

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester Embraces the 8th Principle: Commitment to Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression

Worcester, June 28, 2023 - The Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester (UUCW) is proud to announce its official adoption of the 8th Principle, affirming its commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression. At its annual meeting on June 4, 2023, with no objections, the congregation voted to incorporate this principle into its guiding values, signaling a significant step forward in the ongoing work of dismantling systems of racism and other oppressions, to promote justice and equity.

The 8th Principle reads as follows: "We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester, covenant to affirm and promote: 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."

Unitarian Universalism is guided by the Seven Principles, established in 1985. While some feel that the struggle against racism and oppression is covered in these original principles, there is a grassroots movement to adopt a principle that deals with racism explicitly. As explained on the 8th Principle [website](#), "For people identified as white, it is too easy to ignore these issues [systemic racism and inequality], which is exactly what keeps the system of racism in our society alive and in fact worsening right now. We need to de-center whiteness and other dominant cultures in UUism."

By embracing the 8th Principle, the UUCW recognizes the urgent need to actively engage in anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices, both within its own community and in the broader society. This principle affirms the church's commitment to creating an inclusive environment where all individuals, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of their identity, are valued and respected.

Rev. Aaron Payson, minister of UUCW, expressed his enthusiasm for this milestone, saying, "The adoption of the 8th Principle is a powerful testament to our congregation's dedication to justice and equity. We are taking a bold stand against racism and oppression and affirming our commitment to create a more inclusive and welcoming community for all. This is an important step on our collective journey toward spiritual wholeness." Evan Wilson, leader of the 8th Principle Task Force added, "We recognize

that, in holding ourselves accountable to this commitment, the adoption is only the beginning. Now we need to incorporate it mindfully into everything we do.”

In embracing the 8th Principle, the UUCW joins a growing number of Unitarian Universalist congregations across the country who have also adopted this commitment. By working collaboratively, these congregations strive to make a meaningful impact on the larger community and foster a spirit of justice, equity, and compassion.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester invites individuals, families, and community organizations to join them in their journey towards spiritual wholeness and justice. Together, they aim to build a Beloved Community that cherishes and celebrates the rich diversity of the human experience.

For media inquiries or more information about the UUCW and its commitment to the 8th Principle, please contact:

8th Principle Task Force

8thprinciple@uucworchester.org

About the Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester: The Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester is a welcoming and inclusive religious community located in Worcester, Massachusetts, on the corner of Shore Drive and Holden Street. Rooted in the principles of Unitarian Universalism, the UUCW strives to create a world of justice, equity, and compassion. With a diverse and vibrant congregation, they are committed to lifelong learning, spiritual exploration, and making a positive impact on the local and global community. For more information, visit www.uucworchester.org.