



Racial Justice Assessment Report

In the spring of 2021, the Racial Justice Team sent out a self-assessment form to UU members and congregations in Kentucky. The purpose of this assessment was to begin getting a sense of what UU congregations are doing around racial justice, and what they feel like they need in order to be more effective in making meaningful efforts towards racial justice. This report reflects the key findings from this initial assessment.

KUUJAN received a total of 72 responses from four congregations (out of 11 congregations) . With 49 of these coming from the congregations in Louisville (All Peoples had 34 responses, First U had 15). The UU church of Bowling Green provided 10 responses and the UU church of Lexington provided 8. Other responses came from St John's UU church in Cincinnati (2), Church of the Larger Fellowship (1) and unaffiliated (1).

We received multiple responses from the same congregations. We interpreted these as individual responses and not necessarily as formally representing the congregation. As such, it was not a surprise, nor should it be, that we received some conflicting responses in some cases.

Questions and Responses

Is your church currently engaged in Racial Justice Efforts?

Nearly all respondents responded with "yes". There were a couple of No responses, and a few responses of unsure.

Briefly Describe what:

Responses indicated that there is a vast array of current efforts that these congregations are engaged with the intent of promoting or advancing racial justice. The vast majority appear to focus on anti-racism as it relates to black people and communities. Some of specific responses include (listed roughly in order of how common these were mentioned by responders):

- Book studies
- Educational efforts
- Having black presenters to the congregation (often mentioned as during Sunday services)
- Involvement in/support for the Black Lives Matter movement (including having a BLM sign in the congregation and members putting up BLM signs in their yards/homes)
- Attending rallies/marches/events

- Financial supporting black led and/or racial justice organizations
- Joining in black led or racial justice organizations/coalitions
- Engaging in policy advocacy

Do you feel these efforts are meaningful and have an impact?

Roughly ¾ of responses indicated that yes, they did feel like these efforts are having a meaningful impact with the rest responding unsure or no. Since the survey itself provided meaningful guidance on how to assess “meaningful impact”, this response may be somewhat muted.

Would you like to learn from other UU congregations?

Nearly all responses indicated “yes”

Would you like to be able to share what you’re doing/learning with others?

Nearly all responses indicated yes (although less than the previous question)

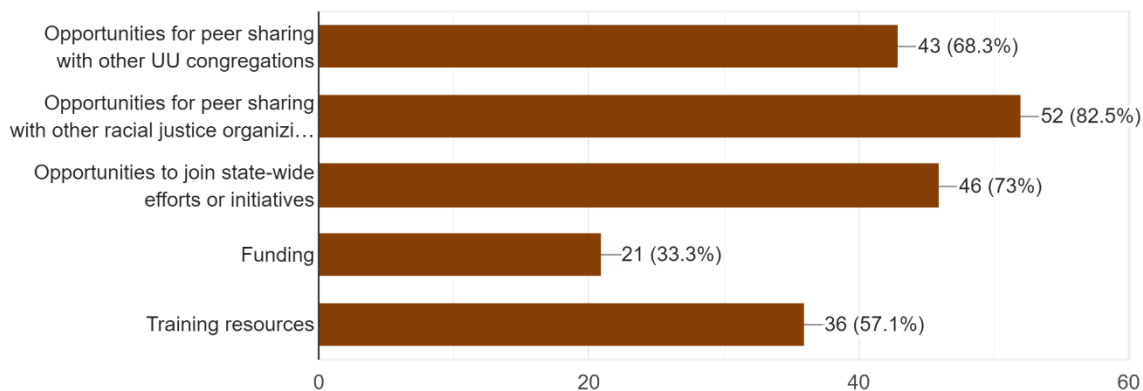
What is most critical in your Congregation being able to have a greater impact?

Responses below are listed in order of how popular they were in responses:

- Opportunities to peer share with other UU congregations
- Opportunities to peer share with other racial justice orgs
- Opportunities to join in state-wide efforts
- Training
- fundraising/financial support

Which of the following are critical to allowing your congregation to have a greater impact in your efforts to advance racial justice? (Select all that apply.)

63 responses



What other supports do you feel would help your congregation to have a greater impact?

Topic	Avg Score (out of 5)
• Community organizing	3.9
• Policy advocacy	4.2
• Faith organizing	4
• Education	4.2
• Using social media	3.8
• Social messaging	3.9
• Community mobilization	4.3
• Networking	4

As noted, all of these topic areas/skills sets received high scores and there is little meaningful difference amongst them. Suggesting that, according to the responses received, that all congregations would benefit from opportunities to develop their capacities on all of these areas.

Are there other capacities that you feel are important to develop to support your congregation's racial justice ministry

The most common response to this question was a desire for tools/resources for congregations to develop their skills in organizing, activism, youth organizing and knowing that they're being effective.

Are you aware of the 8th Principle movement?

Nearly all respondents indicated that they are aware of the 8th principle

Has your congregation adopted the 8th principle?

Most of these respondents indicate that their congregation has not yet adopted the 8th principle (NOTE: one congregation did adopt the 8th principle between the time of this survey and the time of this report)

Is your congregation working to adopt the 8th principle

All respondents indicated that their congregation is working on adopting the 8th principle. Although with less than 1/2 of area congregations represented, this data should be seen as incomplete.

Racial Justice Team Focus:

We asked for input/suggestions for our Racial justice team focus and received a broad range of responses. These are listed below, in no particular order:

- Coordinate concrete state-wide projects
- Address economic inequalities by promoting reparations, encouraging memes to shop at black owned businesses
- Promote state-wide legislation
- Form an alliance with at least one local justice org
- Teach black history, not just slavery
- Support black women leadership

- Forming relationships with black leadership and following their lead
- Training and required readings
- Ways to listen to those most impacted; expand racial justice to mean more than black people
- Supporting protests by showing up
- Police reform
- Effective voter registration and turn out
- Lobbying city and state governments
- Collaboration with other racial justice organizations

Other Racial Justice Team Efforts by KUUJAN

- Monitored the legislation related to racial justice issues
- Organized three all-network gatherings
- Began developing a Racial Justice Toolkit

Conclusion

This report represents the first effort by Unitarians in KY to begin a process of assessing our congregational capacities to engage in meaningful racial justice efforts. As this report reflects, our congregations feel like they are doing some things really well, and see a lot of value in networking and relationship building opportunities where they can develop and expand their racial justice efforts. They also see value in being able to link the efforts of these individual congregations to a state-wide network with a possibility of maximizing their efforts and effectiveness.