Resolution passed at June 2018 Annual Meeting of First Parish Church Duxbury

**First Parish Church Duxbury Statement of Purpose: Black Lives Matter**

As an act of public witness and to affirm our commitment to racial justice, First Parish Church Duxbury wishes to make this commitment known to the Unitarian Universalist Association and the community overall.

Therefore, be it known that we, the members of First Parish Church Duxbury covenant to affirm our continuing commitment to racial justice by:

* endorsing the 2015 General Assembly Action of Immediate Witness in support of Black Lives Matter, which is appended below;
* providing ongoing, intentional learning opportunities for our members, friends and the wider community to deepen understanding of systemic racism and possible ways to change it;
* committing to being an intentionally and proactively anti-racist congregation;
* committing to raising anti-racist children;
* acknowledging the need to continue to reflect on our own individual and collective roles in perpetuating systemic racism;
* committing, as a predominantly white congregation to study and reflect on white privilege and our own complicity in institutionalized racism;
* remaining mindful of the interconnectedness of racism with other systems of oppression that impact people based on class, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, culture, religion, and language; and
* calling upon the Governing Board to schedule a separate vote, either at the fall 2018 Financial Annual Meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, prior to the end of calendar 2018, to consider the question of whether the Church should publicly display on church property a free-standing sign or banner that reads: “Our Faith Calls Us To Affirm BLACK LIVES MATTER.”

**2015 ACTION OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS IN SUPPORT OF BLACK LIVES MATTER**

**WHEREAS,**Unitarian Universalists strive for justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

**WHEREAS,**Unitarian Universalists have a goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

**WHEREAS,**allowing injustice to go unchallenged violates our principles;

**WHEREAS,**the Black Lives Matter movement has gained powerful traction in conjunction with recent tragic events involving, in particular, police brutality and institutionalized racism that target the black community;

**WHEREAS,**Tanisha Anderson, Rekia Boyd, Michael Brown, Miriam Carey, Michelle Cusseaux, Shelly Frey, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin, Kayla Moore, Tamir Rice, and Tony Robinson are just a few names of people who were recently killed by the racism that exists in the United States today;

**WHEREAS,**people of all ages and races are killed by law enforcement, yet black people ages 20-24 are seven times more likely to be killed by law enforcement;

**WHEREAS,** mass incarceration fueled by for-profit prisons and racially biased police practices drive the disproportionate imprisonment of black and brown Americans;

**WHEREAS,**the school-to-prison pipeline is an urgent concern because 40% of students expelled from U.S. public schools are black and one out of three black men is incarcerated during his lifetime; and

**WHEREAS,**we must continue to support the Black Lives Matter movement and Black-led racial justice organizations;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**that the 2015 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association calls member congregations to action, to become closer to a just world community, and to prevent future incidents of this nature;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the 2015 General Assembly urges member congregations to engage in intentional learning spaces to organize for racial justice with recognition of the interconnected nature of racism coupled with systems of oppression that impact people based on class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability and language;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the 2015 General Assembly encourages member congregations and all Unitarian Universalists to work toward police reform and prison abolition (which seeks to replace the current prison system with a system that is more just and equitable); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the 2015 General Assembly recognizes that the fight for civil rights and equality is as real today as it was decades ago and urges member congregations to take initiative in collaboration with local and national organizations fighting for racial justice against the harsh racist practices to which many black people are exposed.

No matter who you are, black lives matter, and a system of fair, transformative, and restorative justice that is accountable to communities is something to which each of us has a right.  Unitarian Universalists and our greater society have the power to make this happen.  Let’s do it!