

UUFC Justice Council

April 2018
Volume 2

Welcome

Welcome to the Fellowship's second Justice Council Newsletter. We hope to showcase all the great justice work that is being done and provide opportunities for connection and collaboration. If you haven't yet, please join us in this work.



Justice Council

Mission Statement:

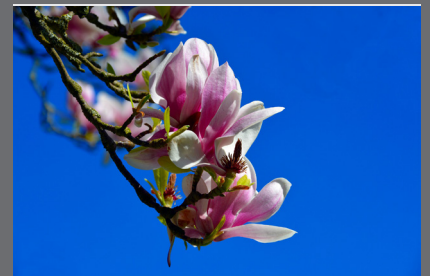
The Justice Council exists to provide support, guidance, coordination, and evaluation of ongoing and proposed social service, charity-related outreach, and other justice programs of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis (UUFC), as well as to coordinate emergent justice-related responses.

The primary concerns of the council are (1) the Fellowship and its ability to engage efficiently, effectively, and

appropriately with the needs of the world in which we live and (2) the Fellowship's ability to meet its justice/outreach goals. The issues the Justice Council agrees to address are the work of the social justice teams and task forces.

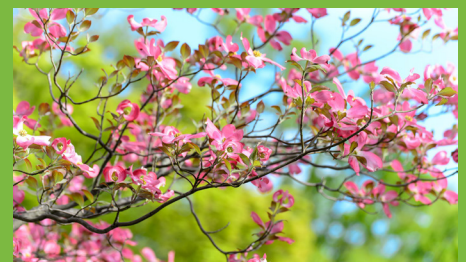
The primary tasks for the UUFC Justice Council include:

- ~Creating a context through which groups doing justice-related work are supported and can sustain themselves;
- ~Developing a communications vehicle through which we describe the work of UUFC justice-related groups and bring visibility to the engagement of UUFC members in community-based justice work;
- ~Identifying the appropriate structures, processes, and procedures to support UU and Fellowship justice-related goals, values, and commitments and to exercise the necessary leadership;
- ~Talking frequently with those doing justice-related work to ensure we are aware of their activities and needs;
- ~Ensuring that knowledge of all justice-related groups is easily available to members and friends who want to get involved.



If you want peace,
work for justice .

~Pope Paul VI



Current members of the Justice Council are: Anne Pemberton and Larry Roper - co-chairs; Susan Christie, Alison Sullivan, Dennis Feeny, Jean Townes, and Claudia Keith.

For more information on all the current Justice teams, visit the UUFC website: http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=4754.

Climate Justice Covenant

Covenant Statement

In 2010, UUFC achieved Green Sanctuary Accreditation, committing us to “work together to restore the earth as we renew our spirits.” UUFC also has voted to sign on to the Earth Charter, to repudiate the infamous Doctrine of Discovery, and to divest from fossil fuels. Thus, we, members and friends of UUFC, now pledge to consider the impact of all our decisions and policies on the environment and the climate of Earth, our home, which we hold in sacred trust for future generations. Through this new covenant, which reflects everything we do and are as a congregation, we secure our values around preservation of the environment, conservation of resources, and consideration of impacts on the climate. We understand that those humans (and other species) most affected by rising seas, ocean acidification, increasing droughts, chaotic weather events, and environmental degradation have done the least to cause these crises and are often powerless to mitigate them. continued -->

The Sacred Work

Some of us are committed to stopping the fossil fuel industry and resisting new fossil fuel infrastructure, including engaging in civil disobedience and risking our freedom, as the Valve Turners have done. This is crucial work, but it's not enough.

Some of us work through legislative processes, showing up at hearing after hearing to testify, and writing letter after letter to government officials, pointing out the need for urgent action. This too is important work, but we must do more.

Some of us put our efforts into helping implement new systems for energy, transportation, housing, construction, and agriculture to replace the ones that are not serving us well. This must be done, but it's still not enough.

Some of us envision new ways of living, with complete new systems of governance and economics, very necessary if there is to be a future on earth for humans and other life. This “out of the box thinking and being” is vital, but it's still not all the work.

Some of us understand the importance of “resilience,” the ability to withstand and adapt to changes in the environment and the climate that we know are coming, and we want to help the Fellowship develop that capacity. But even this is not all that must be done.

Some of us want to care for the people of the Fellowship, to listen when grief and despair seem overwhelming, to point out the good work that is happening all over the earth, to renew hope and faithfulness. But there is still more.

Some of us commit to reducing our household carbon footprint, just because it's the right thing to do. But this too is but a small part of all that is needed.

Some of us want to affirm the indigenous peoples of the world, learn from their wisdom, and unite our work with theirs, as they struggle to reclaim their heritage and restore their lands. This we must do, but one thing remains.

Some of us create inspiring music, art, poetry, and sculpture, which nourishes our spirits and reminds us that there is, and always will be, goodness, love, and beauty in the world, which, in the end, might make all the difference.

What part of the sacred work could be part of the mission of your council, committee, team, or task force? See the examples under the following areas of work (partial list) for ideas. What part of the sacred work calls you as an individual to engage? You might be inspired by reviewing the UUFC Application for Green Sanctuary Accreditation, which is stored in the File Cabinet under the About Us tab on the UUFC website. That document is the foundation of UUFC's commitment to the environment.

Criminal Justice Action Group (CJAG)

Since forming in the autumn of 2017, the Criminal Justice Action Group (CJAG) has been working in three areas:

Exploring and educating ourselves about the structure, function and impacts of the criminal justice system locally, statewide and nationally.

Supporting the needs of Coleman Ward: Coleman has been imprisoned in Nevada for the last four years. Through the generosity of the UUFC community we raised over \$700 at Christmas time through the Angel Tree project, and we continue to work on fundraising to help provide him with clothing, medical and personal care expenses, etc. We plan to advocate for him during his parole hearing process this summer through letters of support and attending his parole hearing.

Action to support local and state-level justice programs: We supported the January fundraising bakesales on behalf of the Sagebrush in Prisons project. We have formed a link with a local mediation organization, Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N), which has a youth Restorative Justice program. Several of our members now volunteer with N2N as community representatives in Restorative Justice conferences. In the coming months we will host a volunteer training to recruit more community representative volunteers for N2N.

CJAG welcomes new members! Please contact Lynn Scott for more information (lynnsctoregon@gmail.com).

Climate Justice Task Force Recent Activities

UUFC Climate Justice Covenant

The task force has been working hard on a climate justice covenant for the Fellowship. It was just presented at the Earth Day services on April 22. The covenant (see page 2 for the full covenant) is not a document to be voted on, but rather an invitation to all groups within UUFC to participate in reducing the devastating effects of climate change. There are many ways to help and one or more of them will surely be right for each group. We are excited about discovering how much we can do together!

The Valve Turners

The Climate Justice Task Force has supported fundraising activities in Corvallis for the Valve Turners, to help them with their legal fees and expenses.

Climate Justice Task Force: Recent Activities, cont.

Clean Energy Jobs Legislation

This year, members of the Climate Justice Task Force have continued to work with UU Voices for Justice, other faith communities, and environmental organizations to support efforts to pass a carbon pricing bill in the Oregon state legislature. Many of us went to Salem to attend rallies and talk with legislators. We wrote many letters and collected signatures on petitions. We had some success, even in this year's short session. There is a good chance a bill will pass next session, if we keep the enthusiastic pressure going.

Personal Divestment Workshop

Sometime this spring, probably in May, task force members will hold a workshop for UUFC members and friends on divesting their personal funds from fossil fuels and reinvesting in clean energy. Watch for information in the newsletter, the email list, and the weekly announcements.

A Large Solar Array for Corvallis High School

Corvallis High School may soon get a new rooftop solar array! The Oregon Clean Power Cooperative has all the investors it needs for this project, but before the project can start, some money is still needed, about \$6,500, to come through donations. The Corvallis Public School Foundation (CPSF) is collecting that money (so it can be tax deductible). UUFC is invited to help. To make a donation, send a check to CPSF, 1555 SW 35th St., Corvallis, OR 97333, with "CHS solar" on the memo line. Do you have travel plans that involve air travel? Supporting this project would be a great way to begin to "offset" some of that carbon footprint. This is truly a community solar project! The more people who participate, the better. If you have questions, contact task force member Martha Clemons at mclemons65@gmail.com.

If you didn't see the story in the Gazette-Times, here is the link: http://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/funds-being-raised-for-new-chs-solar-array/article_21e5fo2d-418e-55b3-92c5-3f96b815e269.html

New Justice Group on Gun Reform

Nearly 20 people gathered for the first meeting of this group in early April. The second gathering will be Sunday, May 6, 12:30 in Room 9. All are welcome. Bring any information of already existing groups and projects on this issue, so that we can explore collaboration.

Social Concerns Team

The Social Concerns Team involves the congregation in social action causes by raising funds and awareness for different local and international charities each month. Activities include Action Lunches, Bake Sales and Sunday Collections. Each year, we traditionally support the South Corvallis Food bank, Community Outreach, the Men's Cold Weather Shelter, We Care, the UUSC, Vina Moses and the McKinney Homeless Education Program. This year, we have supported the Youth Building Program, the Sagebrush in Prison Project and the ACLU. We typically raise up to 2,000 each month for the various charities. Our efforts do have an impact in our community. Our contribution, and that of private individuals from our congregation, provide around 10% of the operating funds for Vina Moses. The \$2,200 we raised for the Sagebrush in Prison Project proved pivotal for allowing the Institute of Applied Ecology to apply for and receive a \$20K grant to continue the program in at least one prison. Fundraising efforts are continuing.

The Social Concerns Team consists of less than a half a dozen core member, but over 40 people contribute to our action lunches and bake sales each year. If you want to help with action lunch or bake sales, contact Sylvia Yamada (yamadas@science.oregonstate.edu).

Justice and Outreach Fund

The UUFC maintains a Justice Outreach Fund for grants that are focused on high-impact projects, aimed at seeding and achieving social, economic, racial, environmental and other kinds of justice.

Purpose: The Justice Outreach Fund promotes the application of the seven Unitarian Universalist principles.

Proposals: The Justice Outreach Fund makes grants that are focused on high-impact projects that are aimed at seeding and achieving social, economic, racial, environmental and other kinds of justice. For more information, visit the UUFC website, here: http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=4013. For more information, feel free to contact the Justice Outreach Fund Grant Committee directly at uufjusticeoutreach@gmail.com.

Partner Church Team.

The Partner Church Team advocates for support of the UUFC's Partner Church, the Unitarian Church in Körispatak, Transylvania, Romania, and promote international understanding, social justice, and our commitments to our relationships.

Beverly McFarland: bfmcfarland2@yahoo.com; 541-908-7408 or Janet Throop: throopj@peak.org; 541-753-1804

Microcredit Team

The Microcredit Team has been making loans to women in over 40 countries since February 4, 2010. The group has had a variety of fundraisers through the years including the sale of plants and pottery and also the production of a variety of concerts including throat singers from Tuva, musicians from Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Central America and an American Iranian group.

At present we have:

Outstanding in loans: \$2398.43

Total amount loaned since 2010: \$30,425.00

Total number of loans: 349

For the last 2 years we have been focusing our loans in Mexico and Central America in the desire to help people from these countries avoid the dangerous migration to the US by helping them economically so they can make a living for themselves and their families in their own countries.

We don't meet often, but we continually make loans as the money is returned to our KIVA account. If you are interested in joining our group we'd be very happy to welcome you. If you'd like to make a donation to the Microcredit Team please write a check to UUFC with Microcredit in the subject line. Your donation can be in any amount, it will be added to our KIVA account so that we can make new loans.

Thank you for your support!

If you'd like more information, feel free to contact Sandy Houtman, Chair of the team. Houtman@aol.com or 541-602-1516.

Immigrant and Refugee Support Team

Recent significant activities include:

1. Joining the month-long campaign spearheaded by Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIrJ) which includes learning about Immigrant and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) contract with the Northern Oregon Regional Correctional Facility (NORCOR), a public prison in The Dalles, Oregon, and the conditions there. Many of us on the team will be joining the vigil to be held at NORCOR on April 28, joining forces with UUs from Eugene and Salem as well as members of other faith groups across Oregon including the Corvallis UCC;
2. Volunteering with Casa Latinos Unidos of Benton County to help with their fundraising gala to be held on September 15, 2018. We will soon be soliciting silent auction items - art work, use of vacation homes, etc. We were surprised and very grateful to UUFC members who have already stepped forward to offer items. What a generous community of people we have the good fortune to be part of!

Newcomers are welcome. Contact: Melinda Sayavedra, sayavedl@peak.org.