

RESOLUTION

Advancing Follen Church as an Antiracist Congregation

WHEREAS, as Unitarian Universalists we strive for justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

WHEREAS, allowing injustice to go unchallenged violates our Unitarian Universalist principles, as individuals and as a congregation; and

WHEREAS, an array of present-day inequities in the United States have deep roots in centuries of harm and racist rationalizations and falsehoods purporting that Black lives matter less and have less intrinsic value and inherent dignity than others'; and

WHEREAS, in an analysis of shootings by police in 2015, unarmed black men accounted for 40 percent of the fatal shootings and were seven times as likely as white men to die from police gunfire; and

WHEREAS, mass incarceration fueled by for-profit prisons and racially biased law enforcement and judicial practices drive the disproportionate imprisonment of Black and Brown Americans; and

WHEREAS, increasing numbers of American racial justice activists, especially Black Americans, are demanding economic, political, legal, educational, and other policy reforms in response to sustained and increasingly visible violence and institutionalized injustice against Black communities and other people of color communities; and

WHEREAS, the 2015 General Assembly Action of Immediate Witness, the "Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism" organization, and other Unitarian Universalist People of Color organizations and leaders have asked Unitarian Universalist congregations to support the Black Lives Matter movement and Black-led racial justice organizations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1.) Called by our faith, Follen Church will commit to being an intentionally and proactively antiracist congregation and supporting the racial justice goals of the broadly based Black Lives Matter movement, as consistent with our Unitarian Universalist principles;
- 2.) Follen will remain mindful of the interconnected nature of racism and other systems of oppression that impact all people of color, as well as people based on their class, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, culture, nationality, religion, and language;
- 3.) As an act of public witness, in a process overseen by Parish Board, Follen Church will indicate its support for racial justice by placing a sign or banner that includes the words "black lives matter" on its property;
- 4.) Follen's Social Justice Action Team, including the Follen Responds to Racism team, and others will communicate to the wider community the reasons why Follen commits to affirming that Black lives matter;
- 5.) Follen will provide ongoing, intentional learning spaces for Follen members and friends and the wider community to deepen understanding of racism in the United States and to organize for racial justice;
- 6.) Follen will commit to raising antiracist children;
- 7.) Follen will seek opportunities to collaborate with local, state, and national organizations working for racial justice, including the Lexington Police Department and other law enforcement agencies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Follen Church recognizes that the fight for civil rights and equality is as necessary today as it was decades ago, and that it has an opportunity to use its resources and resolve to fight for a system of fair, transformative, and restorative justice in which the full humanity and dignity of all people are recognized.

May 8, 2017_Final