

TJMC-UU Racial Justice Committee Meeting
March 11, 2018

Chalice lighting: quote from Ten Bears, elder Yamparika chief. From Empire of the Summer Moon by S. C. Gwynne

Introductions

Agenda:

How can we, as an institution, support our DAF.

1. Accountability circles
 - a. Idea is useful; think of it as a support group, encouragement group, that will encourage people to move forward at their own pace
 - b. This process is used in restorative justice; have also used peacekeeping circles in that context; I support it
 - c. Read the context in which our DAF mentioned them in her letter
 - d. It's not about giving answers, it's about asking questions; questions are asked by other members of the group
 - e. Format:
 - i. Group of 3-4 people
 - ii. Could focus on behavior to change or knowledge to acquire
 - iii. Not everyone has to be in the same place with respect to racial justice to go forward
 - iv. Groups could be comprised of folks who are in different stages of understanding
 - v. Each person decides on goal they want to set to move forward with RJ
 - vi. Goal should be challenging but doable
 - vii. Set interim steps to take before next meeting; make any adjustments needed, report on progress at the following meeting
 - viii. July meeting: report on final results to the whole group
 - f. First proposed cycle: April – June
 - g. Skip summer since many folks are away
 - h. Possibly offer this to folks in the congregation in the fall
 - i. How does this relate? Our DAF has mentioned this as a way of getting behaviors to change.
 - j. They're an opportunity to open up to what can happen, rather than continuing on our current path; will enable great communication between us.
 - k. These meetings will happen during our RJC meeting time.
 - l. Should they be based on the public witness statement and on the things in our DAF's response?
 - m. Proposals for how to start:

- i. sign up if you want to join one; a RJC member will randomly group people; groups will be mailed out with minutes
 - ii. alternative: people self-select groups
 - n. Are there other groups that have done accountability groups that we can consult?
 - o. This could be fun! in addition to being hard and important work
 - p. This may be ongoing, not a one-time-deal.
- 2. A list of actions to take to further racial justice in Cville was attached to the minutes
- 3. Overall: our goal is for more of us to be involved in more RJ activities and be more self-aware of what we're doing? (Committee confirmed: yes, that is overall goal.)
- 4. In a previous RJ class, they did an exercise: one person says something they've been thinking, and another person challenges it, with a RJ lens;
 - a. the exercise is as valuable for the challenger because they get to experience the process of confronting things that further a culture of white supremacy
- 5. Someone has said to one of our RJC members, what is it that our DAF did to warrant that person sending that note? THAT IS NOT OKAY.
- 6. What additional skills do we need in order to be able to challenge people when they say things that further a culture of WS?
- 7. Do we need to better capture what we are already doing?
- 8. Dual goals for this committee:
 - a. Continuing the work we are already doing to address the oppression of people of color in Cville and beyond
 - b. Addressing the culture of white supremacy in TJMC-UU
- 9. Clearness councils:
 - a. One of our members has experience with them via the Quaker community
 - b. Do we have the capacity to do them?
 - c. We need more information about them.
- 10. Do we need to know our DAF better?
 - a. Ministry?
 - b. No info about it on website
 - c. Our ministry brought this idea of shared ministry to TJMC-UU
 - d. Why don't we know her better?
 - e. Is asking these questions a way of deflecting from the pain we feel about the attack?
 - f. Is asking these questions an example of white supremacy because it deflects attention away from the attack and validates what the attacker did?
- 11. We need to do these things as an obligation to our community, in addition to supporting our DAF specifically.**
- 12. We will do this imperfectly, and it won't happen overnight, and we aren't going to have surety about what we're doing.**
- 13. Homework:
 - a. Reread our DAF's response
 - b. Do more reading about clearness councils
 - c. Read what was sent out about accountability circles

- d. Read more about accountability circles

Next meeting: April 8, 2018, with apologies to PAUN

Announcements

1. Tuesday, March 13, 7-8:30 – class and discussion group on Three Fifths Compromise, here at TJMC-UU
2. Tim Wise video and book group is underway
3. Tues, 3/13, 6-8 pm – Old Cabell Hall, Community Roundtable - Dr. King, Jr Memorial Commission
4. Sat, 3/17 – history of race and housing and segregated education; downtown, 9:30 – 5 pm
5. Angela Davis is coming
6. Minutes are now on the website.