

## 2018-19 Beloved Racial Justice (BRJ) CHARTER

### Section A: Name

1. What is the name of your group?

Beloved Racial Justice Team

### Section B: Purpose

1. What is the purpose of your group?

To grow and nurture a multicultural and anti-racist congregation. To grow souls to allow room for many cultures and races to observe and practice the UU principles to which we all subscribe. We believe we are working to change the culture of ESUC to one in which white culture is one of many cultures represented here. To do this, we must identify where we can step away from established practices and allow for collaborative, heart-centered and messy conversations and actions. The key is learning where it is appropriate for us to do work outside of the congregation, inside of the congregation, and when to do our own learning within the BRJ Team. To that end, our work will hopefully support the other efforts of the Board, committees and ministry teams to encourage thoughtful considerations beyond our current ways of doing and being.

2. How is your work related to one or more of our Unitarian Universalist Seven Principles? Our commitments are in italics below:

1. 1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person. *We will expand our understanding and appreciation of those who are different from us, recognizing the validity of their lived experience.*
2. 2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations. *We will start first with those in our own congregation, building awareness and making room to hear voices other than those from the dominant tradition, and empowering these members to assume leadership roles, creating safe and brave environments where they want to assume leadership roles.*
3. 3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. *We will be willing to be challenged by what makes our souls grow, and recognize how we, even with our best intentions, may impede that growth for others. We will support and challenge others to grow in cultural and anti-racist awareness through trust and relationship building.*
4. 4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning. *We will learn to trust and accept when others tell us their truth no matter how hard it is to hear. We will be curious instead of judgmental and stay in difficult conversations. We will challenge and support others to do the same.*

5. 5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. *We will work to help ourselves and the congregation see the value of including those whose voices have been minimized.*
6. 6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. *We will start with our congregation and community, seeking to spread peace, liberty and justice from the pews to the supermarket aisles to those we read about in the newspaper.*
7. 7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. *We will work to understand our position in that web and its effect on the others who share that web. We will take responsibility for our impacts on others, recognizing that what hurts one hurts all.*

3. How does your group connect with East Shore's Mission and Vision? Please see the Mission listed in the Overview Section above. The full Vision based on the Mission can be found at [www.esuc.org](http://www.esuc.org) under Governance and Bylaws.

We practice love by using compassion with all people, no matter where they are on their journey of understanding the truths of racism and white supremacy. Our work is to enable all people to practice love across differences. We explore spirituality by exploring our inner hearts – our blocks to being able to fully love and relate across differences, and even across differences in thoughts and perspectives.

4. In order to intentionally live our mission in our daily team work, a set of Right Relations guidelines is recommended for all Committees and Teams. Do you have an agreed upon set of guidelines? If not, please develop one this year. The Right Relations Committee will assist you as needed.

BRJ team has developed a team covenant base on Right Relations guidelines and we use these principles in all of our meetings. We observe that everyone's perspective is of value and we invite those who are willing to do the internal work to learn from mistakes, share pain, hear deeply, and commit to trying hard to doing no harm.

5. What relationship does your group have, if any, to the 2018/19 Ends? Ends are East Shore's goals.

We consider ourselves instrumental in moving this church from multiculturally aware to anti-racist. To do this work, BRJ efforts currently focus primarily on issues affecting African American, Hispanic, and Indigenous populations. We also support connections with Muslim and immigrant groups.

We actively support growing the church through increasing membership diversity.

Both of these efforts require a culture shift that we are working on.

6. What are your group's specific goals for the next year? What impact do you expect from your efforts? If an activity is listed, what result do you expect from it? How will you evaluate the impact of your efforts?

BRJ's long-term goal is to build an anti-racist community where diverse populations feel welcome to attend and participate in East Shore's spiritual and social justice offerings. From this base, we plan to work in the community and beyond to actively undo racism. To achieve these larger goals, BRJ members support each others' internal development work while focusing their efforts on one or more of the marginalized groups currently embraced by the team: African American, Hispanic, Indigenous, Muslim and immigrant populations.

To these ends, BRJ members have established and continue to support activities including:

We are holding white "going deeper" sessions to enable white BRJ members to explore and process the challenges of working to change the culture of East Shore, and to develop the capacity to have authentic deep relationships with people of color while causing minimal pain. This group is exploring the ways in which white supremacy culture is embedded in their approaches to doing the work of culture change.

We will hold a people of color caucus for members of BRJ to explore ways they can stand up for their spiritual needs and have their voices heard. They will also explore the ways they have been shaped by white supremacy culture.

These two groups will come together to continue this deep exploration together. We will evaluate the impact of our efforts by witnessing the increased depth of trust and relationships among the white and non-white members of the BRJ team.

We will provide space for those in the congregation who are not members of BRJ to come together to do this type of work. This may be Conversations About Race, book discussions, movies and discussions, Beloved Conversations, or other carefully crafted courses. In all of this church transformational work, we will focus on infusing spirituality, exploring white supremacy cultural tenets, and deepening trust and relationships. We will evaluate the impact through attendance and feedback.

We are continuing to hold Flash Stances to declare our commitment to racial justice to the East Side Community. We are evaluating the impact through attendance and community responses to our presence.

We are creating worship services that reflect total inclusion and awareness of privilege. We are evaluating the impact through attendance and feedback.

We believe it is important to question business-as-usual. We plan to infuse spirituality into every business meeting and use all meetings to explore the habits of white supremacy and decentralize whiteness.

Results will vary depending on each participant's willingness and length of time it takes to recognize their story and how it relates to the racial structures of our church and world. Ultimately, the result will be a growing awareness, frank discussions, and full acceptance as cultural norms at ESUC. We will be looking for deeper discussions, more spirituality, more authentic trust in relationships, and more equitable representation of diverse voices in leadership.

It is difficult to measure this kind of soul work, but we are open to considering any established guidelines the UUA or other faith traditions have developed.

### **Section C: Group Structure, Leadership & Decision-Making**

1. Where does your group fit into East Shore's organizational structure – as a Board Committee, Ministry Team or Core Team? Who is your staff liaison or partner?

BRJ Team is a ministry team working through the Earth and Social Justice Coordinating Council liaison. Louise Wilkinson is ESJCC liaison and the Minister, Steve Furrer, is staff liaison to ESJCC.

2. What are the minimum and maximum number of participants? To ensure community representation, no fewer than five members is recommended. If you have fewer than five members, please explain. Who are your current team members?

We have a core group of fifteen who bring varying degrees of experience and interest in this work. They are: Rhonda Brown, Louise Wilkinson, Jack Slowriver, Clare Sherley, Emily Dietrich, Manny Brown, Seth Hamilton, Jose Garcia, Maury Edwards, Jeanne Lamont, Lynn Roesch, Jennie Hall, Danna Schmidt, Marilyn Mayers, Mary Gleason, Carrie Bowman, Li Lu-Porter, Aisha Hauser, and we are sadly missing Dick Jacke.

3. What are the leadership roles and responsibilities within your group?

There are 2 co-chairs: Rhonda Brown and Louise Wilkinson. They schedule meetings and represent the group when required.

4. How are leaders determined, and what are their term limits?

Since our group is based around cultural differences, people involved in cultural and racial diversity are at a minimum at East Shore. We are exploring new ways of looking at leadership, leadership selection, and sharing of leadership. Since the Board is requiring term limits for the chair, the limit will be three years with the option of an additional three years if needed. If additional time is needed the group will ask the Board for an exception. Cochairs may stagger their terms, return to membership for a time, and return to leadership after one year out of leadership.

5. What, if any, are the term limits for your members?

Again, since both diverse people and people committed to anti-racist work are a minority at East Shore, committee members work hard and there are few replacements. We will not be establishing term limits in the foreseeable future, and term limits for members of ministry teams are not required.

6. How are decisions made in your group (consensus, majority vote, officers, super majority percent)? What quorum is needed? Is email vote allowed?

Decisions are made after heartfelt conversation that gives special consideration to minority voices. We plan and proceed based on their experiences and what aligns with our 7 principles. We have few votes but instead rely on majority agreement of those present at the meeting.

7. How are records kept and passed on for your group? If you are a Board Committee, what one person on your team will send the meeting minutes to the Chair of the Archives Team?

Notes are taken and shared with members as appropriate. The group chair will pass on significant records to a new chair.

8. How are members recruited and oriented to your team?

East Shore members volunteer to become involved. They have usually participated in some of the team's offerings which has familiarized them with the team. They are oriented through sharing and relationships.

9. What, if any, qualifications are required for membership or leadership?

People are asked to be fully committed to their own development. They must display a level of awareness; they must be there to further and not prevent the work. We consider our work to be risky for some members of the church and community, therefore caring and courage are required. They need the willingness to learn and listen, and for white people to sit in discomfort and seek understanding, recognizing that it is a long journey.

10. How does your group communicate and collaborate with the larger East Shore community?

BRJ presents services, holds Flash Stances and holds monthly gatherings for both POC and White people exploring race as it impacts African Americans. We offer Beloved Conversations as requested and create spaces for deep conversations about race for the larger congregation. We also offer classes, films, and presentations as ways to reach the larger community about issues that impact indigenous people in our area. We are exploring specific ways in which to address the needs of Hispanic members in our community.

BRJ uses the Beacon, E-blasts, posters and email lists for communication within East Shore.

11. What one person on your team is authorized to approve communications publicized by Staff? Who is the designated back up person?

We are sharing communications efforts.

12. What types of decisions is your group authorized to make?

We make decisions regarding programs for racial justice.

13. What kinds of recommendations, if any, does your group make and to whom (Board, Minister, Staff, congregation)?

We actively communicate with the Board, minister and staff, making recommendations about ways in which they can help to shift the culture. We communicate with the congregation to recommend trainings and growth opportunities. Our communications are meant to inform, educate and recommend actions that will enhance the congregation's understanding of race and cultural differences in an effort to make ESUC a safe place to worship and to become truly integrated into our larger faith community.

14. Does your group plan to sponsor any outside groups to use the church facilities? If so, please see Board Policy 1.16a and the Staff Procedures for Sponsorship of outside groups.

While we have discussed our desire to welcome more diverse groups to host their platforms at ESUC, it is not felt to be safe yet to do so. We have much work to do in our own congregation, although we hope to test the waters with smaller efforts in the near future. If BRJ decides to sponsor an outside group to use the church facilities for their own meetings, it will work with Executive Director, Jason Puracal, to develop a Sponsorship Agreement with the church.

15. What is the expectation for longevity of the group and the plan, if any, for disbanding the group?

The longevity of the group depends on members' tolerance for these conversations and work.

## Section D: Finances

1. Will your group present a budget proposal to the Budget Team next year?

Yes, to support:

- Beloved Conversation facilitation
- Three or four speakers per year
- Supplies for the various activities, ie Flash Stances, meetings, workshops

2. If the Operating Fund is unable to grant the full amount of your budget request, will the group reduce its expenses or do its own fundraising?

We believe BRJ education and programming is the responsibility of the whole.

However, if we feel that it is necessary, we may request to do independent fundraising or charge for events.

3. If your group plans to do fundraising, please describe how it will go about this. If you plan to solicit donations, use the following wording: "Your donation goes to East Shore's operating funds which supports (name of your team) and other programs."

We have no fundraising plans for the immediate future. If fundraising is done, the group will use the wording above.

4. What kind of decision process exists for how money is used?

The group makes the decisions using the process described in Section C 6 above.

5. Which one person on your team is authorized to approve team expenses? Who is the designated back up person?

The two co-chairs: Rhonda Brown and Louise Wilkinson.

6. Does your group have the need for a Prudent Reserve (funds set aside to hedge against a contractual liability)? If so, how much and what for?

No