

Introduction to the Diversity of Ministry Team (DOMT) Initiative

What is the DOMT Initiative?

In late 2006 members of the Diversity of Ministry Team of the UUA began a process to develop healthy, sustainable ministries with ministers of color, Latina/o Hispanic, and multiracial clergy and to support seminarians during their formation. The Diversity of Ministry Initiative is a national program sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) whereby the UUA will work with congregations committed to calling a minister who identifies as a person of color, Latino/a, Hispanic or multiracial minister to become a part of their staff.

Building a Multicultural Ministry

The Diversity of Ministry Team's (DOMT) has a vision of sustaining current ministries; creating healthy new ministries; and investing in a well-funded, multicultural start up congregation. Some important highlights include:

- The creation of 12 ministries in 12 congregations over the next five years: This process includes extensive preparatory and ongoing educational opportunities for the congregations, lay leaders, and staff; start up funding support from the UUA; and ongoing support for the ministers.
- Similar educational and support opportunities for congregations and ministers in already existing settlements.
- The development of a Collegial Study Group, *The Power of Connection* available to clergy cleared for settlement who identify as people of color, Latina/o Hispanic, and multiracial.
- A fully funded annual retreat, to include on-going consultation, for ministers and ministerial candidates who identify as people of color, Latina/o Hispanic, and multiracial.
- Institutionalized support for a seminarians group with monthly online and conference call opportunities for community support and conversation, and annual meetings during General Assembly.
- The creation of a well funded multicultural start up congregation.

Why did the UUA create the Diversity of Ministry Team Initiative?

Historically, ministers who identify as people of color, Latino/a, Hispanic, and multi-racial have had difficulty finding settlements with Unitarian Universalist congregations. Currently, there are only 36 such ministers serving our congregations, and only 54 in fellowship with the Association. DOMT believes that the present situation provides our Association of member congregations with a significant

opportunity to make an intentional, well-financed and successful placement of ministers who identify as people of color, Latino/a, Hispanic, and multi-racial ministers in Unitarian Universalist congregations throughout the United States.

How do I know if my congregation is ready to be a DOMT Initiative Congregation?

The Diversity of Ministry Team is interested in meeting congregations where they are on their journey. It is important for congregations interested in being a DOMT Initiative Congregation to seek honest responses to several questions:

- What is and what has been our commitment to Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppressive, Multi-cultural community?
- What resources have we used in deepening our understanding of racial justice and inclusion work?
- How have those resources strengthened our ability to contribute toward racial justice and inclusion efforts within the UUA and the wider community?
- How is the congregation's commitment to racial justice, inclusion, and multi-cultural community articulated in its short and long term vision?
- What type of education and awareness around issues of racial justice and inclusion do we expect of members in leadership positions?
- In the case of Associate Ministry, how would calling an additional minister promote our own Institutional Development?

What is the traditional ministerial settlement process within the UUA? Will we follow this process in calling a minister as a DOMT Initiative Congregation?

In the UUA's traditional settlement process, congregations seeking ministers and ministers seeking congregations are made aware of each other through the UUA's Transitions Office. A congregation's Search Committee typically exchanges informational materials with prospective ministers and invites three ministers to visit for a pre-candidating weekend. The pre-candidating weekend is followed by candidating week during which a prospective minister and the congregation become acquainted with each other through a series of formal and informal events. At the conclusion of the candidating weekend, the congregation votes to determine whether or not they would like to call the minister.

As a DOMT Initiative Congregation engaged with the Diversity of Ministry Team, we are recommending a modified search process. Once you have assessed your need for additional ministerial staff, your commitment to being an AR/AO/MC community, and your commitment to calling a minister who identifies as a person of color, Latino/a, Hispanic, or multi-racial minister we recommend appointing a Diversity of

Ministry search committee. That search committee will work closely with the members of DOMT to accomplish the following:

- Consultative retreat with congregational leaders to help facilitate discernment around preparation for involvement in this initiative and development of a vision for the future ministry of the congregation.
- A Congregational profile
- Congregational Record (which is hosted on the Ministerial Transitions webpage)
- Strong start up process for team ministries.
- Ongoing consultation around preparation and congregational readiness
- Ever deepening commitment to using an Anti-racist/Anti-Oppressive/Multicultural lens in co-creating ministry

The names of ministers interested in your congregation will first be sent to representatives of DOMT rather than directly to your search committee, as in the traditional settlement system. The Director of the Office of Racial and Ethnic Concerns and the Ministerial Development Director will review the complete list in consultation with your District Executive and Senior Minister (in the case of an Associate position) and will forward up to four names for the congregation's Diversity of Ministry Search Committee to consider. .

The Committee will then host pre-candidating weekends with up to four ministers. As in the traditional settlement process, the congregation will offer Final Candidacy to one minister and host a Candidating week which will lead to a congregational vote to call the minister.

The goal is to have an offer of final candidacy made by March 1st (two weeks before congregations in the traditional search system are first eligible to offer final candidacies to their applicants). This is to give DOMT Initiative Congregations a chance to make ministerial selections without being in competition with the regular process. It also gives ministers participating in the DOMT Initiative a chance to participate in the regular search selections if they are not selected by a DOMT Initiative Congregation.

How will we fund our ministry?

Once you've discerned your commitment to strengthening your ministry by expanding to include multicultural ministry, it will be important to engage your congregation in an intentional conversation about investing in this ministerial vision.

The UUA is committed to providing limited, but substantial grant funding to support DOMT Initiative Congregations. Our staff will work closely with you on determining your congregation's individual financial need.

The level of funding needed is determined by whether or not your congregation is seeking to call a solo or associate minister, size of congregation, and your geographic index. Compensation guidelines for Solo Ministers and Associate Ministers can be found at:

http://www.uua.org/documents/mpl/finances/geoindex_2006.pdf

What opportunities will there be for Congregational and Ministerial Support as well as continuing education?

Both Congregational Services and Identity Based Ministries are committed to supporting congregations and the ministers who serve them. We do this through providing resources that best suit the congregation's needs. An outline of potential resources can be found at the following link:

<http://www.uua.org/aboutus/professionalstaff/identity-basedministries/racialand/diversityministry/index.shtml>

What is the process for inviting an Intern Minister who is a person of color, Latino/a, Hispanic, and multi-racial to complete an internship with us?

The following web page offers information on Internships, to include the Internship Manual, salary recommendations, and Internship Stipend Grants program:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/ministerialcredentialing/internships/index.shtml>

Has the Association researched the legal basis for this Initiative?

Yes. The Association consulted its general counsel and received a legal opinion that fostering and supporting diversity of ministry in this way is absolutely appropriate for our community of faith.

What does it mean if I apply to be a DOMT Initiative congregation and my application is turned down?

Every congregation has the potential to become a multiracial/multicultural congregation committed to co-creating beloved community and ministering with excellence. Since DOMT has a financial goal of supporting 12 congregations in the next five years, it is not possible for us to accept every application.

It is possible for us to work with you on strengthening your vision of co-creating a multicultural ministry using existing UUA resources.

**This vision of Beloved Multicultural Community is OURS...
Catch it. Cast it.
Lead the way.**