

A DOZEN WAYS TO FIGHT RACISM

(Developed by Mass Bay District
Black Concerns Working Group)

1. Hold a congregational discussion on the UUA's Commission on Appraisal report, *Empowerment: One Denomination's Quest for Racial Justice*, 1961-1982. Published in 1984; it is available, with a study guide.
2. Use one of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s books, such as *Where Do We Go From Here, Chaos or Community?* in a discussion of racism. Published by Beacon Press.
3. Show the audio-visual program *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Reverend Mark Morrison-Reed's honest and sometimes painful account of how blacks have experienced religion in Unitarian Universalist, and UU churches. Available through the UUA Audio-Visual Loan Library. The book, on which this is based, is at the UUA Bookstore.
4. Explore the possibility of having an exchange of ministers and/or choirs with a nearby black church. Perhaps a portion of the congregations could exchange as well.
5. Attend meetings of a local black or civil rights group. Join the local chapter of the NAACP. Talk with leaders in the black community and explore issues of common concern. Map out strategy to work together.
6. Clip articles from your local papers related to racism. Post these on a bulletin board at your church and encourage members to monitor ongoing issues. Discuss these issues. Organize support to fight racism, through letter-writing campaigns, attendance at hearings and other methods of social action.
7. Look at housing in your community. Is it integrated, segregated, or neither (basically white)? What can your congregation do to work toward more racially diverse neighborhoods? Try to get one of your members appointed to your local Fair Housing Advisory Committee. (Communities that receive state and federal housing monies must demonstrate a commitment to fair housing practice.)
8. Look at your town's school curriculum. Is black history and culture covered at any grade level? Check with the Museum Afro-American History (46 Joy Street, Boston, phone (617) 742-1854).
9. Check into your town's hiring policy for municipal employees. Ask to see your town's affirmative action plan. What efforts are being made by major private employers in your town to hire and promote people of color?
10. Organize a discussion group using the 6 part "Eyes on the Prize" series shown last year on PBS. This is a vivid portrayal, using actual newsreel footage, of the turbulent civil rights years, 1954-1965. The series is an excellent teaching tool, particularly for junior and senior high students, and should be considered for inclusion in school curriculum. "Eyes on the Prize" is available for rental through the UUA Audio-Visual Loan library.
11. Organize an ongoing congregational book discussion group. A good place to start might be with J. Anthony Lucas' *Common Ground*, published by Vintage Books. This is a hard-hitting book, chronicling the desegregation of the Boston public school system. Fiction choices might include the well-known books of James Baldwin. His *Notes of a Native Son* is published by Beacon Press. Beacon Press also publishes June Jordan's books, one of which, *Civil War*, would be good for discussion. In addition, Beacon Press has a new series of historical works by black women writers.

Other suggested readings are:

The Color Purple, Alice Walker, Washington Sq. Press

The Women of Brewster Place, Gloria Naylor, Penguin Books

Song of Solomon and Sula, Toni Morrison, Plume Books

12. Plan a congregational outing to walk the fascinating Black Heritage Trail on Beacon Hill. Included is the newly reopened and restored African Meeting House, the oldest black church building still standing in the United States. The staff of the Museum of Afro-American History in cooperation with the National Park Service offers guided tours. The Trail begins at the Museum, 46 Joy Street, Boston. Phone (617) 742-1854.

For related resource, check the free catalogs of:

The UUA Bookstore

The Audio-Visual Loan Library

Both are located at 25 Beacon Street, Boston MA 02108

Phone: 742-2100