

Justice Ministry Working Group Report
May 18, 2014

LOVE is the Spirit of this Church, and SERVICE its law.

As members of UUAC, we covenant to live out our religious principles within and beyond the church community through Justice Ministry. The Justice Ministry Working Group is hard at work, drafting a proposal for restructuring UUAC's social action and social justice programs and initiatives in order to empower all congregants to engage in the important work of Justice Ministry.

A Bit of Background

As the congregation has grown and evolved, we've recognized an emerging need for a proactive, coordinated, and efficient approach to creating, sustaining/nurturing, and retiring/suspending social action and social justice projects and programs, in order to best reflect UUAC's strategic vision [1] and strengthen UUAC's justice ministry within and beyond our membership.

Beginning last fall, members of the congregation with an interest in these issues – the Social Action Discernment Working Group – met regularly with Meck Groot, Justice Ministries Coordinator for the UUA's Clara Barton and Mass Bay Districts, to discuss these needs, develop UUAC-specific criteria for justice ministry projects, and formulate a vision and plan for moving forward. Early in the process, several goals emerged to guide this vision:

- Encourage and nurture a balance of types of justice ministry (service, education, advocacy, witness)
- Balance our capacity and resources throughout the year
- Clarify decision-making processes
- Provide clear communication to the congregation about all activities
- Empower individuals to become involved

The Emerging Proposal

On behalf of the Social Action Discernment Working group, the Justice Ministry Working Group is exploring the idea of a **Justice Ministry Committee**, a representative committee formed to monitor the social action and social justice activities of UUAC and promote coordination and collaboration among the various UUAC ministries engaging in forms of social action and social justice work.

The responsibilities of the Justice Ministry Committee *may* include:

- Determine process for creating new justice ministry projects or programs
- Help members of the congregation engage in justice ministry

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- Coordinate resource allocations for groups not funded independently or whose primary function is not justice ministry
- Oversee communication of programs and projects
- Facilitate coordination of schedules of programs to ensure a good flow over the year
- Assess and evaluate current programs using discernment criteria developed by the Social Action Discernment Working Group

The Committee may consist of the Chairs of each UUAC Justice Ministry team and three members at-large. One of the members at-large would act as Chair of the Justice Ministry Council and would represent justice ministries on the UUAC Ministry Council.

Next Steps

Over the next year, while we continue to manage and support our current social action programs, the Justice Ministry Working Group will carry on with its work on the draft proposal for restructuring UUAC's social action and social justice programs and initiatives, for a possible May 2015 vote of the congregation.

More details to come.

Respectfully submitted,

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[1] "Our 2016 Vision and Strategic Plan,"
<http://www.uuac.org/governance/5YearStrategicPlan.pdf>