

## **Racial justice opportunities at UCCH**

Racial justice is a core value at UCCH, and efforts to grow into our [Racial Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Covenant](#) are taking place throughout the church. You can show your interest and apply these values through a wide variety of programs or groups. With the launch of the Spreading Justice initiative, it seemed like a good time to share about groups specifically focused on advancing racial justice in our church.

### **Racial Justice Ministries (RJM) committee**

RJM is a new committee under the Board of Justice, Outreach, and Service (BJOS), launched in Fall 2019 to build on the early efforts of a similar committee in 2016. RJM works in collaboration with other groups both within and outside the church, to identify and help implement ways that UCCH can live more fully into its Racial Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Covenant.

Recent projects include establishing a new UCCH scholarship through the NAACP, the Spreading Justice initiative to help address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, and a Racial Justice Guiding Questions tool which helps all church groups apply a racial justice lens when making decisions.

The committee meets on the second Wednesday evening of every month at 7:00pm via Zoom. To become a member, simply let Ingrid Schmidt know that you are interested. Unlike board positions, formal approval by Council is not needed for committees, and membership in the church is not required.

### **Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR) class**

Our [UCC denomination started Sacred Conversations on Race \(SCOR\)](#) in 2008, and United Church of Chapel Hill has participated from the beginning.

The SCOR group has had a variety of roles in the past, but now that the Racial Justice Ministries committee is in place to handle planning and organization for racial justice initiatives within UCCH, SCOR has been able to focus on being a class and discussion forum for those who are interested in engaging more deeply with issues of race and racism.

Everyone is welcome to participate in the SCOR class, even if intermittently, regardless of where you are in your journey to understand and work against racism. You are welcome even if you are just starting to think more deeply about these issues. "Mistakes" are welcome, because everyone in the group benefits from learning more. We seek to honor each person, wherever they are in understanding the impact of racism in their lives, our community and our world.

In this class we hope to build a more solid foundation of understanding and inspiration, in order to then participate in our congregation's many activities, take action as a community of faith, and create positive change. Through our discussions we continue to prayerfully seek God's guidance, learn, lovingly challenge, support, and be a resource to each other.

Classes alternate between

- topics of study or current events;
- opportunities for personal reflection and relationship building;
- conversations with representatives of our church's various boards and organizations, to support these groups and the Racial Justice Ministries committee in integrating anti-racist work into all aspects of our church life.

SCOR had been meeting on Sunday mornings, but currently meets Saturday evenings at 7:30-8:30 by Zoom. The class is facilitated by Fred Joiner and Ingrid Schmidt. If you are interested in participating, please contact Ingrid or Fred at [ucch.scor@gmail.com](mailto:ucch.scor@gmail.com) for the Zoom details.

### **Sacred Conversations on Race (SCOR) listserv**

The listserv was created primarily to provide details via email on meeting times and topics for the SCOR class, but is also a place to share interesting articles, events, or other resources to advance our understanding of issues related to race. Some people have joined the group mainly to learn about the resources, and the list has grown quite large, even including people in other states who have a connection to UCCH.

Any list member can post messages. In applying what we learn, challenging, honest and constructive thoughts on ways our church can further strengthen its anti-racism work are sometimes shared, but harsh or personal attacks are avoided. (Deeper concerns or grievances are taken directly to individuals involved, or to the [Pastoral Relations Committee](#).) To join this listserv, please send an email to Ingrid Schmidt or Fred Joiner at [ucch.scor@gmail.com](mailto:ucch.scor@gmail.com).

### **[Sacred Conversations on Race Facebook page](#)**

Another opportunity to share resources and events is the SCOR Facebook page. Anyone can join and post articles that might be helpful to all of us on this journey. We apply the same guidelines as for the SCOR listserv mentioned above. Posts are welcome!

### **And so much more...**

Opportunities to grow into and live our church's Racial Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Covenant can be found not only in the activities listed above, but throughout UCCH. We hope you will find the ways that speak best to your gifts or talents, and that help you be an expression of God's passionate love for all.