

# Approved Racial Justice Committee Charter

November 10, 2021

## 1) Purpose

The Racial Justice Committee's purpose is to provide a container within Havurah Shalom to further promote equity and inclusion in our congregation and educate ourselves and engage in opportunities to work towards racial justice. While racial justice is a component of other social justice work that Havurah Shalom undertakes, this fills a need to focus directly on racial justice.

We do this by educating ourselves and the broader Havurah community, disseminating anti-racism information to other Havurah committees, partnering with existing social and political organizations, and identifying opportunities for future broadening Havurah's racial justice work.

This committee will be part of the Tikkun Olam Cluster.

## 2) Scope

Havurah members identified these areas for initial committee oversight.

- Social Action Issues: criminal justice and policing,
- Individual/personal education about anti-racism with our community members,
- Partnerships with outside organizations already organizing on racial justice.

## 3) Committee Responsibilities

- We will communicate our work broadly through email, Hineinu, and Hakol.
- We will be a resource to other committees, both by engaging in their desire to collaborate and by responding to requests about how others can incorporate racial justice in their committee work.

## 4) Relationship between Racial Justice Committee's work, the Anti-racism and Belonging initiative (ARB), and Havurah BIPOC Meetup

We will regularly update the ARB on our work and may ask for guidance from them on projects we are considering. To ensure effective communication between these related efforts, there will be communication channels established between ARB and the Racial Justice Committee that will ensure two-way communication between each of these efforts.

It is our hope that Havurah's BIPOC Meetup will be informed about the work of the Racial Justice Committee via standard communication channels. This committee welcomes any collaboration that might be requested.

## 5) Relationship between Racial Justice Committee's work and the Transparency & Inclusivity Committee

Information on the Havurah Transparency & Inclusivity Committee (in the Governance Cluster) can be found here: <https://www.havurahshalom.org/transparency>. This committee's purpose is to ensure transparency of governance decisions by facilitating clear and effective communication between members and governance and to promote inclusivity

by identifying and implementing ways to help every congregant feel valued. Both committees need to remain aware of each other's work and will collaborate with each other when appropriate.

## **Havurah Shalom Racial Justice Committee Charter Addendum**

### 1) Racial Justice Definition

“Racial justice goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures.”<sup>1</sup>

### 2) Committee Responsibilities

- a) We will communicate our work through Hineinu and Hakol
- b) We will be a resource to other committees, responding to their desire for interaction and responding to requests about how they can include racial justice in their work
- c) Leverage all our voices by collaborating with other Jewish organizations as opportunities arise.

### 3) Individual/personal education - grounded in Teshuva - return; In collaboration with the Anti-racism and Belonging initiative

#### **Teshuva: Growth and Positive Change**

*We can learn and grow, as individuals, as a community, as a people, and as a society.*

Each of us coming to this work, especially those of us who are white and have benefited from our system of white supremacy, must examine the ways in which we need to do teshuva as individuals. While this involves serious examination and consideration, the path of teshuva is ultimately one driven by compassion, in the name of building a more loving and just world.

Examples of Individual/Person educational activities include:

- A. Providing small group opportunities for personal reflections and growth on the issues raised by this work including the intersection of antisemitism and white supremacy.
- B. Showing movies followed by discussions
- C. Organizing book groups
- D. Linking the congregation to Reconstructionist Judaism's work advancing racial justice
- E. Organizing educational trips

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<sup>1</sup> <http://https://icma.org/glossary-terms-race-equity-and-social-justice>

#### 4) Social Action work and partnerships

The scope of social action activities could include:

- A. Assuming responsibility for making discussion of racial justice an ongoing part of the life of Havurah Shalom.
- B. Nurturing a welcoming community of people interested in racial justice and promoting discussion and understanding of the issues involved.
- C. Sponsoring racial justice educational programs for the entire Havurah Shalom community, including both current events and relevant historical contexts.
- D. Supporting specific projects that are working on our issue area focus. Building relationships with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color-led organizations would be a priority.

Potential partnerships include other national, Portland, and Oregon area organizations both Jewish, non-Jewish, religious and secular, such as

- Western States Center,
- Bend the Arc Portland,
- Tru'ah,
- Emanuel Displaced Persons group
- Still in Prison Campaign
- Jewish Federation of Oregon
- Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

#### 5) Immediate Priority and Vision for Future Work

Approximately 60 Havurah members engaged in early discussions chose criminal justice reform as the first area of focus.

We envision that this committee will act as an umbrella for the racial justice issues that Havurah decides to address. We will educate each other, bring in outside organizations to educate us and develop a plan of action. This will involve determining who is already doing the work and learning from them where we can be most effective in change. Havurah can only do this work in partnership with external organizations.

For example, if our work in criminal justice reform leads us to work on the non-unanimous jury issue, we will use expertise within Havurah to begin our education. Then, we will partner with an outside group, such as Still in Prison, with deeper knowledge of the issue. Partnerships could include an outside organization requesting direct action support, using partners to educate our community, and Havurah financially supporting activities or organizations.