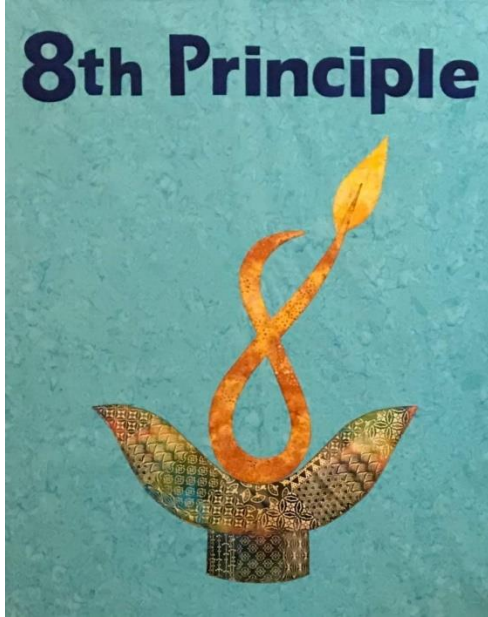


8th Principle



8th Principle – Insights

We will be voting on adopting the 8th Principle at the Annual meeting on June 9th. The Antiracism Initiative team has explored the meaning of key phrases of the 8th Principle below. We encourage you to read, reflect, and let us know your questions or concerns.

We, the members of the First Religious Society covenant to affirm and promote: Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Spiritual Wholeness

Many of us respond to racism and the racist history of this country with feelings of guilt, shame and embarrassment. The tendency to distance ourselves can result if we get stuck in those difficult emotions. The call to spiritual wholeness is an invitation to bring these emotions out of the shadow and into the light, and step onto a path of acknowledgement, and repair.

What does the phrase “**Spiritual Wholeness**” mean to you?

Beloved Community

Beloved Community embodies a vision in which all people share in the promises and potential of a free and equitable existence. Beloved Community is our community committed to love and justice. It brings the gift of belonging.

How might we make our vision of “**Beloved Community**” more inclusive?

Accountability

The 8th Principle would commit us to centralizing racism and other forms of oppression and looking through the lens of equity and justice at all we do. Our existing 7 principles do not explicitly hold us accountable for addressing these oppressions directly, especially at the systemic level.

How could we at FRS hold ourselves **Accountable**, individually, and collectively?

Dismantle

When there is not an explicit commitment to accountably dismantle systems of oppression, the tendency is for systems of oppression to be perpetuated. The 8th Principle will commit us to dismantling “systems of oppression” in ourselves and in our congregation.

How do you think that “systems of oppression” might be unintentionally embedded in FRS informal and/or formal practices and policies?

How might awareness of these unintended consequences guide our actions to change or **Dismantle** these practices or policies?

Racism and other systems of oppression

Being repeatedly certified as a Welcoming Community is evidence that FRS has done a good job in welcoming members of the LGBTQ community and Trans individuals. We also have made and are making substantial improvements in increasing access for people of different abilities. Why does the 8th Principle single out **racism**? At a global level, this would not necessarily make sense, but in the USA, racism stands out as a significant issue.

How could we become as welcoming and inclusive for people of color and people from other historically marginalized groups?

Ourselves and our institutions

We have each been shaped in different ways by racial conditioning and socialization. FRS is putting forward informative offerings that can help us to unlearn racial conditioning and prepare us to advocate effectively for change.

What might we do as individuals, and as a Beloved Community, to act in ways that are as inclusive as we aspire to be?