



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

Dear Colleagues,

We live in perilous times for our country, our spirits and our faith. The last few days there has been much conversation, reflection, anger and heartbreak over the hiring practices of the UUA. We are connected to the UUA staff, board and the other professional organizations of our tradition and we believe that all our organizations and institutions must work together to grow into the beloved community we yearn to become. Unitarian Universalist organizations and institutions were built by and for the dominant culture; we have work to do to continue learning how to dismantle our institutional oppressions. The board, staff and key leaders of the UUMA are in conversation about what we can do as a professional association to offer our support, collaboration and assistance to our siblings in faith. We will share the plans we make as they develop.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know we are listening carefully to the conversation and witnessing to the pain it evokes: the pain of those of us who continue to face the realities of oppression and unfairness in the world, our faith and our institutions - including the UUMA, the pain of those of us who serve in leadership roles in our faith, whose decisions are always (and rightly) open for critique, the pain we all feel when someone we love is hurting. We are witnessing and we are committed to both learning and loving with you as we take the next steps.

In times like these trust is compromised. When that happens, it can be helpful to turn to our covenants to remind ourselves of the promises and commitments we make to each other and the spiritual ground we stand on in our relationship with each other. A few portions of our UUMA Covenant seem especially pertinent to remember in the days ahead. We covenant:

- To support one another in collegial respect and care, understanding and honoring the diversity within our association;
- To use our power constructively and with intention, mindful of our potential unconsciously to perpetuate systems of oppression;
- To seek justice and right relations according to our evolving collective wisdom, and to refrain from all abuse or exploitation;
- To cultivate practices of deepening awareness, understanding, humility, and commitment to our ideals;

Friends, we will do our best to continue to learn personally, professionally and institutionally from the events of the last few days. And we will also do our best to listen to and love one another as we go forward doing the hard and often messy work we are called to do.

In faith and in love,

Cheryl & Don

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Nurturing Excellence in Ministry

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