

Petition In Support of Including Islam in the Unitarian Universalist Sources of Inspiration

Calling Upon All Peoples, A Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Louisville, to Vote on May 15, 2022, In Support of Including Islam in the Unitarian Universalist Sources of Inspiration

Petition PRESENTING SOME SALIENT ASPECTS OF OUR CASE FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

- ISLAM AS AN ABRAHAMIC RELIGION

WHEREAS, Islam is universally recognized as one of the three major Abrahamic religions along with Judaism and Christianity,

WHEREAS, it has been noted by the esteemed Catholic scholar of Islam Louis Massignon that the phrase “Abrahamic religion” denotes that Judaism, Christianity and Islam come from one spiritual source,

WHEREAS, the 4th Source of Inspiration affirms and promotes “*Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to God’s love by loving our neighbors as ourselves,*”

WHEREAS, the 4th Source of Inspiration explicitly mentions Judaism and Christianity, it does not mention Islam,

WHEREAS, the ethical and spiritual teachings and values of Islam are the same as those found in Judaism and Christianity,

WE CALL UPON ALL PEOPLES, A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF LOUISVILLE TO INCLUDE ISLAM IN THE 4TH SOURCE OF INSPIRATION ALONG

WITH JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY SINCE THERE IS NO THEOLOGICAL, SPIRITUAL AND ETHICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR REFUSING TO DO THIS.

- ISLAM AND THE 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, AND 6th SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

WHEREAS, the reference in the 1st Source of Inspiration to “*Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life*” is affirmed by many Qur’anic texts,

WHEREAS, the reference in the 2nd Source of Inspiration to “*Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love*” is affirmed both by Qur’anic teaching and the Sunnah (Practice) of Prophet Muhammad,

WHEREAS, the reference in the 3rd Source of Inspiration to “*Wisdom from the world’s religions which inspire us in our ethical and spiritual life*” is affirmed both by the universalism of the Qur’an and many Islamic thinkers and mystics such as Jalal ad-Din Rumi whose poetry is included in the Unitarian Universalist hymnal,

WHEREAS, the reference in the 5th Source of Inspiration to “*Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit*” is strongly affirmed by the Qur’an which emphasizes the importance of the use of reason and sense-perception in the acquisition of scientific and other forms of knowledge, but also warns against self-idolatry which is the outcome of the arrogance of mind and spirit,

WHEREAS, the reference in the 6th Source of Inspiration to “*Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature*” is corroborated by many Qur’anic texts which point to the earth and various natural phenomena as “signs” of God’s unifying and sanctifying creative activity,

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS, IN GENERAL, LACKING KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF THE ISLAMIC TRADITION (THE QUR’AN AND PROPHET MUHAMMAD’S TEACHINGS) ARE NOT AWARE OF THE SIGNIFICANT SIMILARITIES AND COMMONALITIES BETWEEN ISLAM AND THEIR OWN SOURCES OF INSPIRATION.

- ISLAM AND UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM: SHARED PERSPECTIVES

WHEREAS, both Islam and Unitarian Universalism endorse Humanism which represents “*a philosophical and ethical stance that emphasizes the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively, and generally prefers critical thinking and evidence (rationalism and empiricism) over acceptance of dogma and superstition* (Wikipedia)”,

WHEREAS, like Unitarian Universalism, Islam affirms all Fundamental Human Rights including the Right to Life, Right to Respect, Right to Justice, Right to Freedom, Right to Acquire Knowledge, Right to Sustenance, Right to Work, and Women’s Right to Equality and Equity with Men,

WHEREAS, Social Justice which is of pivotal significance in the worldviews of both Unitarian Universalism and Islam, constitutes a critically important commonality between them,

WHEREAS, both Islam and Unitarian Universalism underscore the importance both of the unity of humankind as well as its diversity,

WHEREAS, both Islam and Unitarian Universalism recognize the importance of building partnerships with like-minded individuals and groups in order to promote Global Peace,

VERY FEW UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS KNOW ABOUT THE COMMONALITIES WHICH ARE OF CENTRAL IMPORTANCE IN THE WORLDVIEW OF THEIR OWN TRADITION AND ISLAM. WHY IS THIS THE CASE? GENERALLY SPEAKING, UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS ARE OPEN TO ACCEPTING INSIGHTS FROM MANY OF THE WORLD’S RELIGIOUS AND WISDOM TRADITIONS AND INCORPORATING THEM IN THEIR SOURCES OF INSPIRATION. WHY HAVE THEY NOT BEEN OPEN TO ACCEPTING ISLAM WITH WHICH THEY HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON, AND WHICH IS -FURTHERMORE – THE RELIGION OF ONE-QUARTER OF HUMANITY – IN THESE SOURCES?

- IS ISLAMOPHIA FOUND AMONG UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS?

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WHEREAS, those Unitarian Universalists who exhibit an attitude of apathy, indifference or negativity toward Islam are unlikely to publicly endorse Islamophobia which represents the suspicion, mistrust, fear and hatred with which an ever-increasing number of Americans view Islam and Muslims,

WHEREAS, the vast majority of Unitarian Universalists are unaware of the fact that Islam and Muslims have been seen not only as “*The Other*” but as “*The Adversary*” by Europeans since 711 C.E. when a small Islamic army landed on the southern shores of Spain and took control of almost the entire peninsula by 720 C.E.,

WHEREAS, Unitarian Universalists, like Americans in general, are not aware of the long history of Islamophobia which played a crucial role in the maligning of Islam and Muslims by the world of Christendom – represented, for instance, in the epic *The Divine Comedy* by Dante, medieval Christianity’s most important poet, who placed the Prophet of Islam amongst the worst sinners in the Inferno (Hell) and depicted him as a man “*cleft from the chin right down to where men fart,*” since in his view Prophet Muhammad’s greatest crime and sin had been to divide the Christian world,

WHEREAS, Muslims are often accused of waging “*Jihad*” (wrongly translated as “holy war”) against Christians, it was, in fact, European Christians who waged a series of Crusades (“*crusade*” meaning “*cross*”, “*crusades*” meaning “*religious or holy wars*”) initiated and supported by the Roman Catholic Church, between 1095 and 1291, originally focused on recapturing Jerusalem from Islamic control, but later targeting a variety of Muslim rulers in Syria, Palestine and Egypt,

WHEREAS, negative ideas and attitudes toward Islam and Muslims appear to have become a part of Western consciousness (sometimes at the level of the Subconscious or the Unconscious) which is manifested in ongoing anti-Islamic rhetoric and actions (such as those exhibited during the Salman Rushdie crisis, the burning of the Qur’an in the U.S., and the banning of *hijab* in France),

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS IN THE U.S. ARE GENERALLY NOT COGNIZANT OF THE IMPACT ON THEMSELVES OF CENTURIES OF RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL HATRED AND BIGOTRY TOWARD ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN THE EUROPEAN CULTURES OF THEIR ORIGIN.

(5) *ACTION OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS AND THE 8th PRINCIPLE*

WHEREAS, standing up for the rights of those who were victims of pronounced neglect, prejudice, discrimination, marginalization, or oppression, has been regarded as one of the foremost priorities of the Unitarian Universalist tradition as exemplified through the consequential work of numerous women and men including Judith Sargent Murray (1751-1820), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), Charles Theodor Christian Friedrich Follen (1776-1840), William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), Samuel Gridley Howe (1801-1876), Dorothea Dix (1802-1887), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Charles Spear (1803-1863), Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804-1894), William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879), Frances Dana Barker Gage (1808-1884), Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), Theodore Parker (1810-1860), Henry Bergh (1811-1888), Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), Lucy Stone (1818-1893), Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910), James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), Mary Ashton Rice Livermore (1820-1905), Clara Barton (1821-1912), Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911), Peter Humphries Clark (1829-1925), Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), David Hilliard Eaton (1932-1992), Olympia Brown (1835-1926), Mary Wright Sewall (1844-1920), Harriet Stanton Blatch (1856-1940), Joseph Jordan (1842-1901), and Carrie Clinton Chapman Catt (1859-1947); and also including martyrs such as the civil rights activists Viola Fauver Liuzzo (1925-1965) and Rev. James Reeb (1927-1965), who were assassinated by white supremacists,

WHEREAS, UUA's ACTION OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS (July 1, 2016) recognizes that "Muslims and others perceived as Muslims in the United States have faced increased levels of discrimination and hate crimes since 9/11", and "expresses its love, respect and support for Muslims in our communities and encourages its member congregations to: build bridges of partnership with Muslim neighbors in our local areas; increase understanding of Islam within and beyond our local congregations especially in this political moment; ...challenge acts and words of Islamophobia in solidarity and coordination with Muslims",

WHEREAS, the 8th PRINCIPLE, drafted by Bruce Pollack-Johnson and Paula Cole Jones states: "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 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." was adopted by a super-majority of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Washington Crossing (UUCWC) on June 3, 2018, and has, as of February 2022, been adopted by 152 Unitarian Universalist Congregations (*Newsletter* of The Unitarian Church of Montpelier, Vermont),

WHEREAS, Islam has been condemned by many Americans in leadership positions such as the former President of the U. S., Donald Trump, who proclaimed "*Islam hates us*," and the President and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Franklin Graham, who described Islam as a "*very wicked and evil religion*," both staunch advocates of banning Muslim travel and immigration to the U.S.,

WHEREAS, describing anger as a powerful and universal emotion, our revered Minister Rev. Bruce Beisner in a passionate sermon delivered on February 27, 2022, entitled “*I’m as Mad as Hell and I Won’t Take It Any More*” articulates his own anger at seeing instances of manifest injustice and lack of compassion in our society, going on to recommend that anger should not be denied but embraced and allowed to become compassion which can lead to “*respectful and gentle action.*”

WE CALL UPON THE MEMBERSHIP OF ALL PEOPLES, A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION TO UNDERSTAND AND EMPATHIZE WITH THE ANGER FELT BY THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT THE EXCLUSION OF ISLAM FROM THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOURCES OF INSPIRATION IS GROUNDED IN ISLAMOPHOBIA AND IS MANIFESTLY UNJUST, AND THEN TO ENGAGE IN “*RESPECTFUL AND GENTLE ACTION*” TO RECTIFY A LONG-STANDING WRONG.

- *ISLAMIC INFLUENCE ON SERVETUS AND THE EARLY UNITARIANS*

WHEREAS, Rev. Alicia M. Forsey Ph. D., a Unitarian Universalist Minister regarded as one of the most knowledgeable historians of early Unitarianism, testifies to the respect which Michael Servetus (1511-1553) had for Islam, and has asked rhetorically, “*How is it that we claim Michael Servetus as one of our earliest founders, but not know that he was burned at the stake by John Calvin in 1553, in part because he said during his trial that he would prefer to be judged by the Turks? That he was well-informed of the Koran and used it in forming his own theological views?*” (Email to Dr. Riffat Hassan, dated February 23, 2022)

WHEREAS, Servetus was greatly influenced by Islam’s categorical rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity and quoted Qur’anic texts unequivocally proclaiming the Oneness of God in his major works entitled *On the Errors of the Trinity* and *The Restitution of Christianity*, e. g. in the latter he cited Surah 4: *An-Nisaa*:171 which states: “*Believe then in God, and His Apostles, and do not say God is a Trinity. Desist from this assertion, for your own good. God is but One God*”,

WHEREAS, Servetus refused to remove from his books the Qur’anic citations and laudatory comments about Islam and Prophet Muhammad brought up during his trial for heresy which led to his being sentenced to death by burning, continuing to assert that a good Muslim was as worthy of salvation as any other person so long as he/she honored God and did good works,

WHEREAS, Servetus exerted a formative influence on radical religious reformers Giorgio Biandrata and Ferenc David the founders of the first Unitarian Church in Transylvania which was under the jurisdiction of Suleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Muslim ruler who, following the Covenants of Prophet Muhammad with non-Muslims, gave his protection to the infant Church allowing it to grow and thrive,

WHEREAS, it has been pointed out by Rev. Justin Osterman in his sermon delivered on 23, June 2011, “*As Unitarians, we are the direct beneficiaries of Muslim tolerance towards other faiths. Without the protection of the Ottoman Turks, our faith might never have had the chance to establish a foothold in Europe and our liberal religious views might never have survived to help shape contemporary culture.*” (Partner Council Church, General Assembly),

THE QUESTION ARISES: WHEN SERVETUS DID NOT DISAVOW THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON HIS THINKING EVEN IN THE FACE OF DEATH AT THE HANDS OF JOHN CALVIN, WHY IS THE THEOLOGICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN ISLAM AND SERVETUS NOT BETTER KNOWN AMONGST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS IN GENERAL? IS IT DUE TO THE GENERATION OF A FALSE NARRATIVE INTENDED TO BLOCK THE STRONG HISTORICAL LINK BETWEEN UNITARIANISM AND ISLAM FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY UNTIL NOW? A STATEMENT MADE BY EMINENT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST HISTORIAN REV. SUSAN J. RITCHIE PH.D. IS VERY SIGNIFICANT IN THIS CONTEXT: “INDEED, THE ONLY LITERATURE THAT HAS DOCUMENTED AN OTTOMAN ISLAMIC INFLUENCE ON TRANSYLVANIAN UNITARIANISM IS THAT OF THE ANTI-TRINITARIAN MOVEMENTS OF SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE (*CHILDREN OF THE SAME GOD: THE HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNITARIANISM, JUDAISM AND ISLAM*, p. 27)

- **CLOSENESS OF ISLAM AND UNITARIANISM IN THE 16th CENTURY**

WHEREAS, Rev. Alicia M. Forsey Ph. D., in her highly-acclaimed book entitled *Queen Isabella Sforza Szapolyai of Transylvania and Sultan Suleyman of the Ottoman Empire: A Case of Sixteenth-Century Muslim-Christian Collaboration* (published by The Edwin Mellen Press, September 30, 2009) in which she has utilized little-known Ottoman Turkish, Modern Turkish, Latin, English, Italian and Hungarian texts and translations, has demonstrated the crucial role played by Sultan Suleyman in ensuring the survival of Unitarianism in the 16th century,

WHEREAS, Dr. Forsey has acknowledged that her historical research “*will annoy historians who insist that there was no common ground between the Muslims and the Christians in the Sixteenth-Century,*” but regards this view as “*narrow*” and considers its transmission “*from generation to generation*” as not being conducive toward “*establishing a solid, peaceful co-existence today*” (Email to Dr. Riffat Hassan, dated February 23, 2022),

WHEREAS, Dr. Forsey refutes the view of those Unitarian Universalists who “*think Sultan Suleyman was a terrible barbarian*” by pointing out that “*he welcomed the Moors and the Jews who were forced to leave Spain,*” building them their own villages and helping them to resettle in their new environment, without ever trying to convert them to Islam or requiring them to fight in his army, and concluding that “*Isabella would have lost her power to Ferdinand the Hapsburg if Suleyman had not installed her as Queen of Transylvania*” (Email to Dr. Riffat Hassan, dated February 23, 2022),

WHEREAS, Dr. Forsey has stated: “*Suleyman was close to Isabella’s father, the King of Poland. They referred to each other as ‘Brother’. Suleyman marched to Buda to help Isabella when Ferdinand was attacking her castle. When Ferdinand saw Suleyman, he and his army fled the scene... When Ferdinand forced Isabella to leave Transylvania, Suleyman wrote this to Ferdinand (in Latin) ‘Bring her back or I will wipe you off the face of the earth!’ And, if Suleyman would not have placed Isabella and her child, John II, in Transylvania, it would not have come to pass that John II, when crowned the King, would have announced that he was a Unitarian*” (Email to Dr. Riffat Hassan, dated February 23, 2022), – the first and only Unitarian king in the history of the world.

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WHEREAS, Dr. Forsey has pointed out that “knowing about the close connection between Unitarianism and Islam will help us to be more knowledgeable about who we are and what we stand for” (Email to Dr. Riffat Hassan, dated April 25, 2022),

1. ALICIA FORSEY’S RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS THE CLOSE TIES THAT EXISTED BETWEEN SULTAN SULEYMAN AND QUEEN ISABELLA WHOSE LITTLE KINGDOM OF TRANSYLVANIA IN WHICH THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH WAS LOCATED, COULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED THE UNRELENTING HOSTILITY OF HER ENEMIES WITHOUT THE OTTOMAN SULTAN’S CONTINUING PROTECTION. DR. FORSEY HAS ALSO DRAWN ATTENTION TO THE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL BONDS AND COLLABORATION WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN THE EARLY UNITARIANS AND MUSLIMS. IF THESE HISTORICAL FACTS HAD BEEN ACCEPTED AS AN INDISPUTABLE PART OF THE LEGACY OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS, ISLAM WOULD HAVE HAD A PLACE OF HONOR IN ITS SOURCES OF INSPIRATION. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT DR. FORSEY’S BRILLIANT WORK REMAINS RELATIVELY UNKNOWN AMONG UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS, BUT SHE IS WRITING A SCREENPLAY BASED ON HER BOOK WHICH WILL HOPEFULLY BE MADE INTO A MAGNIFICENT EPIC-MOVIE THAT IS LIKELY TO BRING ABOUT A PARADIGM SHIFT IN HOW ISLAM IS VIEWED BY UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS.

- COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT CORE ISLAMIC BELIEFS

WHEREAS, the two most important attributes of Allah (God) according to the Qur'an are *Rahman* and *Raheem* (Infinitely Merciful and Infinitely Compassionate) and *'Aadil* (Just),

WHEREAS, Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, commands its followers to treat their neighbor as they would treat themselves and as they would have others treat them, and the Qur'an links *Haqooq Allah* (the Rights of God) to *Haqooq al 'ibad* (Human Rights) to stipulate that obedience to God cannot be separated from kindness towards one's fellow human beings,

WHEREAS, the Qur'an constantly enjoins Muslims "*to use your reason,*" and expounds, by means of a powerful allegorical narrative, that Adam (representing humankind) is elevated not only above animals but also above the angels because he/she has the faculty of reason which enables him/her to form concepts,

WHEREAS, the Qur'anic concept of *Jihad* is to be understood as (a) *Jihad al-Akbar* (the Greater *Jihad*) which is the struggle to overcome weaknesses or imperfections related to one's own self, and as (b) *Jihad al-Asghar* (the Lesser *Jihad*) which is the struggle to eliminate social injustices and ills,

WHEREAS, the Qur'an upholds the absolute sanctity of all human life and affirms all essential human rights including the right of free choice in religion, stating categorically "*Let there be no compulsion in religion*" (Surah 2: *Al-Baqarah*: 256),

WHILE THE QUR'AN CONSTANTLY REFERS TO ALLAH AS "*INFINITELY MERCIFUL AND COMPASSIONATE,*" ISLAM-HATERS HAVE PROPAGATED THAT THIS TERM REFERS TO THE GOD OF VENGEANCE AND DESTRUCTION, MISREPRESENTED ISLAM AS A RELIGION WHICH DOES NOT MANDATE LOVING ONE'S NEIGHBOR, WHICH IS IRRATIONAL AND PROMOTES "HOLY WAR" IN ORDER TO SPREAD ISLAM BY THE SWORD.

- *THE ORIGIN OF MISOGYNIST BELIEFS ASSOCIATED WITH ISLAM*

WHEREAS, all major religions of the world have developed in patriarchal cultures which are male-centered and male-controlled,

WHEREAS, the story that Adam was created prior to Eve who was created from his rib stated in the Yahwist story of creation in Genesis, Chapter 2, verses 18-24, has made woman derivative, secondary and subordinate to men in both Catholic and Protestant traditions until the development of feminist theology in the twentieth century,

WHEREAS, the story stated in Genesis, Chapter 3, that it was Eve who tempted Adam into eating the forbidden fruit, thus causing his “Fall” as well as the advent of “Original Sin” in the world, has led to women’s association with all manners of evil, making them the target of hatred, ridicule and contempt,

WHEREAS, the statement in Genesis, Chapter 2, verse 18, that God made women to be “helpmates” thus making them “instrumental” while men are “fundamental,” has made women subservient and unequal to men both in personal and professional contexts in the Western world until modern times,

WHEREAS, the Qur’an abolished female infanticide, and gave women equality with men with respect to their innate rights in all aspects of life, emphasizing that since women and men were equal in the sight of God, their inequality in society could not be regarded as divinely-mandated,

WHILE ONE OF THE CORE PREMISES OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IS THAT ISLAM IS INHERENTLY AND IRREDEEMABLY MISOGYNSTIC, ALMOST NO ATTENTION IS PAID IN WESTERN TRADITIONS, INCLUDING UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM, TO (1) THE FACT THAT MISOGYNY AND ANDOCENTRISM ARE PRODUCTS OF PATRIARCHY WHICH HAS AFFECTED NOT ONLY ISLAM BUT ALSO HINDUISM, BUDDHISM, JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY, AND (2) THAT NEGATIVE THEOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING WOMEN IN BOTH ISLAM AND JUDAISM ARE DERIVED FROM CHRISTIAN READINGS OF WOMEN-RELATED TEXTS IN GENESIS 2 AND 3. IT HAS BEEN AMPLY DEMONSTRATED BY DR. RIFFAT HASSAN AND OTHER FEMINIST THEOLOGIANs THAT A NON-PATRIARCHAL READING OF THE QUR’AN PROVIDES UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT FOR ALL RIGHTS GIVEN BY GOD TO WOMEN.

- *IN SUMMATION OF OUR COMPELLING NARRATIVE*

WHEREAS, in the foregoing account we have stated compelling theological, ethical, spiritual and historical reasons for including Islam in the Unitarian Universalist Sources of Islam,

WHEREAS, in the foregoing account we have drawn attention to the long history of religious and racial hatred and bigotry toward Islam and Muslims prevalent in European Christian countries which most American Unitarian Universalists regard as their cultures of origin,

WHEREAS, in the foregoing account we have referred to the Action of Immediate Witness (2016) which recognizes that Muslims in the U. S. have faced increasing levels of discrimination and hate-crimes since 9/11, and to the 8th Principle (2018) which urges Unitarian Universalists to “*dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions,*”

WHEREAS, in the foregoing account, we have cited the testimony of Dr. Alicia Forsey, regarded by those familiar with her phenomenal research as the finest American Unitarian Universalist historian of the 16th century, about the respect for Islam shown by Michael Servetus who, in turn, had formative influence on the founders of the first Unitarian Church in Transylvania, and also about the close relationship between Queen Isabella and Sultan Suleyman which led to the survival and flourishing of the only Unitarian country in the world,

WHEREAS, in the foregoing account we have provided the authentic meaning of key Islamic principles and beliefs which are commonly misunderstood or misinterpreted in our Islamophobic society, and have demonstrated that the misogynistic ideas and attitudes attributed to Islam are rooted in Christian theological assumptions pertaining to woman’s creation and her role in the “*Fall*” episode found in Genesis: Chapters 2 and 3,

WE CALL UPON THE CONGREGATION OF ALL PEOPLES, A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF LOUISVILLE TO ACT IN JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS AND VOTE POSITIVELY FOR THE INCLUSION OF ISLAM IN THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOURCES OF INSPIRATION ON MAY 15, 2022.

