

Small Group Ministry Session Thirty-Six: Racism

OPENING WORDS

“I just cannot accept the proposition that some people are better or worse than other people because of their race – whatever that may be. I accept my race and the race of everyone simply as a condition of existence, like height, weight, age, sex, or shoe size. Now this doesn’t mean at all that I am blind to the fact that other people may regard race at the most consequential aspect of their being and my being. I have almost a half century of scars, fortunately most of them on my memory and not on my body, to remind me that I live in a racist society. However, I refuse to permit anyone to infect me with the virus of racial pride, because I know it would turn out to be a cancer that would destroy my spirit, my physical self, and the world in which I live.”

The Hon. Wade H. McCree, First African American to serve as USA Assistant Solicitor General, McCree served as UUA Vice-Moderator 1965-1966

CHECK IN

Current state of physical or spiritual health

Joys or concerns about loved ones

Concerns/excitement about what is happening in our lives

REVIEW COVENANT & PROGRESS OF THE CIRCLE

DISCUSSION

In 1992 the General Assembly passed a resolution that committed the UUA to a vision of becoming a racially diverse and multicultural religious movement. Referred to now as the Journey Towards Wholeness, congregations, individuals and organizations have been challenged to engage in the work of building anti-racism and anti-oppression institutions. This task begins in coming to understand racism as it effects institutions and as it is experienced in individual lives. And a beginning to this task is to consider our own stories and our own experiences.

1. Do you identify, from your own personal heritage, with one or several racial or ethnic groups?
2. If so, how do you embody that part of your identity?
3. What is your earliest recollection of racial differences?
4. What is your most vivid experience of racial prejudice?

5. What challenge does racism present to you as a religious person?

6. To your spiritual practice? What more would you need to know to understand these questions better?

CHECK OUT

What did you like about this meeting? What do you wish had been different?

CLOSING WORDS

“Millions upon millions of people everywhere are drifting from the old formulations, no longer willing to view the ancient myths as religious truths. They are looking for a vital, modern religion with a personal and social imperative. We may have it! I think we do!

Our religion is a religion of social concern, a religion of intellectual and ethical integrity, a religion that emphasizes the dynamic conception of history and the scientific world view, a religion that stresses the dignity and worth of the person as a supreme value and goodwill as the creative force in human relations. This religion can and ought to become a beacon from which this kind of faith shines.”

The Rev. Lewis A. McGee, Ordained in the African American Episcopal tradition, Fellowshiped as a Unitarian in 1948, McGee helped to found the largely black Free Religious Fellowship in Chicago.