

AMM MINUTES AND HISTORY RELATING TO ANTI-RACISM COMMITMENT/ONGOING TRAINING/ASSESSMENT

December 2012

Committee on Peace and Social Concerns of Albuquerque Monthly Meeting – Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – Minute approved December 2012

Since November of 2011, we, the Albuquerque Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), have been engaged in a process of listening, learning, and dialogue with participants in the (un)Occupy Albuquerque movement. This engagement has awakened us to the implications of the use of the word “Occupy” and the ways in which the language of ‘occupation’ is a source of pain for many indigenous people and people of color. As Friends, we now regret the movement’s recourse to the language of war—to occupy is not to set free. In light of the history of colonization and the resulting effects on the land, environment, and indigenous peoples, our aspiration is more nearly expressed as “Unoccupy”. This word recognizes occupation as yet another effort to dominate and colonize both people and the earth and as a root cause of economic inequality. To end economic inequality, we must, among other things, change behaviors, ideologies, institutions, policies, economies, and even language that exploit people, land, and resources, particularly those people who have already suffered oppression.

We are hopeful that the Occupy and (un)Occupy movements globally will continue to be a force for positive change; we affirm the right of demonstrators to free speech and peaceable assembly; and we oppose endeavors to silence those who are exercising these rights through non-violent demonstration and protest. We are also hopeful that through a continued relationship with (Un)Occupy Albuquerque, as well as through self-education about dynamics of privilege, oppression, racism, and colonization, we will continue questioning and speaking truth to ourselves, each other, and our communities (both Quaker and non-Quaker) about these issues, moving past actions that merely substitute one system of domination and oppression for another. In our witness, we must not become occupiers ourselves, simply striving to shift power our way rather than shine the light of truth on systems of race, class, power, and privilege, and the need for restorative economic and social justice.

June 5, 2017

AMM Minute of Support for FGC Institutional Assessment on Structural Racism

Albuquerque Monthly Meeting of Intermountain Yearly Meeting supports the Friends General Conference decision to undergo an Institutional Assessment to examine structural racism within the organization and create recommendations for transformation. We agree that identifying and eradicating policies, structures and culture that inhibit full participation by People of Color is essential. Although such an undertaking may be uncomfortable and disruptive for FGC and its members, we support this assessment. We commit ourselves to renewing our own exploration of institutional racism within the Albuquerque Monthly Meeting.

Following this Minute, AMM adopted the practice of presenting the FGC anti-racism query at the beginning of monthly meetings for worship for business, and – ideally – before each AMM committee meeting.

This minute resulted in an AMM Minute first proposed by the Whiteness Study Group on February 2, 2020:

Albuquerque Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, acknowledging that we are affected by structural racism within a historical framework of white supremacy in the United States, commit to a period of self-reflection and discernment toward becoming an Anti-Racism Multicultural Faith Community. The process will be guided by an anti-racism assessment team made up of volunteers, with a report back to AMM by September 2020, or sooner.”

The COVID-19 pandemic made the above goal impossible to meet.

Educational Efforts by URJE (Upholding Racial Justice & Equity)

In 2016, there were 15-minute-long mini-workshops accompanying monthly Meeting for Worship for Business for a year, prepared and presented by AMM members/attenders.

At the end of this series, a group of committed AMM members/attenders formed the *Whiteness Study Group*. The purpose of the group at that time was to provide participants with continued access to open discussion, self-examination and learning as individuals, and as members of the larger AMM community.

The name of the group was changed, with input from the sole member of color, to URJE – an acronym that signifies: **Upholding Racial Justice and Equity**.

AMM’s commitment to ongoing Anti-Racism Training was reiterated in a minute related to such a request made by the Faith Coalition for Immigrant Justice, as a commitment by AMM as a Sanctuary Church. The Faith Coalition ended, and no further action was taken by AMM.

Book groups, Contemplative Reading and Adult Education have also, intermittently, focused on writings of people of color with a focus on racism and white supremacy, spiritual growth, etc.

URJE members also provided a series of monthly workshop on structural racism/whiteness on ZOOM during the first year of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Now, Post Pandemic, URJE hopes to bring these matters to the forefront of the Meeting’s consciousness and resolve once again, starting with films/discussion groups, and, possibly, a meeting-wide facilitated discussion on what we mean by the FGC query and what we envision an actively anti-racist faith community to be.

