

A Climate Justice Covenant

for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis

Guided by our seventh principle: Respect for the interdependent web
of all existence of which we are a part

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.

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.

Making a Commitment

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.

The following ideas are just examples to get us thinking:

Worship

Purpose: As worship is at the heart of the Fellowship and nurtures our spirits, concern for our climate will have a place in it.

Example: We will celebrate Earth Day each year in worship, honoring the Earth, celebrating the richness of its life, grieving for the species that have been lost, and renewing our commitment to care for the planet and its climate.

Finance and Investment

Purpose: To guide the Fellowship in using our money to do good work that supports our values and to provide for the well-being of the Fellowship for the people who come after us.

Example: We will work to ensure that the UUFC endowment funds are invested in clean energy and other environmentally and socially responsible projects, some of them local.

Religious Exploration

Purpose: To nurture all that is right and good in us, to help us to grow into our best selves.

Example: We will learn about our Green Sanctuary Covenant, our commitment to work together to restore the earth as we renew our spirits.

Fellowship Care and Support Team

Purpose: To provide listening companions, crisis response, and integration of pastoral care into many areas of church life, and to support the work of others.

Example: We will lead at least one workshop or afternoon retreat each year designed to uplift and nurture the spirits of UUFC's social justice workers.

Building Design and Construction Team

Purpose: As we work on the plan for our building enhancement, we are keeping in mind our UU principle of respecting the interdependent web of all existence.

Example: A way to do that is to make our new structure as energy efficient, sustainable, and earthquake resistant as possible.

EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion)

Purpose: To explore issues and responses to racism, oppression, and exclusion, with the understanding that global climate change most severely affects the poor and communities of color.

Example: We will join our efforts with those of Lummi Nation (and the Bellingham, Washington, UU church), as the Lummi Nation struggles to prevent fossil fuel infrastructure projects on its lands.