresses.

Remind participants that feedback about the meeting site, lodging, or food arrangements should be communicated to the module coordinator or the on-site contact. Explain that should any participant perceive a problem with facilitation or group dynamics, they may wish to speak to one of the leaders as soon as possible so that the situation can be remedied.

Identify other resources for this module including:

- “Parking Lot” (sometimes referred to as the “Bike Rack”). Explain that this newsprint sheet (or, lined pad) is where questions or issues not directly related to the session topic can be posted. At the end of each session, leaders will check the parking lot and decide whether, how, and when to address the questions.
- Resource tables. Invite people to peruse in their free time and to add any sample brochures, programs, and materials they have brought to share.
- Newsprint for volunteers to sign up to light or extinguish the chalice, offer chalice lighting words, or lead songs at the beginning or end of each session. Mention (if Internet access is available) that the UUA Worship Web ([www.uua.org/worship](http://www.uua.org/worship)) is a great resource for chalice lightings words, as is the UUA mobile app, Illuminations (<http://www.uua.org/beliefs/illuminations>).
- Fidget basket
- (Optional) Link to shared online folder, e.g. Dropbox folder
- (Optional) Basket with energizers. Invite participants to offer “energy breaks” as needed, such as leading a song, some movement, or stretching.

## **Activity 2: Open Communication/Covenant (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 4, Covenant Guidelines

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 5

### **Description**

Display Slide 5. Explain that open and safe communication will have special importance in this module, as participants will take some risks in speaking about their experiences and in using new lenses to view experiences others may share.

Distribute Handout 4, Covenant Guidelines. Tell the group these guidelines, adapted from the adult Tapestry of Faith program, Building the World We Dream About, were developed specifically for groups doing anti-racist, anti-oppression, and multicultural work together. Propose these guidelines as a starting point for a covenant to make the module a safe and effective experience.

Invite the group to take a minute or two to read the handout. Post blank newsprint. Record on newsprint participants' ideas for modifying or expanding the guidelines. Encourage participants to note one another's ideas on their own handouts.

Once the group reaches consensus on a covenant, you may wish to rewrite the agreed-upon guidelines on fresh newsprint. Leave room for changes the group may make later in this module.

### **Activity 3: Getting Acquainted (30 minutes)**

#### **Materials**

- Handout 5, People Attributes
- Writing paper and pencils
- Timepiece (minutes)
- A chime or bell
- Slide 6

## **Description**

Display Slide 6. Tell the group the ice breaker they are about to do also invites them to practice thinking with a multicultural lens.

Distribute Handout 5, People Attributes. Say that the handout offers a number of ways people can be the same as or different from each other.

Have participants form four groups. To make groups of equal size, ask participants to count off.

Ask each small group to generate a list of ways the individuals in the group are similar to one another. Recommend they use the handout to help them. Tell them they will have five minutes.

Sound a chime when five minutes are up. Now ask the small groups to discover the diversity in their group—to list ways they differ from one another. Once again, suggest they use the handout and tell them they will have five minutes.

After five minutes, sound the chime again. Now invite the small groups to explore the relevance of similarities and differences to a realistic scenario. Tell them their small group has been appointed to work together to create a Coming of Age project for their district. Ask them to:

- Review their lists of similarities and differences and identify three attributes that are relevant to the task.
- Discuss how the team will need to work together in order to allow all members to participate fully. What accommodations need to be made?

Allow groups to work for up to 10 minutes. Then, bring the large group back together. Invite groups to briefly share observations that came up.

Now ask participants to re-examine the covenant they developed earlier in this session. Does the exercise they have just completed suggest any additional covenant items that might help create a multicultural culture for this module?

## **Activity 4: Why Multicultural Education? (15 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 6, Why Multicultural Education?
- Slide 7

### **Description**

Display Slide 7. Distribute the handout. Invite participants to take a few minutes to read the handout silently to themselves. Or, you might ask for volunteers to read aloud.

Invite comments and questions.

## **Activity 5: Reading – “The Children of Jowonio” (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 7, What the Children of Jowonio Know
- Slide 8

### **Description**

Display Slide 8. Invite participants to read responsively with you a piece that was written to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Jowonio School, in Syracuse, New York. Jowonio (jo-WOH-nee-OH) is an Onondaga word that means “to set free.” Jowonio was the first school in the country to systematically include children diagnosed as autistic in regular classrooms with “typical” children.

Distribute the handout. Have the group start the reading, with this litany (italicized on the handout):

The children of Jowonio know—not because they have been told—but because they have lived it.

## **Activity 6: Hopes, Fears, and Expectations (25 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- 4x6 index cards, two colors
- Pencils
- A basket
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 9

### **Description**

Display Slide 9. Give each participant two index cards of different colors. Ask them to list two or three hopes they have for this module on one card (color #1), and two or three fears or concerns on the other (color #2) Have them place their finished cards in the basket. Mix up the cards and pass the basket around, inviting participants to each take one card of each color. Then, ask each person to read aloud the cards they chose.

Invite reactions to the hopes and fears the group has heard. What is needed to help address fears or alleviate concerns? What might the leaders do? What might the participants do?

Direct attention to the covenant the group has developed, and post fresh newsprint. Ask: What do we need to add to the covenant? Amend the covenant as needed.

## **Activity 7: Exploring Our Identities and Telling Our Stories (45 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- TED talk "[The Danger of a Single Story](#)"

- A variety of art supplies such as colored construction paper, color markers (including multicultural flesh tone markers), tape, glue sticks, magazines, paint, collage materials, and scissors (including left-handed scissors)
- Slides 10-12

### **Preparation**

- If Internet access is not available, download the video to a laptop.
- Set out art supplies on work tables.

### **Description**

Display Slide 10. Watch the TED talk as a group. Display Slide 11. Tell the group they will now do a hands-on, expressive activity to explore their identities.

Encourage participants to take a few minutes to consider multiple aspects of who they are. Mention that aspects of identity include race, ethnicity, culture, language, nationality, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, family relations, roles, and religious beliefs. Then, suggest participants might go deeper into their identities to consider their dreams, personality traits, temperament, spirituality, and passions. Display Slide 12. Ask: Who are you really? Invite participants to reflect on how their identities may have changed over time, and how this might be represented.

Indicate the art and writing materials you have gathered. Tell participants they may take the next half hour to create a representation of their personal identity. Explain they will display their work and process the activity at the next session. If you wish, tell them they may return to their project between the close of this session and the start of the next to work on it some more.

Say, in your own words:

*Although this exercise involves creativity, no artistic skills are required.  
Use whatever media you feel best conveys who you are. You may draw, paint, collage, write, sculpt, dance, sing—whatever you feel best*

*represents you. Whether you think of yourself as an artist, or not, you are encouraged to let go of the need to make this “look good.” Your goal is to create an honest expression.*

Allow participants 30 minutes to work (or more time, if you have it). Then, invite participants to gather the materials they will need to present their projects at the beginning of the next session.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Chalice and centering table
- Optional: Newsprint, markers, and tape; or copies of *Singing the Journey*, the supplement to *Singing the Living Tradition*
- Slides 13-14

### **Preparation**

- Optional: Sing “Where Do We Come From?” together; provide copies of *Singing the Journey* or write the lyrics on newsprint, and post.

### **Description**

Display Slide 13. Gather the group around the chalice. As a closing reading, share the lyrics to “Where Do We Come From?” (music by Brian Tate, text by Paul Gauguin and Brian Tate), Hymn 1003 in *Singing the Journey*, the supplement to *Singing the Living Tradition*:

Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?

Where do we come from?

Mystery, mystery, life is a riddle and a mystery.

Display Slide 14.

# SESSION 2: Core Issues

## Session-at-a-Glance

<b>Opening</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 1: Who Am I?</b>	<b>55 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 2: Identity Wheel</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 3: Privilege and Oppression</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 4: Sources of Power</b>	<b>40 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 5: Systems of Linked Oppression</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 6: Silences</b>	<b>20 minutes</b>
<b>Activity 7: Language</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
<b>Closing</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>

**Total Time: 3 hours**

## Goals

- Discover the multicultural identities present in the group
- Explore the relationship between identity and society
- Illuminate some of the challenges of diversity
- Examine the powers of silence and language in diversity issues
- Demonstrate that oppressions in society are linked, not independent or idiosyncratic.

## Session Preparation

- Read the session. Plan how co-leaders will share leadership responsibilities for each activity, including gathering the materials you will need.



- This session does not include a common break. You may choose a place to break, and extend the session appropriately. Or, plan to alert the group that there will not be a common break and invite them to excuse themselves as needed.
- Post the covenant the group has created.

## Opening (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Name tags
- Chalice with candle and lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
- Centering table and (optional) decorative cloth
- Slide 15

### Description

Display Slide 15. Invite the group to wear name tags.

Gather the group around the centering table. Light the chalice and share this reading from “The Web” (1997), used with permission:

#### **More White People Talking**

by Katie Kissinger

Part of the reason  
this thing works so well  
is because  
so many of us white people  
are silent when we should be talking.  
Talking is hard  
when you've never heard anyone else doing it.  
Either you don't know the words  
or the words you know

don't seem right,  
or they seem right,  
but they just won't come out.  
NOT TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING GIVES IT POWER  
We feel embarrassed  
because we were taught  
it's not polite  
to talk about differences  
which is code for  
"it's not okay to be different."  
We want to do the right thing  
but we don't want to be "correct."  
We feel this overwhelming guilt  
and our good intentions  
can't get past the lump in our throats.  
Of course talking about it  
is not enough.  
And it can't be lip service  
it has to be REAL.  
But if we start talking  
then at least we can all  
find each other  
and begin the rest of the work...  
When is the time,  
Where is the place,  
How is it done,  
Who will save face?  
NOT TALKING ABOUT IT GIVES IT POWER.

## Activity 1: Who Am I? (55 minutes)

### Materials

- Timepiece (minutes)
- A chime or bell
- Slide 16-18

### Preparation

- Calculate how much time each participant may take to share their identity representation so the sharing will fit in the time allotted. Save 10 minutes for discussion after all have shared.

### Description

Display Slide 16. Share this quotation, from Na'im Akbar, an African American psychologist and lecturer:

*All people have a major task, from cradle to grave, of defining who they are.*

Display Slide 17. Invite participants to share the representations of their identities that they have created. Tell them how many minutes each may take to share.

Keep track of time and signal each participant when their time is up.

Display Slide 18. Ask: What common themes did we hear? What are some of the factors that have shaped our identities? Ask volunteers to tell how the process of creating a representation was for them.

Say, in your own words:

*Knowing our own identities and stories is a prerequisite to any embrace of pluralism. Without self-awareness, we may fear those who know themselves better than we know ourselves and make them objects of envy or anger. Without knowledge of our own ancestral traditions, we are dependent on images provided by the dominant culture.*

*Historically, people of color have been disconnected from their own ancestral traditions. This is because the dominant culture defines itself as normative, misrepresents or does not represent the cultures of people of color, and pressures all cultures to conform as best they can to the norm. In a truly multicultural society, all cultural identities are honored.*

Ask: How are the cultures of all members and families honored in your congregation? Encourage participants to share examples.

Ask the group if anyone would like to add to the covenant, based on this greater understanding of the identities present.

## **Activity 2: Identity Wheel (10 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 8, Identity Wheel
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 19-20

### **Description**

Display Slide 19. Distribute Handout 8. Invite participants to describe themselves on the Identity Wheel by specifying their own attributes (for example, in the section labeled “Marital Status,” one might write “single”).

Give them a few minutes. Display Slide 20 and ask:

- Which description says more about you, your Identity Wheel or the creation you shared earlier?
- While your Identity Wheel may not express the whole of who you are, the attributes you’ve written do matter. How do these attributes influence your social reality?
- What other attributes might belong on an identity wheel? [Suggest physical appearance and size, language spoken at home.]

Point out that items in the inner circle are identities which are usually hard to change, yet these identities can spark quick, firm impressions in others which can profoundly affect your life.

## **Activity 3: Privilege and Oppression (15 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 21-22

### **Preparation**

- Prepare four sheets of newsprint to post. Give each a heading:  
Male  
Heterosexual  
White  
Apparently able

### **Description**

Display Slide 21. Tell the group they will explore the concept of privilege. Display Slide 22. Invite participants to define it. Then, share this definition, from The Free Dictionary by Farlex (online):

Privilege: (1) a special advantage, immunity, permission, right, or benefit granted to or enjoyed by an individual, class, or caste; (2) such an advantage, immunity, or right held as a prerogative of status or rank, and exercised to the exclusion or detriment of others.

Ask the group to consider how privilege relates to our identities. Share:

*According to Peggy McIntosh, author of "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," privilege exists when one group has something of value that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to rather than because of anything they have done or failed to do. For*

*example, when a man is taken more seriously than a woman saying the same thing, when a heterosexual can talk freely about her husband without concern her marriage will meet judgment or scorn, and when a white person can be pretty sure to see in the movies many positive images of people who look like them, these people hold privileges based on the groups they belong to. These are unearned privileges. When people hold privileges just by being who they are, they can easily be unaware of these privileges.*

If useful, offer the analogy of a fish in the water:

*We are living in the system (our “water” being the larger culture). Thus, we may find it difficult to become conscious of the system of privileges and prejudices we move within.*

Post the newsprint sheets you have prepared with these headings:

Male

Heterosexual

White

Apparently able

Brainstorm and list privileges of each identity attribute. Use asterisks to note similarities across attributes.

Once you have established privileges for each identity, say:

*A result of someone’s unearned privilege is the oppression of others who are not afforded the privilege.*

Lead the group to review the brainstormed lists and identify oppressions that result from privileges the group has named. For example, if males are taken more seriously, women must work harder to be taken seriously or must constantly prove themselves.

## Activity 4: Sources of Power (40 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 9, Sources of Power
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Timepiece (minutes)
- A chime or bell
- Slides 23-27

### Preparation

- Make sure participants have their Identity Wheel handouts (Handout 8).

### Description

Display Side 23. Distribute Handout 9, Sources of Power. Invite participants to read it to themselves. Display Slide 24. Then, ask what connections they see between the Sources of Power and the unearned privileges. In what ways do these powers reinforce the privileges? How do the privileges reinforce the power? How do both reinforce the oppression?

Offer this example: #BLACKLIVES MATTER. Display Slide 25, then Slide 26. This is an opportunity to engage in a discussion of why "All Lives Matter" is problematic and affirms a white supremacist paradigm. As Unitarian Universalists, we must affirm the fact that black lives have been systematically devalued throughout our nation's history. The Tweet illustrates that Jesus advocated for those who were oppressed and devalued during his time. "Beatitudes" is one of the most explicit examples of Jesus affirming the lives of those who were oppressed.

Display Slide 27. Ask participants to focus, with a partner, on another of the Sources of Power and come up with an example of how that kind of power reinforces privilege. Then re-gather the group and ask each pair to share the example they generated.

Share these observations about unearned privilege:

1. *People who hold privilege are usually reluctant to give it up.*

Our society reinforces a scarcity model rather than an abundance model: We commonly believe that when someone gets something, someone else has to give something up. Thus, those with privilege can believe their quality of life or their very survival depends on it. They may feel urgency to pass on their privileges to their children. As black Americans attain more wealth assets, for example, some white Americans may worry there will be less wealth for them to accumulate. Therefore, many are invested in not acknowledging their unearned privilege. They may believe they must keep it for themselves and future generations.

2. *People often try to conform, to gain privilege.* Many give in to societal pressures to assimilate into the privileged group.

Have participants form new pairs. Referring to the Identity Wheels, invite them to consider which of their identities provide them with privilege. Pause for a moment to allow reflection. Then say:

*Imagine how your life might be different if you woke up one morning and one of your privileged identities was changed. Consider how your daily life might be affected.*

Ask them to take a few minutes for reflection and then share with their partner.

Stop the pairs after five minutes. Ask:

- What identity of yours keeps you from privilege, and leads to oppression?
- What are the positive effects of the identity you are thinking of?

Invite participants to share their reflections on both questions with their partner.



After five minutes, or once you see most pairs are finished, re-gather the large group. Ask for any comments about the Identity Wheel in light of these reflections.

## **Activity 5: Systems of Linked Oppression (15 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 10, Systems of Linked Oppression
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 28

### **Description**

Display Slide 28. Post a sheet of blank newsprint. Invite the group to brainstorm ways different oppressions in society are linked together. To prompt, say, “The June, 2016 shooting at Pulse, a nightclub in Orlando, Florida whose patrons were mostly gay and/or Latinx, provides one example.”

Briefly note contributions. Once the group has generated some ideas, distribute Handout 10, Systems of Linked Oppression. Invite participants to read to themselves. Or, have volunteers read aloud:

*Oppressions are linked, whatever their form, in at least these respects:*

- *They have similar origins in bias, fear, ignorance, and the desire to preserve power.*
- *They confer unearned advantage on some and impose disadvantages on others.*
- *They limit and deprive people through roughly the same devices, such as physical violence or the threat of violence, job discrimination, political under-representation, and unequal access to education and economic opportunity.*
- *They divide us against one another, because they rest on the assumptions that (a) our differences are more important than our*

*similarities and commonalities and (b) our interests are better served by competing rather than cooperating with one another.*

*• They reinforce each other by promulgating the myth that one minority in the human population is the norm, and the other minorities (which together may comprise a majority) are deviant. For example, when “heterosexual male” is the norm, both female and gay male are deviant, and sexism and heterosexism reinforce each other. If the norm for female beauty is young, slim, and Caucasian, then ageism, ableism, and racism reinforce each other.*

*When we understand the way oppressions are linked, it becomes clear that no one is safe from the effects of an unjust society. “We,” not “they,” participate in the process, and “we,” not “they,” suffer from it.*

Conclude by saying:

*Oppressions lead all of us—people on either side of an oppression—to form relationships based on scarcity rather than abundance. Oppressions thrive on a belief that a competition must exist for limited resources and power. Oppressions interfere with our will and ability to develop a beloved community in which we generously make room for all.*

Invite participant questions and comments.

## **Activity 6: Silences (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 11, Questions for a Congregation
- Optional: Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slides 29-32

## Preparation

- Optional: Write the handout text (three bulleted questions) on newsprint, and set aside.

## Description

Display Slide 29. Say:

*Silence is one way we allow oppressions to continue. When we could speak up to acknowledge someone's story, to name everyone we hope to include, or to protest an injustice, but we remain silent, our silence communicates very effectively. Our silence can powerfully convey: Some people don't matter; some people are invisible; some people have nothing to offer to enrich my faith or community. People who identify with minority or marginalized groups hear that silence and may conclude: We are not welcome; we are not valued; we do not belong here.*

*To acknowledge black and white, African Americans and European Americans, is to acknowledge biculturalism. That still leaves silences, as our society is not bicultural but multicultural. Racism and prejudice affect different peoples of color differently, in and outside of our congregations. To remain silent about the existence of any identity in our community is to effectively rescind the invitation to belong.*

*The impact of these silences is also felt by people marginalized because of a disability, their age, their gender identity, or another identity.*

Ask participants to turn to a partner and share about a time when, because of their identity, their voice was not heard in a group and they were hurt or offended by the silence. Or, they may share about a time when they participated in keeping someone else's voice silent—someone who brought a minority or marginalized identity to the group. Ask them to reflect what might have been said

in place of the silence. Ask how a similar silence could be filled in a future situation.

After about five minutes, stop the pairs. Ask them to discuss with the same partner a time when to keep silent might be appropriate, even respectful: When might silence be more honestly inclusive than to speak for another?

After five minutes, re-gather the large group. Ask for any “Ahas.” Then, say:

*To engage our congregations in multicultural religious education for transformation, we must listen for the silences. When you go home, find a way to bring these questions to your congregation.*

If you have prepared the questions on newsprint, post the newsprint. Then, distribute Handout 11. Display Slides 30-32. Read each question aloud or invite volunteers to read them:

- In what ways are we as a congregation diverse? How is that diversity recognized, affirmed, and celebrated?
- What are the silences in our community? Who is not here, not heard, not included? Who is ignored?
- What would this religious community look like if we were to hear and see and know each of us as full participants?

## **Activity 7: Language (15 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 33

### **Description**

Display Slide 33. Say:

*As we become more aware of silences and how they can reinforce oppression, we also need to be aware of our language. Historically, the*

*group with the most social power has had the ability to name themselves and others, to articulate values which then become the norm for everyone. Our dominant culture has fostered a preponderance of male pronouns, the use of light and dark for good and evil, and value-laden language for marginalized groups including gay, lesbian, transgender, and people with disabilities. Much in our language is neither affirming nor appropriate for our multicultural society.*

*Language is powerful. It reflects, reinforces, and shapes our perceptions.*

Post two sheets of newsprint. On one, ask participants to list words, expressions, and sayings that contain the word “white” (white knight, white as snow, whitewash, etc.). Then brainstorm common uses of the word “black” (blacklist, black sheep, black magic, etc.). Compare and contrast the lists:

- Which items in the white list have positive connotations? Negative ones?
- Which items in the black list have positive connotations? Negative ones?
- How do the positive and negative values associated with “white” and “black” as colors correlate to our broader cultural values and standards associated with “white” and “black” races of people?
- How do these values reflect onto people who identify as “black” or “white?”
- How might these value associations affect people of color who do not identify as either black or white?

Post two, new sheets of newsprint. On one, write: Illegal Alien. On the other, write: Undocumented Worker. Ask: What is the difference? Which term is more respectful? Why? Briefly note contributions on the newsprint.

Again, post two sheets of newsprint. On one, write: Handicapped. On the other, write: Person with a Disability. Ask: What is the difference? Which term is more respectful? Why? Again, note contributions. Then, invite the group to suggest and analyze more pairs of descriptive terms where one term reinforces marginalization and oppression and the other offers more respect.

To conclude, say:

*Multicultural education teaches us to seek language about our differences that does not uphold oppression. If you do not know how to refer to someone from a racial, ethnic, religious, or other group, ask them directly and politely.*

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Chalice, centering table, and (optional) decorative cloth
- Slides 34-35

### **Preparation**

- Optional: Copy the reading below, “Dark and Light, Light and Dark,” for a volunteer to read aloud. By Jacqui James, a retired UU religious educator who focused on developing multicultural ministries and curricula, it is published on the UUA Worship Web:

<http://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/5934.shtml>

### **Description**

Display Slide 34. Read aloud, or have a volunteer read, these closing words from the UUA’s Worship Web:

#### **Dark and Light, Light and Dark**

By Jacqui James

Blackmail, blacklist, black mark. Black Monday, black mood, black-hearted. Black plague, black mass, black market.

Good guys wear white, bad guys wear black. We fear black cats, and the Dark Continent. But it's okay to tell a white lie, lily-white hands are coveted, it's great to be pure as the driven snow. Angels and brides wear white. Devil's food cake is chocolate; angel's food cake is white!

We shape language and we are shaped by it. In our culture, white is esteemed. It is heavenly, sunlike, clean, pure, immaculate, innocent, and beautiful. At the same time, black is evil, wicked, gloomy, depressing, angry, sullen. Ascribing negative and positive values to black and white enhances the institutionalization of this culture's racism.

Let us acknowledge the negative connotations of whiteness. White things can be soft, vulnerable, pallid, and ashen. Light can be blinding, bleaching, enervating. Conversely, we must acknowledge that darkness has a redemptive character, that in darkness there is power and beauty. The dark nurtured and protected us before our birth.

Welcome darkness. Don't be afraid of it or deny it. Darkness brings relief from the blinding sun, from scorching heat, from exhausting labor. Night signals permission to rest, to be with our loved ones, to conceive new life, to search our hearts, to remember our dreams. The dark of winter is a time of hibernation. Seeds grow in the dark, fertile earth.

The words black and dark don't need to be destroyed or ignored, only balanced and reclaimed in their wholeness. The words white and light don't need to be destroyed or ignored, only balanced and reclaimed in their wholeness. Imagine a world that had only light—or dark. We need both. Dark and light. Light and dark.

Display Slide 35.

# SESSION 3: Critical Reflection

## Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	5 minutes
Activity 1: Approaches to Multicultural Education	15 minutes
Activity 2: What Will We Be and For Whom?	20 minutes
Activity 3: UU Case Studies	60 minutes
Activity 4: Cultural Appropriation	70 minutes
Activity 5: What about the Holidays?	50 minutes
Closing	5 minutes

**Total Time: 3 hours and 45 minutes**

## Goals

This session will:

- Introduce five approaches to multicultural education
- Identify some ways our society and our congregations fail to fully include people of color and people with other historically marginalized identities
- Raise awareness of issues involved in cultural appropriation
- Elicit strategies for engaging, not misappropriating, diverse faiths' and cultures' texts and practices.

## Materials

- [YouTube video](#) from The Daily Show

## Session Preparation

- Read the session. Plan how co-leaders will share leadership responsibilities for each activity, including gathering materials.



- Set up and test media equipment. Preview and time the material you plan to show.
- Post the covenant the group has created.

## Opening (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Name tags
- Chalice with candle and lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
- Centering table and (optional) decorative cloth
- Optional: A copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*, the Unitarian Universalist hymn book
- Slides 36-37

### Preparation

- Optional: Choose an alternate reading from the module resource box or from *Singing the Living Tradition*.

### Description

Display Slide 36. Gather the group around the centering table. Display Slide 37.

Share these words, from Max Warren, a 20th century British missionary:

*Our first task in approaching another people,  
another culture is to take off our shoes,  
for the place we are approaching is holy.  
Else we find ourselves treading on another's dream.  
More serious still, we may forget that God was there before our arrival.*

## Activity 1: Approaches to Multicultural Education (15 minutes)

### Materials

- Handout 12, Approaches to Multicultural Education

- Slides 38-44

## Description

Display Slide 38. Say, in your own words:

*Multicultural education supports us to try and see from different people's perspectives. It gives us ways to ask questions and listen for answers, so we can work together to bring various groups that have been on the margins into the center of society. It supports us to care and take action to make our society more just and humane.*

*There are four essential steps to implementing multiculturalism in our faith communities:*

- *Knowing the stories, both personal and institutional—who we are, what our histories are, and why.*
- *Listening to the silences—being aware of who is left out, ignored, or avoided, in our lives and the lives of our religious communities.*
- *Engaging in critical reflection on the insights of the stories uncovered and the silences heard: What does this mean for our life together, as we take diversity seriously?*
- *Moving toward intentional transformation, celebrating the new richness and grieving the losses that change brings.*

Distribute Handout 12, Approaches to Multicultural Education. Display Slides 39-44 as you go through these definitions. Ask participants to take a few moments to read the top section of the handout, or have volunteers read each item aloud:

- **Contributions Approach** – Highlights cultural heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural elements.
- **Additive Approach** – Expands time spent on multicultural investigations with literal “add-on” units dealing in depth with content, concepts, themes, and perspectives.
- **Transformation Approach** – Enables participants to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives.

(Essentially the teacher “pulls out,” “redesigns,” and “creates anew” the existing curriculum.)

- **Social Action Approach** – Enhances engagement as participants make decisions on issues and take actions to solve problems.
- **Cultural Change Approach** – Uses all of these approaches to create a multicultural culture in the program that recognizes that the community includes multiple cultural perspectives and backgrounds and strives to welcome and nurture these perspectives and to develop participants’ anti-bias awareness.

## **Activity 2: What Will We Be and For Whom? (20 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 13, What Will We Be and For Whom?
- Handout 14, Who Are My People?
- Slides 45-46

### **Description**

Display Slide 45. Distribute Handout 13. Explain that Kat Liu’s essay is published in the book *A People So Bold* and that this activity has been adapted from the adult Tapestry of Faith program, Building the World We Dream About. Kenny Wiley’s essay is from his blog site, A Full Day: Love-infused words on faith, sports and social justice from a black male Unitarian Universalist.

Invite participants to read both handouts and consider the questions at the end of the reading. Allow about 10 minutes for reading and reflection. Display Slide 46.

Then, lead a discussion with these questions from the handout:

- What aspects of Unitarian Universalism attracted Liu? Why? [socially pleasant community, faith value of individual authenticity balanced with community accountability, a “justice-seeking religion”]
- What aspects of Unitarian Universalism were uncomfortable for her? Why? [at first, idea of “fluffy” religion; later, lack of color diversity in

congregation; disappointment with UU prophetic voice with regard to multiculturalism]

- From Liu's perspective, what are the most important characteristics of a faith community? What are the most important characteristics for you?
- Wiley asks "Who are my people?" and his answer has some complexity and perhaps some pain. Why does his question not have a simple answer?
- In your life, does the question "Who are my people?" have a simple answer? Why/why not?

Save a few minutes to pose these additional questions:

- Do these essays point the way to a strategy for diversifying Unitarian Universalism? How?
- How is building an antiracist, anti-oppressive, multicultural congregation a *religious* imperative? How is it an *institutional* imperative?

### **Activity 3: UU Case Studies (60 minutes)**

#### **Materials**

- Handout 15, UU Case Studies
- Timepiece (minutes)
- A chime or bell
- Slide 47

#### **Preparation**

- Assess the time. Calculate how much time you can give groups to prepare (at least ten minutes, if possible) and how much time each group may use to present their case study (five minutes is ideal).

#### **Description**

Display Slide 47. Share this quotation from the Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed:

*Our history in regard to racial justice is brave enough to make you proud, tragic enough to make you cry, and inept enough to make you laugh once the anger passes.*

Then, say:

*Both individuals and institutions perpetrate oppression. Just as individuals have identities, groups and institutions do, too. One important piece of our UU identity as it relates to our work in this module is the aspect of UUism's identity as it relates to race. Social justice, and specifically racial justice, forms an important part of UU heritage and identity. Yet, our institutional identity also includes centuries of race oppression. By adopting multicultural religious practices, we can help move our congregations away from—and, in time, transform—the oppression-rooted aspects of Unitarian Universalism's institutional identity.*

Distribute Handout 15. Form five small groups and assign each group a case study. Explain that each case study is a real event in recent Unitarian Universalist history. Invite the groups to read their case study, explore how it could be used as a teachable moment, and prepare to present their case study to the larger group. Ask them to begin their presentation with a short role play, and then describe how the case study could be used as a teachable moment.

Tell the groups how long they will have to prepare and how long their presentations may be. Keep track of time.

Re-gather and have each group present. When groups have finished, invite comments.

## **Activity 4: Cultural Appropriation (70 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 16, Considerations for Cultural Borrowing – Questions to Ask (and Answer)

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- YouTube video from The Daily Show  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loK2DRBnk24>
- Slides 48-50

### Preparation

- Make sure you have Internet access to show this video. It cannot be downloaded.

### Description

Display Slide 48. Say, in your own words:

*Culture includes any and all aspects of a community that provide its life force—for example, music, art, food, spirituality, philosophy, and history. Our secular culture in the U.S. reflects and mixes many different cultural traditions. More particularly, as Unitarian Universalists, we share a religious tradition which draws from many sources, specifically including “wisdom from the world’s religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.” Cultural sharing is not only a fact of life, it is also desirable as we seek to become truly multicultural.*

*The goal of this section is to raise awareness of the issues involved in cultural borrowing. We must learn to know the difference between appropriately, respectfully exploring or sharing in a cultural tradition and recklessly borrowing from it. This is especially important as it relates to bringing spiritual rituals, symbols, and artifacts that are sacred to a cultural or faith community into our Unitarian Universalist worship and education programs.*

Display Slide 49. To “appropriate” culture—or as we sometimes say, to “misappropriate”—means to take possession of aspects of someone else’s culture in a way that:

- Disrespects a tradition’s spiritual, historical, and social context
- Ignores the way our own culture may have affected and may continue to affect the lives of people of that culture

- Reinforces marginalization and oppression.

The Reverend Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley defines cultural appropriation as consciously or unconsciously seeking to emulate concepts, beliefs, or rituals that are foreign to a particular framework, individual, or collective. It is incorporating language, cultural expressions, forms, lifestyles, rituals or practices about which there is little basis for direct knowledge, experience, or authenticity into one's being. It is also the superficial appreciation of a culture without regard to its deeper meaning.

This is a broad and controversial subject for Unitarian Universalists. Concerns are raised about whether it is possible for Unitarian Universalists to authentically incorporate rituals, symbols, and artifacts from many of the world's cultures and traditions. Increasingly we hear concerns that there is racism inherent in cross-cultural "borrowing" of various spiritual rituals and traditions. We need to think about these questions when we wonder whether a certain act is cultural appropriation or appropriate cultural sharing.

Display Slide 50. Distribute Handout 16. Give the group a few moments to read it. Then, solicit additional questions that would-be "cultural borrowers" can ask themselves. You might suggest:

- What is my responsibility toward the people from this culture? How am I participating in their continued oppression and how might I address this?
- How do people who identify with the culture feel about this piece of its tradition being borrowed?
- If artifacts and/or rituals are available to me as a commodity, then how were they acquired? Where does the money go?
- Is this borrowing spiritually healthy for Unitarian Universalists? When we, as a religious tradition borrow rituals from other cultures, we lose the significant meaning they take on from the community in which they are based. When the integrated belief involved in performing a ritual gives it its meaning, are we simply impersonators?

Share this reading from Joanna Kadi, an Arab American woman, about her experience with the *derbeke* (der-BECK-eh, a traditional Arabic hand drum); permission pending:

*I sense an imperialistic attitude in which privileged people want to own segments of other people's cultures... unencumbered by hard political/historical/cultural realities, never asking themselves the questions that would uncover these realities... What has imperialism and racism done to the people who created this music? Do I have a right to play this instrument? What kinds of beliefs do I hold about Arabs? Ignoring these questions and ignoring Arab musical traditions translates into cultural appropriation... [T]he derbeke and its playing style are important pieces of Arab culture, with thousands of years of history attached. To disregard that and play however one chooses whitewashes the drum, and by implication Arab culture.*

*I've come to the conclusion that I'm not opposed to non-Arabs playing derbekes if it's done with respect, knowledge, and seriousness, and if these attitudes manifest themselves in concrete action. I want drummers to learn the derbeke's culture and history, and the proper way to play. And to take this knowledge a step further by actively countering the imperialism, racism, and genocide Arabs experience today. It's not enough to celebrate cultural difference by learning language, music, or history, when people's whole worlds are at risk.*

Ask the group for comments. Then, show the YouTube video from The Daily Show.

Post newsprint and invite the group to name issues they thought the piece raised. Suggest they apply the questions on Handout 16, and any other questions the group discussed, to the examples of appropriation presented in the clip. List responses briefly on newsprint.

Ask participants to turn to a partner and discuss this question:



- In our RE programs and our congregations, what practices can we strengthen or initiate that might provide experiences that are culturally appropriate for Unitarian Universalist worship and religious education?

Allow five to ten minutes. Then, re-gather the large group and ask pairs to share their ideas.

Reaffirm to participants that while our Principles and Purposes affirm that “the tradition we share draws from many sources,” we need to grapple with the fact that certain ways of borrowing can be an exercise of unearned privilege that perpetuates oppression.

## **Activity 5: What About the Holidays? (50 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Slide 51

### **Description**

Display Slide 51. Say:

*Our religious communities celebrate a number of holidays, some religious and some secular. These often become the focal point for religious education program activities as well as celebrations in worship.*

*Unfortunately, celebrating special times from a cultural tradition does not help children learn about the realities of daily life for people whose holidays we attempt to honor. When we use holidays as the primary focus of activities about cultural diversity, we take a “tourist” approach to cultures. Children experience only discrete cultural elements; they visit a culture by participating in a few activities and then go home. This leads to stereotyping and trivializing a culture: All people do is dance, wear special clothes, and eat.*

*We certainly don’t want to do away with holiday celebrations, but multicultural education demands approaches that go deeper than we often*

*have in the past. If we are to help children understand that some holiday customs incorporate stereotypes about other cultures, we must approach these holidays in ways that help children identify and think critically about such stereotypes.*

*Another trap we fall into, especially regarding widely celebrated or national holidays, is purveying the false assumption that for all Americans, holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter have a positive and/or profound significance. Multicultural education compels us to avoid presenting any holiday as if celebrating it is the only norm.*

Mention that one complex national holiday is Thanksgiving. Share this quotation from the late novelist, Native American Michael Dorris:

*Native Americans have more than one thing not to be thankful for on Thanksgiving. Pilgrim Day, and its antecedent feast, Halloween, represent the annual twin peaks of Indian stereotyping. From early October through the end of November, “cute little Indians” abound on greeting cards, advertising posters, in costumes, and school projects...Virtually none of the standard fare surrounding either Halloween or Thanksgiving contains an ounce of authenticity, historical accuracy or cross-cultural perception.*

Tell the group that, in the next session, they can look more deeply into ways we might celebrate the holidays. Post newsprint and ask if any holiday celebrations of their congregations might be revised to avoid misappropriation and to broaden and make more authentic the nature of the congregation's encounter with a particular culture or religion. Explain that we will not try to solve those issues right now, only to identify a few holidays for later discussion.

Post newsprint and list the holiday celebrations participants suggest.

Explain that in the next session, the group will focus on practical ways to strengthen or begin multicultural religious education in their home congregations.

Tell the group they will work in small groups to plan a specific, multicultural approach to an actual situation or opportunity. Ask them to reflect on events or issues in their programs and congregations, beyond the holidays they have named, to which they would like assistance applying a multicultural lens. Invite them to bring these to the next session.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Chalice and centering table

### **Description**

Gather the group around the chalice. Share the closing reading:

**Quest** by Rev. Kathy Fuson Hurt; used with permission.

It starts out quite simply, as complex things can do.

We rise one morning, at the usual time.

We dress, eat breakfast, and set out for the office, in the usual way.

We do our usual job, and then return home as usual.

And so it goes, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,

Friday World without end But not this time.

Today something is different. In the middle of our work, we wonder, "Why?"

And everything changes.

The Universe shifts when we ask "Why?"

Things do not look the same after the question, "Why?"

Although we may go on with our usual routine, it will not feel usual anymore, because that "Why?" has intruded.

Wondering why, reflecting on the meaning of what we do, indicates that our lives are about to move in a new direction. When the old familiar

patterns have been outgrown, when the time comes for crossing a threshold and entering a new existence, the question “Why?” appears. Having once asked “Why?” it is difficult to keep on with our accustomed ways because that “Why?” hints at the possibility of something more than usual. Like a siren, the “Why?” calls us to an adventure.

# SESSION 4: Taking the Work Home

## Session-at-a-Glance

**Opening** **5 minutes**

**Activity 1: Multiracial/Multiethnic Families** **35 minutes**

**Activity 2: Practical Application, Part I** **2 hours**

**Closing** **5 minutes**

**Total Time: 2 hr. and 45 min.**

## Goals

This session will:

- Demonstrate how children and youth internalize messages about racial identity
- Highlight identity development challenges that face children who are biracial, multiracial, and/or raised in multiracial families
- Apply a multicultural religious education lens to existing situations or realistic opportunities in the home congregation
- Explore how and why various approaches to multicultural education can be useful to improve situations or create opportunities.

## Session Preparation

- Plan how co-leaders will share leadership responsibilities in this session.
- Arrange working spaces for small groups so members can hear one another and make notes easily.
- Plan to alert the group that there will not be a common break and invite them to excuse themselves as needed.
- Post the group covenant.

## Opening (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Name tags
- Chalice with candle and lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
- Centering table and (optional) decorative cloth
- Slide 53

### Description

Display Slide 53. Invite the group to wear name tags.

Gather the group around the centering table. Light the chalice and share this reading, “Sins of Omission,” attributed to Natasha Josefowitz:

It is not only what I say  
for I am seldom prejudiced  
in any obvious way

It is what I don't say  
it is the forgetting  
the not noticing  
the disregarding  
the overlooking

It is not only the support not given  
it is not knowing  
when it is needed

I do not sin by commission anymore  
I sin by omission.

## Activity 1: Multiracial/Multiethnic Families (35 minutes)

## Materials

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Handout 12, Approaches to Multicultural Education

## Preparation

- Have on hand some copies of Handout 12, from the previous session.
- Optional: Copy the reading by Laura K. Warrell for volunteers to read aloud.

## Description

Say:

Prejudice and bias increase the threat for many individuals and families whose appearance sets them outside a norm. The already complex nature of racism can present a particular set of challenges for individuals who identify as biracial or multiracial and families that are multiracial. When children are biracial or multiracial, or belong to multiracial families, they can face a particularly complex path in identity development.

Read aloud, or ask volunteers to read, this piece from Laura K. Warrell, a Boston-based novelist and blogger (used with permission):

My mother is white and my father is black. Thus, to others, I am “mixed,” “mulatto,” a “half-breed.” I prefer biracial. Throughout my life, people have asked questions about my race because they assumed that being labeled “different: was unbearable. At times, it was. Now I embrace my ethnic composition because it has challenged me to rise above prejudice.

There seems to be a choice inherent in being biracial: Are you black or white? Biracial people often feel pushed by society to choose which race they are. No matter which group one aligns with, the opposite pole resurfaces. If an individual has light skin and a white parent, it may affect

relationships with blacks. If a person has dark skin, whites may never allow the individual to become “one of us.”

The choice was more difficult for me because there were few opportunities to feel part of a larger community. There was no box marked “biracial” to check on questionnaires, no bookstore shelves marked “Biracial Studies.” As a dark-skinned girl with a white single mother living in a small, predominantly white town, disassociating myself from blackness seemed to be the only way to fit in. While never altering my personality to appease white friends, I was silent on issues of race and devastated by remarks that “outed” my skin color.

After moving to a more racially mixed community, I witnessed both sides of racism. But my aspirations and tastes were never black or white to me. They were a genuine result of my upbringing and inner voice...

We fight racism because it’s an unfair way to define and control individuals. Race should not confine people to boxes, creating lives that are focused solely on breaking through barriers and battling stereotypes. Race should be celebrated and cherished, one beautiful fragment of the whole individual. A marvelous cord that joins people.

The biracial person offers evidence of what is possible: an amalgamation of the races, the chance to expose prejudice on both sides and dismantle it. After years of being pulled by both sides and knowing neither completely fit me, I chose not to choose. More accurately, I chose to be biracial. It is more empowering to position myself outside of categories established only to divide people. My vision of racial politics is different because the possibility of overcoming racial boundaries is real. My life is richer because I’m not confined by the narrow lines that restrict and divide.



Invite the group to take a few moments for reflection. Then invite participants to share briefly about their experiences serving biracial/multiracial individuals or multiracial families in their congregations.

Provide this background:

Claiming a biracial or multiracial identity has only recently become a viable option in the United States. Until the 2000 census, individuals were forced to choose one racial category only, denying the experience of many people. Current trends indicate that the biracial/multiracial demographic in the U.S. will continue to grow, and thus, so must our commitment to become a faith community that welcomes and celebrates this diversity. Many of our congregations and particularly our RE programs have a growing presence of biracial/multiracial individuals and multiracial/multiethnic families, some through transnational and transracial adoptions. UU religious professionals have both the opportunity and the responsibility to leverage multicultural perspectives and implement multicultural approaches. We need to become more aware of diversity and more prepared to authentically welcome individuals and families that bring a wide variety of racial and ethnic identities, including “mixed.” As religious educators, we are well positioned to create programs that explicitly teach anti-bias and welcome each individual in the fullness of their identities. This is extremely important work for the healthy identity development of biracial and multiracial/multiethnic children and youth, children and youth of color who are minorities in their communities, and transracially adopted children and youth, all of whom face a likelihood of some of these outcomes:

- They may feel between worlds, not completely at home in either (or any) of their cultural heritages. These feelings can be acute and constant for children of color who are, or feel, alone in a white world, disconnected from communities of color.

- They may be challenged by questions, sometimes intrusive, about where or with whom they belong. Biracial and multiracial children are often asked, “What are you?” This also can mean, or be heard as, “Which side are you on? Where do you stand?” Children of color whose parents are white are often asked “Is that your real mom/dad?” “Are you adopted?” “Why is your mom white when you are black?” Whether or not children are adopted, such questions cast doubt on their right to belong in their families.
- Biracial and multiracial children often appear exotic to others. Frequent remarks about one’s physical features can feel flattering to a child or youth, but at the same time such remarks objectify a child or youth, and over time teach the individual that they are “other,” not normal.
- When a parent and child have different racial identities, the parent faces an inherent challenge in nurturing the child’s healthy self-concept through all the stages of identity development. Parents of biracial/multiracial children may not know how to prepare a child for the “What are you?” questions the child will have to navigate. White parents of children of color may lack the ability to give their children tools to protect themselves from racism the children will likely encounter in their lives; some parents may be unaware their children will need such tools.

Solicit ways participants do or could nurture and support biracial and multiracial children and/or multiracial/multiethnic families in their home congregations.

Suggest participants refer to Handout 12, Approaches to Multicultural Education, to spark ideas. Post newsprint and briefly record contributions.

Add these ideas if the group does not generate them:

- Facilitate the formation of support groups and networking for families that share racial identity concerns. Work to create groups that are diverse, to help families build a multicultural community of friends.

- Help white parents of children of color to understand that their child’s racial identity is an integral part of the child’s developing identity and is relevant to child-rearing.
- Support parents to address their children’s racial identity development by providing programming, perhaps in a community or interfaith setting, such as panel discussions about family issues such as how to prepare children of color for instances of racism they may encounter.
- Provide antiracism/anti-oppression education opportunities across age groups; these might include book discussion groups or movie nights, as well as UUA programs and trainings (see Tapestry of Faith programs online).
- Start a congregational book group around fiction that highlights diversity in family composition, economics, and ethnicity.
- Choose books, toys, and other resources for your program that show a “norm” of people of different races, ethnicities, physical abilities, and family compositions.

Invite the group to keep these ideas in mind as they work on practical applications for multicultural religious education, in the next exercise.

## **Activity 2: Practical Application, Part I (2 hours)**

### **Materials**

- Handout 12, Approaches to Multicultural Education
- Writing paper and pens/pencils
- Optional: Computer(s) with Internet access, and printer

### **Preparation**

- Have on hand some copies of Handout 12, from the previous session.

## **Description**

Tell participants they will use the remaining time in this module to apply a multicultural education lens to existing situations and potential opportunities in their programs and congregations. They will choose a project topic from the list you will present, to work on in a small group. They will have about an hour and a half to develop their project. Then, the next time the group meets, small groups will present to the larger group.

Suggest these project ideas:

- Design a training to help RE teachers create an inclusive culture in their religious education group.
- Design a program to reach parents and other adults in their congregation with the tools to create an inclusive culture in the congregation.
- During the course of this module participants may have described issues or situations in their congregations that are not multicultural but have an inclusion focus. Re-create a scenario to make it multicultural, then devise a way to improve it.
- Design a program to help adults, youth, or children become better allies to marginalized communities.
- Revise one of your congregation's traditional holiday celebrations with a multicultural lens.
- (If Internet access is available.) Use Tapestry of Faith curricula and resources to create a multicultural education program for a multigenerational group.

Help participants form groups of three or four, based on their project preferences.

Then, give these instructions:

- Review the situation or opportunity. Identify aspects of the situation or opportunity where a multicultural lens and multicultural approaches can make the biggest difference. Look for places where your project can

specifically address issues we have talked about, such as unearned privilege, silences, cultural misappropriation, language, and stereotypes.

- Make suggestions on how to change the situation or develop the opportunity.

Invite them to apply the approaches to multicultural education from Handout 12 as they can to foster cultural change.

Suggest they make notes on writing paper or newsprint to help them present their project in the final session.

Say, in these words or your own:

*We want our religious education programs to demonstrate that there are many ways of seeing and living in the world; we do not want them to demonstrate that a white, Western view is normal and others are exotic, supplemental, and not normal. Try to design a program or create a change that promotes differences as normal, familiar, and acceptable, and nurtures in all participants an anti-bias awareness and an activist identity.*

Allow small groups to work on their projects for the rest of the session, until it is time to gather for the Closing.

## **Closing (5 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Chalice and centering table

### **Description**

Gather the group around the chalice.

Read aloud, or have a volunteer read, these closing words, written anonymously by a gay high school student and adapted in the adult Tapestry of Faith program Building the World We Dream About:

## **Mattering**

My father asked if I am gay

I asked Does it matter?

I said, Yes.

He said get out of my life.

I guess it mattered.

My friend asked why I talk about race so much?

I asked, Does it matter?

I told him, Yes.

He said, You need to get that chip off your shoulder.

I guess it mattered.

My neighbor asked why I put that ramp up to my front door.

I said, Does it matter?

He said, Not really

I told him it made my life easier.

He said, Is there a way to make it less obvious?

I guess it mattered.

A member of my church asked why I like gospel music.

I asked, Does it matter?

She said, No, not really.

I told her it connects me to my southern, Christian childhood.

She said, I think you're in denial about your oppression.

I guess it mattered.

My God asked me, Do you love yourself?

I said, Does it matter?

She said, YES!

I said, How can I love myself? I am gay, Latino, disabled, and Christian in a hostile climate.

She said that is the way I made you.

Nothing will ever matter again.

# SESSION 5: The Transforming Community

## Session-at-a-Glance

Opening	10 minutes
Activity 1: Practical Application – Project Reports	90 minutes
Activity 2: Taking the Work Back Home	45 minutes
Closing	5 minutes

**Total Time: 2 hrs. 30 min.**

## Goals

- Provide practice applying lessons learned to existing situations and potential opportunities in the home congregation
- Nurture envisioning of the components of an inclusive, anti-oppressive UU religious community
- Guide action plan development.

## Session Preparation

- Read the session. Plan how co-leaders will share leadership responsibilities, including gathering the materials you will need today.
- Post the group covenant.

## Opening (10 minutes)

### Materials

- Name tags
- Chalice with candle and lighter or LED/battery-operated candle
- Centering table and (optional) decorative cloth
- Slides 54-56



## **Description**

Display Slide 54. Invite the group to wear name tags.

Gather the group around the centering table. Light the chalice and share this reading by Vivian Sellers, former Director of Religious Education at the UU Congregation of Gwinnett, in Lawrenceville, Georgia; used with permission.

### **When I Feel Discouraged**

When I feel discouraged about how far we have yet to go on our journey together, I will remember that, in only one generation, in only one family (mine) some things have changed.

I learned the “N-word” in rhymes and heard it used in daily conversations. My children have never heard their parents use the word to describe people, only in explanation of why we should not say the word.

I attended all white schools until the ninth grade, when one—yes one—African American integrated into my high school. My children have attended multi-racial schools since pre-school, and have been in the racial minority since early elementary school.

I never attended school with children who were persons with disabilities. My children now have classes with these children who are no longer “shut away.”

I was told to go into a “woman’s profession” — either teaching or nursing. My children, of both sexes, are told all options are open.

I grew up assuming that because I was a woman, I would have children. My daughter says that she wants none and is encouraged to keep that

belief!

I never was told about gay and lesbian people until I was going away to college and was warned about women who “went after” other women. My children know homosexuality, like heterosexuality, exists and who our friends are that are gay/lesbian.

I never dated a man who I knew to be “of color.” My son’s first girlfriend has ancestry that includes an African American grandfather.

I was told as a child that I was fat and to lose weight. My daughter is told that health, not size, is what really matters.

I knew few Jewish people and heard many negative things about them. My children attend a Passover Seder Service each year and respect has grown.

I grew up thinking Indians were savages who would kill, scalp, burn, and rape for no reason. My children know that Native Americans were here first, that white people took their land and destroyed their civilizations.

I grew up eating pretty much only “southern” food. My children eat Mexican, Italian, Thai, Chinese, Cuban and Southern (which we know is largely of African American descent) food.

I was raised in a church where, when teachers of color entered the sanctuary for “teacher appreciation Sunday” many white people left. My children attend a church where diversity in color is actively sought and welcomed.

All-in-all, many steps have been taken, many more are yet to come. It's daunting, and it's tiring, but each small step lessens the distance to go.

## **Activity 1: Practical Application – Project Reports (1 hour and 30 minutes)**

### **Materials**

- Small groups' notes from previous session
- Timepiece (minutes)
- Slide 55

### **Preparation**

- Calculate how much time each group can have to present their project. Save time for the responses and suggestions after each small group presentation.

### **Description**

Display Slide 55. Have groups report on their work in the last session. Invite responses after each presentation. Keep track of time so all groups can present.

## **Activity 2: Taking the Work Back Home (45 minutes)**

### **Description**

Ask participants to form triads. Invite each person to share for two minutes about how this module will affect their program over the next year or two. Encourage participants to help one another become specific about their plans.

After 10 minutes, regather the group. Invite each individual to share one specific plan they now intend to do.

Spend the remaining time reviewing any outstanding questions from the Parking Lot or questions that have arisen during the module.

## Closing (5 minutes)

### Materials

- Chalice and centering table
- Slide 56

### Preparation

- Optional: conclude the module with a short closing ceremony. You might have participants share a word or short phrase about how they are feeling as they end the module, or create another closing activity. One suggestion is to sing “We Are the Ones We’ve Been Waiting For.” YouTube offers several versions of this song arranged by Unitarian Universalist Bernice Johnson Reagon. Hear one [sung by a high school choir in 2012](#).

### Description

Display Slide 56. Gather the group around the chalice. Share this closing reading and any songs or activities you have chosen to conclude the module:

#### [We Are Not Done](#)

by Audette Fulbright Fulson, on the UUA’s Worship Web in the Black Lives Matter collection

Do not think we are finished—  
oh no  
we will never be finished  
never just done  
until the light of justice is lit behind every eye.

Do not think we will be silent—  
no  
there will not be silence until the world has sung the names  
of the dead with full throats and still  
we will sing on.

Do not think fear is the end of us—oh  
you are broken in mind and heart if you even imagine  
that our fear for our lives is the end of this story.

We are braver than you have ever conceived  
and you  
will not be the end of us.

We have come to take back the world  
the world that is the inheritance of better children  
better lovers  
better days.

There will be love again but justice is our demand now.  
You will not take us down  
We are endless  
firelit  
determined  
and we  
are coming  
for you.

In Memoriam—Eric Garner