FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT
the PROPOSED 8TH UU PRINCIPLE, BELOVED COMMUNITY, & ARTICLE II

1. What is the proposed 8th Principle?

"Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

2. What is Beloved Community?

"Beloved Community happens when people of diverse racial, ethnic, educational, class, gender, abilities, sexual orientation, backgrounds and identities come together in an interdependent relationship of love, mutual respect, and care that seeks to realize justice within the community and the broader world."

3. Why did grassroots UU lay leaders create the 8th Principle?

Although UUs personally believe every person has inherent worth and dignity, our **first principle** is aspirational and **does not *specifically call us to action*** *to address racism and other oppressions* harmful to human worth and dignity. Whiteness and privilege persist within our minds, within our congregations, and within our denomination. Paula Cole Jones, a Black woman, and Bruce Pollack Johnson, a white man, co-created and proposed the 8th Principle to prompt UUs at every level **to examine and change our thoughts and actions.** The 8th Principle was designed to **move us from aspiration to action**.

4. How is the 8th Principle involved with the revision of Article II?

In 2017, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly started discussing the proposed 8th Principle. At the local level, 237 individual congregations have adopted the grassroots 8th Principle as of 2/27/23 and are now enacting the 8th Principle and dismantling oppression.

In 2020, the UUA Board-appointed commission convened to review Article II of the UUA Bylaws, which houses our Principles, Purpose, and Sources. **The UUA Board charged the Article II Commission to include the essence of the 8th Principle.** They were to center our core theology of Love in Action, embolden UU communities to be relevant and powerful forces for growth, healing, and justice, and use inclusive language to creatively revise, replace, or restructure.

On January 20, 2023, the Article II Commission presented their work to the UUA Board. https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission (Click on Article II Study Report PDF, pgs. 19-22 for the proposed Article II.) The essence states **"Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love."** The proposed Article II will be brought to the June 2023 General Assembly, where delegates will vote to move it forward or not. If moved forward, the final vote will be at the June 2024 General Assembly.

5. Why is it important that UU Asheville adopt the 8th Principle?

Local commitment to work for collective liberation cannot wait until June 2024 for the UUA. When UU Asheville adopts the 8th Principle, voting members are affirming our ongoing justice ministry and stepping it up by committing to accountably work towards dismantling racism and other oppressions in ourselves, our congregation, and our community institutions.

The 8th Principle ***calls UU Asheville to accountable actions*** such as those which actively address our biases and decenter whiteness, those which review our By-Laws structures to see if they promote community, and those which integrate anti-oppression and liberation in our Religious Exploration classes.

6. Why is it important for the UUA to adopt Article II, infused with 8th Principle ideas?

UUs of color have asked all UUs to commit to take action to dismantle racism and other oppressions. Although our members of color love our faith, they are often hurt by white members and structures. Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) and Diverse Revolutionary UU Ministries (DRUUM) have urged the UUA to infuse the essence of the 8th Principle into the proposed revision to Article II. This is a compelling reason **to support the call of our faith to the long-term work of ending racism and other oppressions, decentering the white perspective, and working towards collective liberation.**

7. What about changes to the wording in the 8th Principle?

Congregations are being asked to **adopt the proposed wording** of the 8th Principle **as it stands**. Many UU congregations have adopted it with the same wording. Individual congregations adopting the 8th Principle with identical wording **shows unified support for this work and preserves the intent and spirit behind it.**

The wording of the proposed Article II integrates the intent and essence of the 8th Principle, as well as the existing 7 Principles https://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/principles. Our actions matter more than the wording or the organization of our principles and values.

8. How can I vote?

UU Asheville will vote to enact the 8th Principle for our congregation at our annual meeting on June 4th after the worship service. Proxy votes can be either electronic or paper. To be eligible to vote, UU Asheville members need to have completed a financial commitment form within the past year.