Racial Justice Mission Group Members

**Dawn Carbonneau Berry** has been on a journey of racial justice since 1949. She was unaware of racism as she grew and went to school; and, like all white children, was unconsciously formed by the system of white supremacy. Motivated by the Civil Rights Movement, she participated in the Selma Sympathy March, Fall River, MA as a high school student with her church in 1965. As a delegate to Synod, she was challenged to support the Wilmington Ten falsely convicted in 1971. In 2016, she awoke to white privilege, white supremacy, and that is when her real journey of antiracism began.

Dawn serves on the Racial Justice Mission Group NHCUCC and Race and Equity in NH – Building Foundations for the Future, Endowment for Health with a focus on Criminal Justice. She is a learner with the UCC Sacred Conversations to End Racism. She is a member of NAACP and GSOP. She has served as chaplain in a shelter for battered women and facilitator for Parents Anonymous. She has worked, marched, and voted for justice.

Dawn is a wife, mother, and UCC clergy. She is a member of First Congregational Church of Hopkinton, UCC. Her ethnicity is Irish and French.

**John Gregory-Davis** is a cis-gendered, hetero male (he/him) of northern European descent, who co-pastors with his partner, Susan, the Congregational Church (a spiritually progressive, Open and Affirming, Sanctuary congregation of the United Church of Christ) in Meriden, NH. Having run a shelter for homeless men in Hartford, CT for 8 years before coming to NH 25 years ago, John brought with him a passion for social, economic, & racial justice which has often led him to demonstrate, vigil, and testify in Concord on various legislative initiatives. While in in seminary at Boston University School of Theology, John was active in prison ministry, and while in Hartford, John was arrested twice in Washington, DC for civil disobedience in support of adequate and affordable housing as a human right for all people. John currently serves on the NH Conference Peace with Justice Advocates, Economic Justice, & Racial Justice Ministry Teams, as well as being active in the NH Immigration Solidarity Network, the Poor Peoples’ Campaign, and Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ). John’s church has sponsored weekly Black Lives Matter vigils in Meriden for the past 5 years, and is currently discerning how to become more intentionally anti-racist in theology and action.

**Kate Kennedy** is the Associate Pastor at the Congregational Church of Amherst, NH. She began her journey towards becoming an antiracist while she was doing her CPE residency at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill, NC, a program that profoundly affected the way she sees and reads the world. Kate grew up in New Hampshire, and her ancestors are from Armenia, Sweden, and Italy. She attended Boston University School of Theology for her M.Div., and continues to strive to be a learner and interrupter in her professional and personal life. Participating on the Racial Justice Mission Group is one of the most important aspects of her ministry here in New Hampshire, and she sees racial justice as the central call of God to the Christian church today. Kate lives in Lee, NH with her spouse, Rufy, and two cats, Simon and Mateo.
**Rev. Mark Koyama** is the settled pastor at the United Church of Jaffrey in Jaffrey, New Hampshire. Mark holds theological degrees from Union Seminary in New York City (MA 1994) and Yale Divinity School (MDiv 2015). He also earned an MFA in fiction from the University of Massachusetts 2010. In addition to his ministry, Mark is also a teacher of English and Religious Studies at Northfield Mount Hermon School. Mark's father, Kosuke Koyama came to the United States from Japan in the early 1950's. Mark’s mother Lois Koyama (née: Rozendaal) grew up in Iowa. Her grandfather, Willem Rozendaal emigrated to America from Holland in 1888. Koyama means "Small Mountain" in Japanese and Rozendaal means "Valley of Roses" in Dutch, so Mark feels right at home in the New Hampshire landscape.

**Ethel McConaghy** is a member of the Congregational Church of North Barnstead. She was instrumental in organizing this newly year-round, UCC church in 2000. She has served as Moderator and on the Call Committee, Deacons and Prudential Board. At the NHCUCC Ethel has served on the Human Resource Committee.

Ethel’s commitment to Civil Rights began early in her family and blossomed during the 1960s. She participated in Crossroads Africa in Ethiopia, and served with the Peace Corps in Senegal. Throughout her career she provided leadership for “multicultural” and subsequently “diversity” events. In retirement, she and her husband are very active in their community’s programs for children and youth and seniors.

Ethel’s professional life began in the field of Early Childhood Education primarily as a planner and advocate. Her graduate work was in child development opened with a paper was on the development of racial attitudes in young children. The second half of her career was within HR and Diversity Departments of Fortune 50 Corporations with a “work/life balance” portfolio of family support services. Ethel is married, step-mother to 2 biracial and 4 African American children and the adoptive mom of a European American child. Ethel’s grandparents were immigrants from England and Northern Ireland.

**Kira Morehouse**’s interest in racial justice is rooted in her African American heritage. Her involvement with the Racial Justice Mission Group, New Hampshire Conference reflects her having been raised in a family that passed on intergenerational stories rooted in the values of civil rights and equity. Her interest in the RJMG was sparked while attending NHCUCC Annual Meeting in 2018 as a delegate from Brookside Congregational Church in Manchester, NH where she has been a member since 2007. Hearing the motion to create racial justice churches was when she realized that there were larger church missions to educate and advocate for a more inclusive experience. This anti-racism work starts with acknowledging our history of Black, Indigenous, People of Color that goes back a long way here in New Hampshire but is often forgotten and overlooked. We must acknowledge the role in which our churches have in acknowledging the fullness of our history and how that has negative impact on all of us as community members in faith.

Kira regularly attends church with her husband and their two daughters. She looks forward to bringing more visibility and alliance among us and others who have common goals of promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.
**Kathleen (Kathy) Oliver** is a cis-gender, senior, female activist, and a practicing Christian. She was educated in the Catholic Church, which taught her how to think. She thought her way into a home in the UCC. She believes that racism, systemic racism, and white privilege are white people’s problem to address, not Black people’s responsibility to solve. She believes in children (and adults) finally, being educated in real history. She has participated in a systemic racism course at Keene State College where our moderator and teacher, Dr. Dottie Morris, introduced us to the reality....” If you want to become allies, you have to get comfortable being uncomfortable.” She is beginning to grasp what this means. Kathy is a member of the Poor People’s Campaign. She knows that strong allies in community are key to supporting our Black and African American sisters and brothers as they claim their rights. She is of Northern European heritage (British/Irish/French) and a child of the working poor. First in her family to go to college, and own property. Kathy believes in respect, equity, and reparation. Her professional life was in journalism, youth advocacy, and health care community relations. She wants to listen. To learn. To share. To advocate. To interrupt. And to witness.

**Renee Rouse:** Setting captives free from a life of racism and empowering all who will listen and learn with Divine tools to stay awake in our journey toward anti-racism is a lifelong goal of hers. Renee is a Repairer of the Breach.

She has been involved with the Haitian Community Center of Manchester, NH since 1998. She is a member of the NH Black women's Health Project. She has led workshops at Prepared to Serve as well as led workshops in the marketplace on race. She is currently serving as the Co-Chair of the Racial Justice Mission Group of the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC. She is the Pastor and Teacher of the Northwood Congregational Church, Northwood, NH.

Renee' enjoys bringing healing to others through her teaching, preaching and her singing and praying. She believes all of God’s children are called to a higher purpose and true freedom is a gift available for all of God’s children. Just open your hands and receive it by the Holy Spirit, then use it to help free someone.

Rev. Renee' Rouse
Dojolo, Cherokee, European, African American, Black
**Cheryl Lynne Stromski:** Cheryl came to her understanding of white privilege through her work in incarceration. Having spent a year as a chaplain inside NH prisons, she witnessed what she had only read about in books...that we as Americans chose not to address the issues of poverty and race...instead we incarcerated the problem.

Seeing first hand this “invisible” system that negates life and fosters death, and understanding that change trickles up from the bottom, she started connecting with local churches as a means of changing systems and structures currently in place. Cheryl has taught small groups and has offered classes at Prepared to Serve and The Episcopal Spring Challenge on Mass Incarceration and Restorative Justice. She has addressed legislation through CCJR (Citizens for Criminal Justice Reform) a Concord-based advocacy group. She is co-chair of the Episcopal Prison Concerns Committee and has worked directly with the DOC (Dept. of Corrections) on establishing more just policy.

Through her work with incarceration, Cheryl recognized the deep-rooted, inconspicuous paradigm of White Supremacy and began to understand the racism that holds this system in place. She began to see how much of our current theology secures white privilege. As a cis-gendered woman of northern European descent, she has heard the cry of those long and still oppressed and is working to more deeply understand her part in holding this system in place as she works with others to dismantle it.

**Harriet Corean Ward** is an African American Black member of Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Brentwood Kingston. She is former chair of trustees and served as chaplain of the pastoral search committee. Harriet is a member of the UCC Board of Director where she is currently serving on the Finance Committee, the Development Committee a Task Force that focuses on The Ecology of Giving and Generosity throughout the Greater Church and the Nominating Committee... Harriet completed Sacred Conversations to End Racism facilitated by Rev. Dr. Velda Love, National UCC Minister for Racial Justice. In the New Hampshire Conference, she is Co-Chair of the RJMG and collaborating with another RJMG member in the production of NH Juneteenth Celebration—an educational Facebook page that focuses on African American Culture{s}, unfiltered history and achievements. Professionally, Harriet has taught blind, deafblind, multiply challenged and neurologically diverse students, has authored, edited and collaborated on many research and curriculum development projects and served as an adjunct professor and mentor/instructor of vision studies. Her doctoral interest was in Brain Based Vision Loss in Infants and Young Children. In semi-retirement she continues Braille transcription and consultation to schools. The joys in her life are two young grandchildren and a teenaged niece.