

**2015 Action of Immediate Witness:
Support the Black Lives Matter Movement
Preliminary Text**

Because Unitarian Universalists strive for justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

Because Unitarian Universalists have a goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; and

Because Allowing injustice to go unchallenged, is a violation of our principles;

Whereas, The Black Lives Matter movement has gained powerful traction in conjunction with recent tragic events involving, in particular, police brutality and institutionalized racism that targets the black community;

Whereas, Tanisha Anderson, Rekia Boyd, Michael Brown, Miriam Carey, Michelle Cusseaux, Shelly Frey, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin, Kayla Moore, Tamir Rice, and Tony Robinson are just a few names of people who were recently killed by the racism that exists in the United States today;

Whereas, People of all ages and races are killed by law enforcement, yet black people ages 20-24 are seven times more likely to be killed by law enforcement;

Whereas, Mass incarceration fueled by for-profit prisons and racially biased police practices are driving the disproportionate imprisonment of black and brown Americans;

Whereas, The school-to-prison pipeline is an urgent concern because 40% of black students are expelled from US public schools and one out of three black men are incarcerated during their lifetime; and

Whereas, We must continue to support the Black Lives Matter movement and Black-led racial justice organizations;

Therefore, be it resolved

- That the 2015 General Assembly calls member congregations to action, in order to become closer to a just world community, and in order to prevent future circumstances of this nature; and
- That the 2015 General Assembly urges member congregations to engage in intentional learning spaces to organize for racial justice with recognition of the interconnected nature of racism coupled with systems of oppression that impact people based on class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability and language; and
- That the 2015 General Assembly encourages member congregations and all Unitarian Universalists to work towards police reform and prison abolition; and
- That the 2015 General Assembly recognizes that a system that allows oppression to thrive is not a system that can successfully undergo reform, and therefore should be abolished altogether and replaced with a system of transformative justice; and

- That the 2015 General Assembly recognizes that the fight for civil rights and equality is as real today as it was decades ago, and urges member congregations to take initiative in collaboration with local and national organizations fighting for racial justice against the harsh racist practices many black people are exposed to.

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No matter who you are, black lives matter, and a system of fair, transformative, and restorative justice that is accountable to communities is something each of us has a right to. Unitarian Universalists and our greater society have the power to make this happen. Let's do it!

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