

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Cynthia Walsh

Phone: 978-701-5352

Email: [Cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org](mailto:Cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org)

# Newburyport Community Members Come Together After Black Lives Matter Banner Vandalized

**Faith Community Host Rededication of Black Lives Matter Banner**



*Photo of BLM Banner that was vandalized outside the First Religious Society UU's Sanctuary. (Courtesy Photo)*

NEWBURYPORT – On Tuesday, May 25 at 5pm ET, the City of Newburyport's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Alliance and the First Religious Society Unitarian Universalist Church of Newburyport, will host a Rededication of the Black Lives

Matter Banner that was prominently displayed on the front of the church sanctuary and vandalized last week. The church community will stitch together the vandalized banner to show solidarity and strength in advocating for racial justice.

“We are saddened, but not moved to retaliation, with the recent vandalism of our Black Lives Matter sign on our church building. We will not react with hate or vitriol; however, we will not accept this either” said Rev. Rebecca M. Bryan, Minister, First Religious Society, Unitarian Universalist. The First Religious Society and community leaders will band together to condemn racism and reaffirm that Newburyport is a welcoming and inclusive community.

“I ask that whoever did this think of its impact, especially on Black children and teens, whose safety and feelings of worth should never be anything but sacred. None of us are free, until all of us are free,” said Rev. Rebecca M. Bryan.

Tuesday’s Rededication falls on the one-year anniversary of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin.

The City of Newburyport’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Alliance focuses on racial equity issues in the community and is carrying out a thorough review of city policies, services and ordinances, as well as root out inequities in community systems. The group is working on developing clear recommendations for change, as well as a system for measuring success. The Alliance consist of local political, religious and business leaders, as well as community advocates and citizens.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

For more information about the Rededication, contact Cynthia Walsh by email at [cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org](mailto:cynthia.walsh@frsuu.org), or call 978-701-5352.

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