



Cristy Cardinal

Ending White, Cis-gender, Heteropatriarchy Together: UU Congregation of Ann Arbor MI

Project Goal

At the end of 18 months, 10% of the congregation will have increased awareness and capacity to address white supremacy and gender inequality. This 10% will understand and embrace an intersectional feminist world view and work toward living it out.

Personal Reflection

In setting up my support system, I have needed to reach out and make personal connections with many folks. In my personal goal for this work, I stated that I wanted to create deeper roots for myself in the congregation. I have been doing this rather diligently and extensively for the last two months.

In addition to talking to many folks about the project details, I have been creating community beyond those of us already engaged. Attending General Assembly was transformative for me. I did a selfie project as a means to introduce myself to people and forge connections. It was popular and fun, and it was moving. We came back and nearly immediately set up some new social plans, both formally in the church and informally among the members of the congregation.

I also created a new Facebook group for self-described “church ladies,” which is not exclusive to UUAA or even UUs in general, but is open to the majority. There is a lot of enthusiastic participation, and it might just give birth to the feminist group at UUAA that is part of my workplan. Or, it might just remain a fun, supportive exercise in showing up for one another in the 21st century. In spite of my sponsor and senior minister’s retirement, I feel more connected to my fellow congregants than I could have ever expected in this moment.

Project Update

The three components of the project are at various states of progress. I have put the most effort into the racial justice curriculum “Examining Whiteness.” We have four facilitators, dates set for classes, and have generated sufficient buzz to believe we’ll have no trouble filling the 16 available placements in our pilot group. We have even had interest from outside of our congregation, but we have decided to limit that because this work needs to be tested in our

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own house first, since the goal of of the project is to deal with our own internal white supremacy.

The pilot group discussions will run throughout the fall. I will also be teaching a class myself on intersectional feminism as a spiritual practice as part of the fall spiritual growth and development schedule. The final component, our social justice strategic plan, has had a slow start, but after the classes are planned and set to run, time will free up for that multi-month process.

I have been met with a great deal of enthusiasm about this project, and that's all without announcing it from the pulpit yet! I will be part of worship as the "social justice connection" on August 7. I will then be hosting a table in the social hall afterward.