

AN INVITATION INTO RIGHT RELATIONSHIP AND SPIRITUAL BALANCE THROUGH REPARATIONS

Social Justice Resolution 2026 | Working Draft

Whereas deep, unresolved harm has been perpetrated against our neighbors—Native Americans, Black Americans, and other People of Color.

Whereas this harm is historical and continuing; it has been perpetrated by our nation and by religious institutions, including our own denomination.

Whereas we, the Boise UU Fellowship, as a congregation and as individuals, have accrued benefits and advantages through these acts of harm, creating a state of spiritual and material imbalance with our neighbors of color.

Whereas we, the Boise UU Fellowship, endeavor to be people of integrity, humility, gratitude and generosity.

Whereas, it is our wish to generate spiritual and material balance and harmony, stand in right relationship with all people, and create Beloved Community by living our Unitarian Universalist values.



Whereas, our Fellowship’s mission directs us to hold a passion for social justice, to dismantle systemic racism, and to welcome the wider community as allies in anti-racist work.

Whereas our Fellowship began the work of amending harm by adopting the Eighth Principle in 2019, and we have lived into the principle through acknowledgement of history, self-examination, extensive study, and acts of goodwill.

Whereas reparations are concrete, sustained actions to make amends for harm done to people and their communities; reparations involve intentional acts that recognize and address historical, psychological, cultural, material, and spiritual injuries.

Whereas, reparations can bring us, as a Fellowship, closer to spiritual balance and into right relationship with our neighbors.

Whereas models of reparations exist at the international, national, community, and congregational levels, which can inspire and inform our own reparations program.

Now, therefore, be it RESOLVED that the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship commits to an ongoing reparations program to amend historical or continuing harm to communities or individuals of color and to take concrete steps to repair relationships and build Beloved Community.

Be it further RESOLVED that

1. The Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will have a standing reparations ministry team to develop and lead the program and to support continuing education about reparations in the Fellowship.
2. The reparations ministry team will lead an ongoing process to identify communities or individuals who have endured the effects of harm perpetrated, that is, *affected communities* or *affected individuals*.
3. The reparations ministry team will foster relationships with the affected community or individual so that they may consider us good, trustworthy neighbors and may indicate what form of reparations is meaningful to them.
4. The reparations ministry team will have a congregational fund to use for reparations.
5. The reparations ministry team will oversee actions of reparation, generating ever-growing understanding and engagement of the Fellowship in right relationships.

REQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESOLUTION

What Does the Resolution Do?

The resolution does two things.

- First, it commits to an on-going reparations program. This is not a one-time project.
- Second, it provides a foundational framework to start reparations work after the resolution is approved. A reparations program needs resources of leadership and funds. The framework provides for those.
 - It calls for a standing reparations ministry team to guide the on-going work of identifying and developing relationships with affected communities or individuals and to create a reparations program with the them. It will also continue to educate and engage our community.
 - It calls for a fund to be created for reparations. The details of this fund are intentionally left to be determined with more discernment. But to be effective, the reparations ministry requires funding.

Will the Standing Reparations Ministry Team be Part of the Social Justice “Bubble” at BUUF?

- Yes. BUUFs social justice teams work as partners through the Social Justice Council. Reparations Ministry will be a partner team with other justice efforts, like Refugee & Immigrant Ministry and Racial Justice Ministry.
- At this time, the reparations ministry is seen as separate in purpose from the Racial Justice Ministry, which has focused on our congregation’s education about race, racism, and racial identity.
- A reparations ministry team will focus on connections and relationships with communities and individuals affected by historic harms.

Will Funds Be Dedicated to Reparations? Where Do They Come From?

- The resolution directs that a fund will be developed to do the on-going work. This has been done before.
- The source of the fund will be determined cooperatively through BUUF processes that incorporate the Reparations Ministry team, the board, the minister and staff, and the congregation.
- Funding of a particular reparations effort will be decided by the Reparations Ministry team.

Do Other Social Justice Teams Have Funds?

- Yes. Some justice teams have dedicated funds available to do work that fulfills the team’s purpose. Those funds are managed prudently and cooperatively by team leadership, staff and Rev. Sara.
- Some teams use funds available through the social justice council.
- Commitment of funds to a social justice activity or project depends on funds available.
- Funds for the reparations ministry would be managed with the same principles, prudence, and care as existing funds.

What Do We Mean By “Reparations”?

- Reparations are concrete, sustained actions to make amends for harm done to people and their communities.
- Reparations involve intentional acts that recognize and address historical, psychological, cultural, material, and spiritual injuries.
- Reparations may take the form of material, financial, labor or other assistance as deemed appropriate by the recipients.

Why is BUUF Called to Make Reparations?

Reparations are required because American institutions and religions have either harmed people of color or benefited from harm perpetrated in the past. That harm is on-going.

- Our homes and church are on land stolen from the Shoshone, Paiute, and Bannock people. Communities of color continue to suffer grievously from this and the loss of culture, language, spiritual practices, and community. Our community has a spiritual mortgage.
- Our financial support comes from generational wealth rooted in the unpaid, slave labor of Black people. This awakens our generous natures.
- Our own denomination has perpetrated harm through boarding schools and broken commitments. We wish to repair and heal.

- In the face of a blatantly violent, racist regime, BUUF’s commitment to action that makes the world better for our neighbors of color cannot be stopped.

Why do We Say Right Relationship? Spiritual Balance?

- Right relationship is a connection inclusive of ethical integrity, mutual respect, trust, empathy. This term is widely used in reparations work among faith-based communities and with indigenous communities.
- Spiritual balance is a state of understanding, harmony, possibility, peaceful coexistence with one’s self and others.
- Both right relationship and spiritual balance are directly supported by our UU values.

Remind Me What Our Six Values Are Again.

- Interdependence...*We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships*
- Justice...*We work to be a diverse multicultural Beloved Communities...We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression.*
- Generosity...*We covenant to freely and compassionately share our faith, presence, and resources. Our generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality.*
- Equity...*We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities*
- Pluralism...*We celebrate that we are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.*
- Transformation...*We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically.*

What Has the Reparations Working Group (RWG) Been Doing?

- RWG members are Diane Dorius, Diane Ryssel, Don Stepich, Ed Pack, Eileen Oldag, John and Paula Warren, Linda Secretan, and Tom Neale, with Rob Ham serving as liaison with the BUUF Board.
- Beginning in the fall of 2025, RWG met regularly, reviewed a wide range of source materials, discussed and refined the elements of the draft resolution. They shared perspectives on and intentions for reparations with the congregation in the November 30 service.
- Their work now is to host the Listening & Learning Circles and to communicate the need and opportunities reflected in reparations. They are shepherding the resolution through the process.

Reparations Working Group Tasks BEFORE Resolution Approval INCLUDE	Reparations Working Group Tasks BEFORE Resolution Approval DO NOT INCLUDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing A Draft Reparations Resolution based on UU Values • Conducting Learning/Listening Circles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 In-person ○ 2 via Zoom ○ Others as needed • Soliciting comments, suggestions, ideas • Listening but not deciding • Communicating the need of reparations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciding what affected communities we hope to bring into relationship • Deciding how funds are developed or used

What is the Timeline for this Process and Creating the Reparations Ministry at BUUF?

- The Listening/Learning Circles will continue in March with a community event expected in April. (You can pencil in April 19 and look for a confirmation invitation.)
- The Resolution will be presented at or around the Annual Congregation Meeting in May with electronic voting after.
- If the resolution passes, the reparations ministry will be formed after.

FAQs may be updated as questions develop or answers deepen. You are welcome to send your questions to: Reparations@BoiseUU.org.