

BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUR PROCESS
(To accompany the warrant articles IV and V)

At the request of Standing Committee, a group of 8 congregants volunteered in early 2017 to work on developing a Black Lives Matter Banner Process for WUS. Our first face to face meeting was in mid March and we produced a written proposed Black Lives Matter Banner Process for the consideration of Standing Committee on 4/23/17.

After receiving Standing Committee approval, we initiated our activities in early June with a display in the Symmes Room, an insert in the Order of Service and announcements in Highlights. We included a comment box on the display and also set up a dedicated email address where folks could submit comments via email. We conducted four two hour “open conversations” in the fall and separate conversations were conducted by Rebecca Kelley-Morgan, with her R.E. students, and Sam Wilson and Haley Wegner, with WUSYG members and the participation of one of our banner process group members.

We reported in detail to Standing Committee in early November about all of these conversations and the many comments we received anonymously and via email from congregants. We indicated in that report that “We all feel strongly that further education within our community is both appropriate and needed.” We also agreed that while there was broad support expressed by those who participated in the “open conversations” for displaying some kind of a Black Lives Matter Banner, broad support was not expressed for any specific banner design, including simply BLACK LIVES MATTER. Six of the eight of us had a preference for displaying a banner that reads simply “Black Lives Matter,” while the other two preferred to add additional language, **in the belief that it would be more acceptable to the congregation.**

Further, we recommended that our next step be to work on a special resolution on this issue to be considered at a congregational meeting. We explained that a resolution could serve as both a way to make explicit our joint intentions in displaying a Black Lives Matter Banner and a continuing form of education for us all. Drawing on other recent resolutions from other local UU Churches, we now offer these two Warrant Articles for your consideration.

Please take a look at the extensive additional written material detailing the above process, which has been posted online at: <https://www.winchesteruu.org/members/black-lives-matter-materials/>

With appreciation for your interest in this important issue,

Steve Butterfield, Phil Coonley, Sarah Kelley, John Loewy, Gordon McIntosh, Kathy Richardson, Patty Shepard, and Sophia Sid

Black Lives Matter Banner Process Group