

Youth Reflections

8th Principle

This 8th Principle and action plan was officially adopted into GUUSH's class covenant in June 2021.

We, the members of Birmingham Unitarian Church's GUUSH Youth Group, 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.

We will live out this Principle by: consuming media that centers BIPOC, calling in our friends and family, unlearning our own racist behaviors, learning and using appropriate vocabulary, teaching and learning about anti-oppression alongside BUC congregants, communicating our ideas with the wider congregation, openly and clearly welcoming people of all races to GUUSH, and consistently seeking other ways to become better allies/accomplices.

This vote only affects GUUSH's class covenant. The conversation for adopting this 8th Principle into BUC's covenant is just beginning. Keep an eye out for more information and ways to get involved with that process.



What are my UU values?

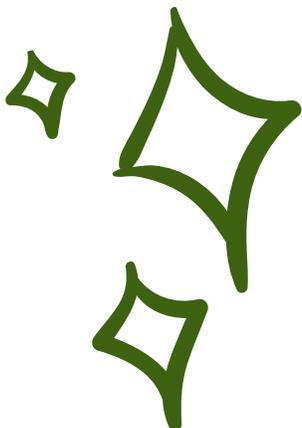
What do my UU values call me to do?



Youth Reflection

Nate Schreck (*he/him/his*)

I believe that it is important that GUUSH adopted the eighth principle because social movements throughout history have often had some sort of youth-led drive. An article from the library of congress notes that many civil rights protestors started leading protests as young as eight years old. Many of these kids saw their parents making change in their community and became inspired to adopt those very ideals. The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee was one of the largest groups advocating for civil rights and was created by students. During the Vietnam war, college students were the primary dissenters in regards to their opinions on the war's justness. They believed the war was immoral and many groups such as the Students for a Democratic Society led protests against the draft and against the war. Recently, social movements such as the March for our Lives surrounding gun violence protests have been led by youth and have led to the biggest gun reform bill in federal history. Despite our young age, youth-led protests have a history of making change throughout our country's history and that history can be continued through GUUSH's adoption of the eighth principle.



What words or phrases sparkle out at you from this reflection?

The Process

What is the 8th Principle?

Spend several classes learning its text, history, and current context.

Decide to vote on adopting this Principle for GUUSH.

Research the voting process and adapt it for our needs.

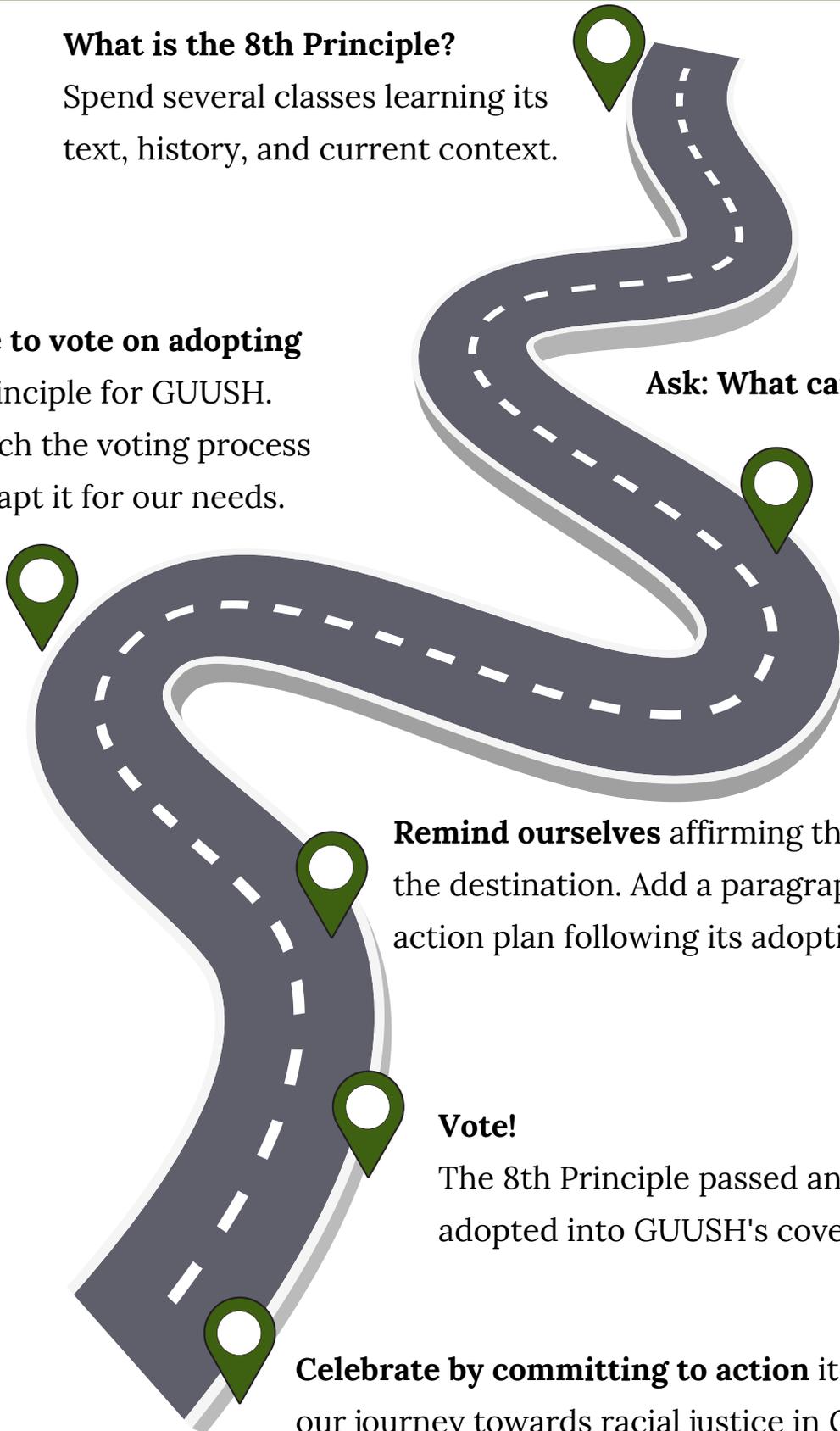
Ask: What can we do about this?

Remind ourselves affirming the 8th Principle isn't the destination. Add a paragraph that outlines our action plan following its adoption.

Vote!

The 8th Principle passed and was officially adopted into GUUSH's covenant

Celebrate by committing to action items to further our journey towards racial justice in GUUSH.



Youth Reflection

Abby Schreck (she/her/hers)

BUC, as with all Unitarian Universalist congregations, is ever evolving. GUUSH's spiritual growth over this year has led us to ratifying the 8th principle; a process which has required reckoning and introspection that was not easy nor is it over. As members of GUUSH we recognize that ratifying this principle cannot be a checkbox or one and done. Rather, just as we do with the other seven principles, we will make conscious commitments to live by and act out the 8th principle.

In order to build true beloved community, we have to commit to doing the work of caring and respecting others. To care for each other and respect one another, we must hold ourselves accountable and do the real work of addressing and dismantling biases in ourselves and our congregations, and broader systems of oppression. As much as we may feel uncomfortable to hear it, there are issues that must be addressed in every congregation, BUC included. The work is hard and it's easy to feel defensive, but our principles are aspirational. I think it's right that we expect ourselves to be the best we can, while also acknowledging we have work to do and that is ok. It is ok to acknowledge when we fall short and address that, and the 8th principle gives GUUSH the space and tools to do that.



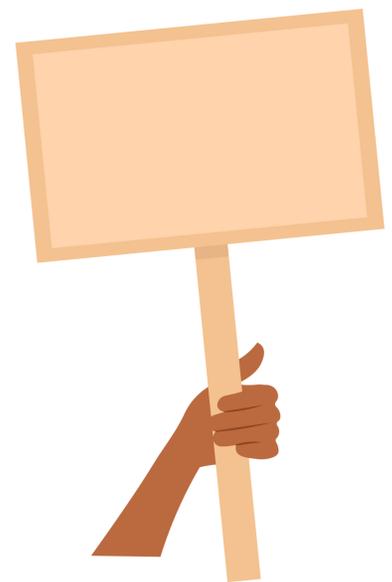
What feelings do you notice in yourself experiencing as you read this reflection?

Youth Reflection

Audrey Schreck (she/her/hers)

Please join in the Birmingham Unitarian Church's GUUSH Youth Group's mission to adopt a new 8th principle to our 7 founding ones. One that will work to dismantle racism based oppressions in order to establish a more accepting multicultural church community. This principle is something we will strive to constantly include and adapt to in this community, whether by teaching about a more diverse array of cultures, using more appropriate vocabulary, integrating cultures and traditions or even just taking the time to recognize the issue and within ourselves and our companions. Overall, no matter how much we act like we are an integrated congregation; no one is going to be perfect. However, through conscious effort and set in place rules to encourage acceptance and understanding, our goal of dismantling these racial oppressions becomes more and more a reality.

After reading this reflection, what do you feel called to do?



For More Information

- 8th Principle website: 8thprincipleuu.org
 - Black Lives UU: blacklivesuu.org
 - 8th Principle info sheet: [click here](#)
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For Reflection

What words, images, and feelings come to mind when you think of creating and enjoying Beloved Community at BUC?

What will you commit to doing to help create Beloved Community at BUC?

