

Racial Justice Committee meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville  
7-7-19

**Minutes:** Ann Forno

**In attendance:** Ann Forno, Beverly Ball, Shirley Paul, Maggie Record, Edith Good, Bill Bernstein (Reston UU), Frank Dukes, Linda Dukes, David Mellor

1. Unity Days in Cville

- a. Frank shared background information: Unity Days were devised by City Council; some events have already taken place; there is a theme for each month (history, current situations, looking towards the future);
  - b. Bill Bernstein, member of UU congregation in Reston and Floris UM of Herndon; came to visit us to talk about Unity Days and joining up with us
  - c. Here is a brief overview of events the weekend of Aug 10:
    - i. Sat Aug 10
      1. Cville Resonates - music and potluck, 11 - 1, Emancipation Park
      2. Monticello to Main Street tour, 11 - 1
      3. Historic Barn Tour, 2 pm
      4. Sing Out - 4 pm, Sprint Pavilion
    - ii. Sun Aug 11 - also national reparations days; Alex is preaching
      - 1.
    - iii. Mon Aug 12
  - d. Our ideas:
    - i. **Get the word out to our congregants about these events**
    - ii. Make suggestions to congregants as to what Unity Days events to attend
    - iii. Hard at this time of the year to get our folks to come out
    - iv. How will we recognize each other (NOVA folks and us) if we all come to some events?
    - v. Bill doesn't have a sense of how many folks would come from NOVA.
    - vi. Last year, CCC had a week's worth of events around A12; Frank doesn't know of anything in the works right now.
    - vii. Ann explained to Bill: this year is a "first," in a way, since A12 of 2017 and of last year were so different
    - viii. Pastoral Visitors has put on listening circles recently; could do one on Aug 11 or Aug 12, here in the church; Patty would need to be consulted, Leia has been doing them, too - 11:30; **Shirley will get a room on the calendar**
    - ix. Silent vigil is also a possibility, Friends Meeting of Cville may be planning that - **Ann will follow up on that**
    - x. **Ann will coordinate with Bill if we are going to have our folks join up with his on Sat, Aug 10**
2. Considering Our Name - David Mellor came to talk to us about this.

- a. His interest in this came out of his covenant group, Raising Race Conscious Children
  - b. Wants to start a series of conversations about this issue
  - c. He is collecting signatures to have an item put on the next congregational meeting agenda: the item would be an initiative to move forward with the process of considering changing our name / changing our name
  - d. There is nothing in the by-laws about changing our name.
  - e. At the first congregational meeting: 50% of members present at the meeting would need to vote to put this on the agenda/pursue this as an initiative
  - f. David wants to make sure that congregants understand that this is not an attempt to steamroll anyone or disregard anyone's feelings
  - g. David is here to hear what RJC members' thoughts are, to answer questions, to collect signatures
  - h. Our thoughts:
    - i. I commend your covenant group for raising your children in a conscientious way.
    - ii. Thank you for bringing this up; when we were having this conversation before, I didn't think this was relevant, but now I do.
    - iii. This church was half funded by the UUA because it wanted a church near Monticello that had Thomas Jefferson's name in it.
    - iv. Rev Wikstrom had a conversation with our accountability partner, Pastor Bates at Ebenezer Baptist Church; Pastor Bates said, don't change the name; own your history.
    - v. Pastor Bates may have changed his thinking by now.
    - vi. We need to keep trying to make this happen, even if it doesn't pass this time.
    - vii. Our committee can help staff cottage conversations, etc.
    - viii. We need to get people who are influential in our church to be in favor of changing the name.
    - ix. I hoped we wouldn't get caught up in what we call ourselves so much that we neglect the important work we are doing; but it's one step at a time, as I now understand, after hearing Karen Foley's sermon this morning.
3. Adult Faith Development offerings that we can provide for the upcoming year:
- a. Linda is teaching Wik's course, Seeing with New Eyes, with Diane Ober.
    - i. Linda has taught this previously, in her neighborhood.
    - ii. 4 sessions, Monday nights, each session is 2 hours
    - iii. Wik gave permission for Linda to teach this with his curriculum.
    - iv. Linda asked committee members to recruit people to take this class, especially families and young people.
    - v. If they get enough people, they will teach the follow-up class, Understanding with a New Mind.
  - b. An Evening with Edith Good????

- c. Raising Race Conscious Children covenant group - Camille Thompson and Stephanie Davis lead that group and collected lots of materials; David will ask them about sharing them and turning that into a class (even just one session)
    - i. Met in evenings, first Tuesday of every month, chipped in for childcare - that made the covenant group successful
  - d. At the listening circles, a theme emerged: people in this congregation are completely confused about what's happened; prior and present board members could help be there to explain what happened; we could be more enlightened, get some facts - pastoral visitors holding a workshop on Aug 3: how to listen when you know you're going to disagree - Sat, Aug 3, 2-4 pm
  - e. Course on book called "I'm still here: black dignity in a world made for whiteness," by Austin Channing Brown; reminiscent of what Christina has gone through; read book, have others read it, do discussion about it; heavy, emotional info, but a quick read
  - f. Hate Free Schools coalition - bring them here to speak about their work; they need help, and more members; Frank can connect with them
  - g. Beverly attended a session of one of the Unity senators; there was a welcoming circle; lead by Elliott Cisneros, Founder/Exec Dir of "the sum," [www.thesum.org-work/play](http://www.thesum.org-work/play) workshops, assessment of bias, advocating WITH people (instead of FOR)
4. Tabling at the Yard Sale - help sign people up for Medicaid who now qualify
- a. Who is willing to help staff that table:
    - i. Sat Aug 24 - Maggie, David, Beverly Ball (with Edith, 11 am?), Edith (1 hour, not 8 am)
    - ii. Sun Aug 25 - ????
5. Other -
- a. Does this committee need a FB page?

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