

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **June 2022 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalists Association (UUA) in Portland, Oregon to be Met with Protestors from its Own Ranks**

PORTLAND, OR – For the first time in its 61-year history, the national meeting of America’s most liberal religious body – the UUA – will face demonstrations from some of its own members and clergy. They are alarmed at the radical, authoritarian, and anti-liberal turn of Association’s leadership in recent years. In particular:

- \* Rejection of reason, tolerance, and open dialogue in matters of controversy, in favor of the declaration of jargon-filled social dogmas. Exclusion of even the mildest variation from the new dogma in Association communications such as the national UU World magazine.
- \* Declaring that the liberal UUA is awash in “white supremacy” and beginning a radical process of “dismantling” it, which includes transferring power from congregations to the UUA.
- \* Personally attacking and silencing dissenters rather than engaging their ideas – openly rejecting the need to even read their words before publicly condemning them. Condemning disagreement as “harm” to people of marginalized identities. Officially censuring and disfellowshipping ministers for expressing dissent. By-passing due process.
- \* Subverting democratic process by making it very difficult for anyone not hand-picked by the current leaders to run for elected leadership positions in the UUA.

Many Unitarian Universalists are feeling, as best-selling author John McWhorter puts it, “Unitarianism has been all but taken over in many places by modern anti-racist theology, forcing the resignation of various ministers and other figures.” (*The Atlantic*, September 2020)

Rev. Dr. Todd F. Eklof was censured and stripped of his professional credentials after writing a book critical of the UUA in 2019, *The Gadfly Papers*. Eklof says, “I became a Unitarian Universalist because commitment to freedom of conscience is kind of my thing. I thought it was *our* thing too and am certain it was, until recently.”

Demonstrators are also concerned about the deterioration of democratic norm. Jay Kiskel, a 2021 candidate for the UUA Board says, “For a denomination dedicated to the use of democracy, we have become distressingly undemocratic.”

Kiskel and Eklof, along with many other concerned Unitarian Universalists will be outside the Oregon Convention Center (777 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd) during the UUA’s General Assembly happening June 22 – June 26, 2022. Demonstrators hope to raise awareness about the anti-liberal turn of their liberal religion before it reaches a point of no return.

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