

In the fall, the 8th Principle Steering Committee hosted four conversations to explore what the Neighborhood community needed in order to learn and reflect more on the 8th Principle. The first two conversations were BIPOC community focused and the other two were congregation-wide. The 8th Principle Steering Committee is thankful for all of the attendees of these conversations and came away with many great ideas and areas of concern to work on. We welcome further conversation about bringing the 8th Principle to Neighborhood. If you were unable to attend one of these conversations or want to continue the conversation, please reach out to us [here](#).

During the BIPOC community focused conversations attendees were asked how they have experienced Neighborhood in a positive way and how the church could change to improve their experience. Some common themes that emerged from the first question were that Neighborhood is a welcoming community where lasting relationships have been made, the church's understanding of racial justice has expanded, and the commitment to social justice is a key reason many members of the BIPOC community remain active at Neighborhood. Several members mentioned the importance of the fellowship that the NPOC group has created in creating a positive experience for them. The music at Neighborhood was also praised for being engaging and exciting. It was noted that Neighborhood has been doing 8th Principle work for many years through NPOC (the oldest Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries fellowship group in the UUA), Building Bridges, Truth & Reconciliation, annual Juneteenth celebrations, racial justice breakfasts, and more.

The ways in which Neighborhood could change to improve the experience of BIPOC community members also brought out some common themes.. One of the ways that we can live this is by providing more direct action, social justice outreach, and involvement within our larger community. Microaggressions were identified as an ongoing issue for many members of the Neighborhood BIPOC community that have led to uncomfortable and hurtful situations. More education and consciousness about microaggressions within the Neighborhood community was identified as a direct way to help create a more welcoming environment for BIPOC. The conversations about anti-racism and the 8th Principle were identified as being positive steps in creating a stronger sense of belonging.

The congregation-wide conversations were a great opportunity for us to find out what questions members may have about the 8th Principle and what it would mean for Neighborhood to affirm and adopt this proposed principle. Some of the questions that were raised were:

- Why single out racism in the 8th Principle? What about other oppressions?
- How can we identify behaviors that perpetuate racism?
- What does it mean to adopt the 8th Principle at Neighborhood? Is there support from the UUA?
- What does accountability look like?
- What is Neighborhood currently doing to become a more welcoming congregation? What more can be done?

In the upcoming months, the 8th Principle Steering Committee will be continuing to address these questions and to provide educational opportunities to learn more about how we can bring the 8th Principle to Neighborhood. For more information about the 8th Principle, please see our webpage [here](#).

-The 8th Principle Steering Committee