Racial Justice Ministry 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 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, 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.
Gail Kinney serves as Worker Justice Minister with the Meriden Congregational Church, UCC and previously served as Pastor of the South Danbury Church, UCC for five years where she now provides occasional pulpit supply. She is also active with the National Writers Union. Gail first immersed herself in the quest for racial justice and struggle to confront systemic racism as a teenager through activism with the NAACP Youth and College Division, and she has been committed to this journey since then. Currently, she is equally engaged in both the faith and worker justice communities and is passionate about bringing faith and labor together as allies for social and economic justice. She helps convene NH Voices of Faith, a multi-faith effort to bring voices of moral conscience into the public square as advocates for fair and just public policies and also helps convene a collaboration of faith and labor in NH. Gail is guided in her daily endeavors by the words of the Rev. Howard Thurman that “During practically any week, you may be faced with some great wrong or some simple but gross expression of injustice and there is no one to speak but you. Do not be silent.”

Ethel McConaghy is a member of the Congregational Church of North Barnstead and British American. Ethel’s commitment to Civil Rights began early, was nurtured by family and then blossomed during college in the 1960s. She participated with Operation Crossroads Africa in Ethiopia, and served with the Peace Corps in Senegal. Throughout her career she provided leadership for diversity events. Currently she and her husband are very involved with their community’s programs for children and youth, with a renewed focus on racial justice.

Ethel’s professional life in the field of Early Childhood Education began as a teacher, program director, child care planner and advocate. Her graduate work was in child development opened with a paper on the development of racial attitudes in young children. The second half of her career was consulting with HR and Diversity Departments of Fortune 50 Corporations and representing “work/life balance” family support services. At mid-life Ethel married, became step-mother to 2 bi-racial and 4 African American children and the adoptive mom of a European American son.

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.
Kathy Oliver is a 76-year-old White, cis-gender female activist, and a practicing Christian. She was educated in the Catholic Church, and chose to leave when it became obvious to her that the church was more interested in ritual and dogma than loving our neighbors. She found a home in the UCC. She believes that racism, systemic racism, and White privilege are White people’s problems to address, not Black people’s responsibility to solve. 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 of ... If we want to become allies, we 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 sisters and brothers as they claim their rights. She is a child of the working poor, of Irish/French descent. First in her family to go to college, receive a degree, and own property. Kathy believes in respect, equity, and reparation. Her professional life was in youth advocacy, health care & community relations. She wants to listen. To learn. To share. 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 free is a lifelong goal of hers. She has been involved with the Haitian Community Center of Manchester, NH since 1998 and currently serves as VP of the Board. She is a member of the NH Black Women's Health Project. 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 preaching and her singing. She believes all of God’s children are called to a higher purpose and that true freedom is a gift available for all God’s children. Just open your hands and receive it by the Holy Spirit, then use it to help free someone else.

Curt Springer came to NH as a teenager, graduating from Portsmouth HS and Dartmouth College. He retired in January 2020 after 35 years in IT at Harvard University, returning to his parents’ house in New Castle. He is associated with Pilgrim UCC in Brentwood, where he served as a deacon and as chair of the pastoral search committee, and New Castle Congregational Church, where he has been hosting Zoom meetings for weekly worship and church meetings.

Harriet Corean Ward is a 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 working with the finance committee, the Development Committee and a Task Force that focuses on The Ecology of giving and Generosity throughout the Greater Church.

Harriet is engaged in a yearlong course Sacred Conversations to End Racism offered by our 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, and multiply challenged students, 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 activates and consultation to schools.

The joys in her life are two young grandchildren and a teenaged niece.