

Consultant for Equity and Inclusion

Julia Gaughan



Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to serve the Kansas Oklahoma Conference of the United Church of Christ as a Consultant for Equity and Inclusion. As everyone knows, the pandemic has impacted how we work together as a church community greatly. I am filled with gratitude for the sense of adventure and willingness to try something new exhibited here at KO.

February included Racial Justice Sunday and is the annual recognition of Black History Month in the United States. In connection with these events, we put together a Prayer of Confession for Racial Justice Sunday. If you'd like to revisit this prayer, [please click here](#). We also gathered virtually to watch and discuss The Green Siblings Project Documentary. If you were not able to join us, you can still [view the documentary here](#).

On February 27, the Open and Affirming Coalition offered a one-day workshop for churches interested in becoming open and affirming or churches interested in deepening their commitment to being open and affirming. People from across the KO Conference were able to join in this virtual learning experience with the Michigan Conference. The workshops ranged from a deep dive into allyship to honoring pronouns. If you are interested in participating in future ONA webinars or training, please let me know. I have also been pursuing authorization to be an ONA trainer.

May 31 and June 1, 2021, marked the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre. The national setting of the United Church of Christ hosted a virtual commemoration of this tragedy, giving the KO Conference an opportunity to share with the wider church our commitment to racial justice and the work we have been doing these past several years to meet our communities where they are and to push forward together in pursuit of racial justice.

In connection with Pride Month, celebrated in the United States in June, we held a virtual Celebrate Pride event bringing together people from across the Conference to celebrate our LGBTQIA+ family, sharing stories and music, honoring those we have lost

to violence against the LGBTQIA+ community, and calling each other to action through love. I must give another warm thank you to everyone that made this event possible - it truly was an event to remember.

As this report is going to press, I am preparing a two-part Boundary Training for our authorized ministers based on the UCC's Let's Talk White Privilege and Sacred Conversations To End Racism curricula. I am also evaluating potential programming in connection with Native American Heritage Month in November. More details to come! If you are interested in engaging more deeply in our Equity and Inclusion work, please contact me at julia.gilmoregaughan@gmail.com. Thank you for your support.