

Racial Justice Group's Name Change Request to Church Council  
February 15, 2023

The Racial Justice Group of Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ would like to change our name to the Anti Racism Group in order to keep in step with the NHUCC Anti Racism Ministries group. The main reason behind this change is understanding that, as the ARMg notes, "anti-racism is an action word." Racial justice is the place where we are striving to get to, but where we might not truly reach for generations to come. So, to use the term "racial justice" to describe the difficult day-to-day work that it will take to get there is too vague. It is rooted more in an idea than in an action. When asked what racial justice looks like, we may say that we will know we are there when everyone is treated equally based on their shared humanity, not on what they look like or where they come from. It will be the realization of Dr. King's dream in which all people are judged by the content of their character, not the color of their skin. Racial justice is the end point. It is what we are striving for. But we are not there yet.

In the meantime, we have learned that equity is more relevant to our time than equality. We live in an inequitable society, based on the dehumanizing of people based on the fact that they are of non-European descent. That is white supremacy. Practicing equality now, giving or treating everyone the same, is not going to help us reach racial justice. Ibram X. Kendi says that the only thing that will end racist discrimination right now is anti racist discrimination. Equity, or anti racist discrimination, describes giving to and treating everyone based on their needs to make up for past and current inequity. Currently, inequity is the status quo. White supremacy is the status quo. Racism is the status quo. The work to dismantle these institutions is anti racism.

It is important to note that being an "anti racism" church is not being an "anti racist" church. It would make about as much sense to be an "anti sinner" church as an "anti racist" church. None of us would be allowed through our own doors. Kendi also describes that in each moment we have the choice to be racist or anti racist and that we will be defined by our actions. Indeed, racists and all other kinds of sinners are welcome through our church doors and invited to be part of our anti racism work that will one day lead to racial justice.