

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UU CHURCH OF DAVIS**

*Approved November 9, 2015*

### **BACKGROUND**

#### ***The UUA***

The UUA states, “We have a legacy of ‘deeds not creeds.’ Our work for a better world calls us to unexpected places as we harness love’s power to stop oppression. From grassroots community organizing to interfaith state, national, and corporate advocacy; in protest marches, prayer vigils, and press conferences; in homeless shelters and in prisons, Unitarian Universalists put our faith into action.

Our justice efforts are grounded in our congregationally-driven social justice statements and our call to break down divisions, heal isolation, and honor the interconnectedness of all life and all justice issues. We model these commitments by creating just, welcoming, and inclusive congregations. We act in partnership with groups and communities most impacted by injustice on local, state, national, and international levels...”

#### ***UU CHURCH OF DAVIS***

The UU legacy of deeds not creeds informs the purpose of UUUCD’s social justice ministries which is:

- To promote personal changes that help us live more socially just lives;
- To engage in service to others, guided by our social justice priorities; and
- To witness and advocate on behalf of social justice in legislation and public policy.

Our participation in social justice work—whether sheltering the homeless, testifying on climate change legislation at the state capitol, or educating ourselves on racial and social inequalities—has its roots in Unitarian Universalist principles and theologies, which come alive as they inspire us to action.

Appendix E of the *Long-Range Planning Report of the Dream Team* (6-9-15) states that the first efforts to enhance UUUCD’s social justice efforts should focus on the following three priorities:

- Food and Housing Justice (we have chosen this broader label over “Homelessness”)
- Climate Justice
- Racial and Immigrant Justice

#### **Current Social Justice Leadership Groups (listed with *examples* of their programs/activities)**

- Davis Community Meals
- Dove & Serpent (formerly Partner Church Committee)
  - Support for International Women’s Convocation
- Green Sanctuary Committee
  - Cool Davis programs/activities
  - Expanding the Reach of Yolo Food Bank (securing a refrigerated truck)
  - Interfaith Alliance for Climate Action programs/activities
    - Meatless Mondays
- Interfaith Rotating Winter Shelter

- Quilting Bee
  - Quilts for Progress Ranch
- United for Racial Justice
  - Black Lives Matter banner
  - Beloved Conversations (with UU Society of Sacramento; funding provided by district)

**Existing, emerging, and proposed social justice projects/activities not associated with a particular UUCD leadership group**

- Grow a Garden ( with residents of El Rio Villa; project under discussion)
- Faithful Friends-Amigos Fieles (immigrant visitation program at Elk Grove ICE detention center)
- UCD Office of AB540 & Undocumented Student Center (to date work by Rev. Banks; project still being developed)

**PROPOSALS TO THE UUCD BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Social Justice co-chairs propose to:

- Design an over-arching structure, the Social Justice Coordinating Committee, to support social justice leadership groups and improve communication about social justice issues and activities within the congregation and beyond (described below).
- Modify the process, in accordance with existing church policies, for creation of new social justice leadership groups (described below).
- Design the Social Justice Project/Activity Initiation Process, a simple mechanism for review of new social justice undertakings recommended by leadership groups, staff, or a congregant (described below).
- Develop social justice materials:
  - A social justice page for the UUCD website
    - A social justice calendar on the social justice page
  - A social justice brochure (which would be revised regularly)
  - A social justice section in the weekly bulletin and the monthly journal (when relevant to the monthly theme)
- Help social justice leadership groups to:
  - Strengthen leadership skills of individuals through mentoring, referral to relevant (e.g., leadership, conflict resolution) training, and possibly convening of training
  - Attract more congregants to participate in social justice activities; create more inviting opportunities
  - Develop new initiatives in the three identified priority areas
- Coordinate with the Senior Minister, the RE Professional, the Campus Minister, and leadership group chairs (ARE, Committee on Ministry, for example) to ensure worship, education, and other church endeavors support UUCD’s social justice ministry and vice versa; incorporate the monthly themes and the work of organizations receiving special collections into social justice activities.
- Connect UUCD’s social justice programs/activities and those at UU Justice Ministry of California (UUJMCA), District/Region, and UUA levels to increase effectiveness.
- Participate in the Davis Social Justice Coalition, a new group aimed at improved communication and cooperation among groups engaged in social justice activities in Davis and Yolo County.
- Celebrate social justice accomplishments and thank social justice leaders and participants.

We propose the following **structural changes** to strengthen UUCD's Social Justice ministry:

- Formation of a Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC). This group will be led by what are now being called the Social Justice Co-Coordinators (they will become the Co-Chairs of this new committee). In addition to the Co-Chairs, the committee will consist of the chairs of each social justice leadership group, and up to three at-large members to be selected by the Social Justice Co-Chairs in consultation with the minister(s). Meetings of this committee will be monthly and open to all interested parties. See attachment 1 for a social justice coordinating committee charge.
- Modification of the process for creating new social justice leadership groups (see attachment 2).
- Adoption of a Social Justice Project/Activity Initiation Process (see attachment 3).
- Approval and adoption of "action alerts." An "action alert" will engage the UUCD community in policy advocacy on issues endorsed by the Social Justice Coordinating Committee or another social justice leadership group (see attachment 4).

In addition to our recommendations regarding overall structure and process, we see the following specific social justice leadership group needs:

- Creation of a new leadership group focused on immigration and refugee issues (to guide some existing activities such as our participation in Faithful Friends – Amigos Fieles and collaborations with UCD, YIIN (Yolo Interfaith Immigration Network), and UUJMCA, as well as possible future endeavors, such as sponsoring Syrian refugees). A new leadership group charge will be sent to the board when ready.
- Either expansion of the IRWS group to include other activities addressing homelessness, hunger, and related issues or the creation of a separate group to do that. A modified or new leadership group charge will be sent to the board when ready.
- Recruitment of additional people, including leadership, to the Green Sanctuary Committee. Stefan and Robin are on their agenda for December.

#### Proposed Timeline

- November 2015: presentation of proposal(s) to UUCD Board of Trustees
- November 2015: initiate the above proposed responsibilities/tasks of the Social Justice Co-Coordinators effective the date of board approval
- December 31, 2015: completion of social justice materials
- January 15, 2016: posting of social justice materials on line

Submitted by Robin Datel and Stefan Harvey, Social Justice Co-Coordinators

Attachment 1: Social justice coordinating committee charge

Attachment 2: Modification of the process of creating new social justice leadership groups

Attachment 3: Social Justice Project/Activity Initiation Process

Attachment 4: Action Alerts

## Attachment 1

### Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis

#### SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COMMITTEE CHARGE

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 9, 2015*

#### **Purpose**

To support the social justice ministry of the church, enlarging its capacity

- to promote personal changes that help us live more socially just lives;
- to engage in service to others, guided by our social justice priorities;
- to witness and advocate on behalf of social justice in legislation and public policy; and
- thereby to enliven the principles and theologies that are the sources of social justice ministry.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Review proposals for major new social justice programs/activities
- Review proposals for new social justice leadership groups
- Help develop and maintain social justice communication tools
- Help social justice leadership groups develop leadership skills, grow participation in their activities, and shape new initiatives
- Enhance coordination between social justice programs/activities and other UUUCD endeavors
- Connect UUUCD social justice programs/activities with other UU entities, interfaith efforts, and appropriate secular groups
- Celebrate UUUCD's social justice accomplishments and thank their leaders

#### **Special Qualities or Skills Needed by Members**

- Willingness to devote time each month to strengthening *the overall social justice ministry* of the church
- It is desirable to have represented on the committee experience with the variety of activities that make up social justice efforts, such as education, direct provision of services, and policy advocacy. In general, good communication and organizational skills are desirable.

#### **Number of Members Needed**

One committee chair or two co-chairs plus chairs of the church's social justice leadership groups, and up to 3 additional members

#### **Terms of Office**

- Chair or co-chairs and the up-to-3 additional members: 3 years.
- Chairs of the church's social justice leadership groups: as long as they remain chairs of the leadership groups they represent.

### **Membership Selection Process**

- Chair or co-chairs are appointed by the Board of Trustees, following consultation with the minister(s).
- The up-to-3 additional members are selected by the chair or co-chairs, following consultation with the minister(s).
- All other members serve by virtue of their being chairs of other social justice leadership groups.

Attachment 2

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis**

**Modification of the process for creating (and nurturing) new social justice leadership groups**

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 9, 2015*

The only existing UUCD policy with regard to the creation of new leadership groups is that their leaders complete and submit a Leadership Group Charge, which is then reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. (“Leadership Group Charges Policy”)

The Social Justice Co-Coordinators recommend:

1. All proposals for social justice leadership groups shall be reviewed by the Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC) before being sent on to the Board of Trustees.
  
2. A minimum of five church members must be committed to active involvement in any new group for at least a year.
  
3. If approved by the Board, the group will receive a maximum of \$200 in the first church budget year after its formation, along with mentoring by the SJCC. If successful, the group gets a maximum of \$500 and more mentoring in the second year. In the third and each subsequent year of continuing success, the group will receive a maximum of \$1,000. (For purposes of comparison, we note the following: in the 2015-2016 budget, Green Sanctuary and United for Racial Justice each receive \$1,000; Davis Community Meals gets \$700; Dove & Serpent gets \$500 plus a special collection; IRWS gets a special collection; and the Quilting Bee gets \$250.) There is no rollover of funds. The money is to be spent on church projects/activities and leadership development. It cannot be donated to other organizations, although it could be used on collaborative endeavors both within UUCD and outside the church.
  
4. The types of questions to be asked by the SJCC as a group is getting started:
  - How many people want to be involved in the planning?
  - What are the skills of this group?
  - What specific actions are they interested in? What outcomes?
  - What kind of time commitments are involved?

5. After the first year, useful questions are:

- Are ample numbers of people attending events of the group? Is that number growing?
- Who is showing up? Is there diversity?
- Are your issues showing up in other church programming (such as worship and religious education)? How does the congregation respond?
- Can fellow SJCC members help mentor?

6. In cases where social justice leadership groups are having difficulties, it is the responsibility of the SJCC to work with them to increase success. Particularly if their difficulties are the result of genuine shifts in congregational passion and energy, then the SJCC may recommend to the Board of Trustees the modification or end of a social justice leadership group.

*Note: we acknowledge the social justice webpage of First Unitarian Church of Portland as the source for much of this framework.*

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis**  
**Social Justice Project/Activity Initiation Process**  
*Adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 9, 2015*

This attachment deals with projects and activities that involve some complexity and coordination. Less complicated activities undertaken by a social justice leadership group, such as tabling at an off-site event or joining a protest, should be posted to the social justice calendar in order to facilitate communication and participation, but would not normally be reviewed by the Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC).

New projects or activities can be initiated by social justice leadership groups, staff, or a congregant by following the procedures noted below.

**Project/activity initiated by existing social justice leadership groups**

New projects or activities can be initiated when a majority of the group (either by vote or consensus) endorses the project/activity; commits the time and resources necessary for the success of the project/activity; and individuals step forward to provide leadership, including inviting and recruiting others in the congregation to become involved.

A one-paragraph description of the project must be submitted to the SJCC as early as possible. It should include a title; the purpose and the desired outcome of the project/activity; any dates, times, and locations already known; what groups (UUCD and non-UUCD) are involved; and contact information. Proposed projects/activities will be discussed at the next available SJCC meeting. Co-Chairs of the SJCC may respond more quickly if needed. The purpose of this review is improved communication, coordination, and support. While we anticipate that generally the SJCC's response to proposals will be positive, there may be instances where the SJCC might recommend not pursuing an activity or might suggest modifications.

**Project/activity initiated by staff or congregant**

Staff or congregants interested in proposing a social justice program/activity can approach an existing social justice leadership group; if the group wants to adopt the project, then the process described above is set in motion. If the proposer is not sure what is the best leadership group for a project/activity or if it appears that no appropriate group exists, then the one-paragraph proposal will go directly to the SJCC. The SJCC may steer the proposal to the best existing leadership group or may propose the creation of a new group to support the program/activity. In the latter case, the SJCC will work with the proposer to develop and submit a Leadership Group Charge to the Board of Trustees, per existing policy ("Leadership Group Charges Policy"). As above, project/activity proposals will be taken up at the next available SJCC meeting.

This policy also pertains to interfaith or collaborative programs/activities with organizations outside UUCD especially programs/activities which request or require the inclusion of UUCD's name on a list of supporting organizations. Activities undertaken in the name of UUCD must meet the current "Advocacy & Sponsorship Policy" (adopted 5-12-2014). [http://www.uudavis.org/PDFs/Congregational/Policy\\_AdvocacySponsorship.pdf](http://www.uudavis.org/PDFs/Congregational/Policy_AdvocacySponsorship.pdf).

Major social justice projects/activities will continue to benefit from input from church staff; the Social Justice Coordinators recommend continuance of the current practice of scheduling time at staff meetings for this type of collaboration.

Attachment 4

**Unitarian Universalist Church of Davis**

**Policy on “Action Alerts”**

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees on November 9, 2015*

The Social Justice Co-Chairs recommend the following “Action Alert” policy to provide opportunities for congregants to engage in policy advocacy. Allowing bold and rapid action on behalf of relevant legislation and policy signals our congregation’s commitment to social action.

This proposed policy would create exceptions to—for action alerts only—the first sentence and first numbered point in the existing “Guidelines for Sunday Tabling in the Social Hall,” which are posted on the church website at [http://www.uudavis.org/PDFs/Congregational/Info\\_UUCD%20Leadership%20Nuts%20&%20Bolts.pdf](http://www.uudavis.org/PDFs/Congregational/Info_UUCD%20Leadership%20Nuts%20&%20Bolts.pdf) and are as follows:

Guidelines for Sunday Tabling in the Social Hall Sunday tabling should be used only to promote UUCD or Unitarian Universalist (UULM, UUA, UUSC, etc.) programs and events. If in doubt, please contact the Congregational Administrator to see if your activity qualifies.

1. Tables should be placed ONLY in front of the benches along the east side of the Social Hall to allow people room to mingle without bumping into tables.
2. Please use the 24"x48" white Lifetime tables with a tablecloth. Each table should provide enough space for one or two groups. Tables are stored in the Meeting Room storage closet.
3. There is room for up to five tables (5-10 groups) each Sunday. Please be respectful in sharing tabling space with other groups, so as many groups as possible will have the opportunity to advertise or sign people up for special events, collect signatures, offer items for sale, etc.
4. Each group is responsible for setting up, taking down, and putting away its own table every Sunday it decides to table. The Social Hall default set-up instructions are on the front of the white fridge and in the Meeting Room storage closet.
5. To have an item included in the brochure rack, please contact the Congregational Administrator.

An “Action Alert” is an effort to inform people and gather signatures in support of or opposition to local, state, or federal legislation or policy. An action alert is typically used in short-deadline situations.

Action alerts at UUCD must support UU principles *and* must be approved by a social justice leadership group (which can be the Social Justice Coordinating Committee). Because action alerts by their very nature are responses to rapidly unfolding events, such approval can be obtained from a group majority via e-mail and telephone.

In accordance with UUCD’s existing “Advocacy and Sponsorship Policy,” action alerts pertaining to political parties or candidates for public office are not allowable.

Promoters of an action alert can solicit signatures at tables and by circulating in the social hall and outside the social hall (other than the sanctuary) as long as promoters of an action alert are respectful. For action alerts, a table can be placed in a location other than near the east side benches, for example outside the front doors to the social hall.

Nothing in this proposed policy is inconsistent with the church’s existing “Advocacy & Sponsorship Policy.”