



OUR MISSION

UUCSJ was created as a collaboration between the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Our mission is to inspire and sustain effective and spiritually grounded activism for justice.

WE ARE... SPIRITUALLY GROUNDED

At UUCSJ, we believe that our spiritual values and practices can play an essential role in motivating our work for justice, informing the ways in which we approach this work, and sustaining us in these efforts over the long haul. In other words, spirituality can help us answer the questions: What am I called to do to engage in the work of justice-making in our world? How will I go about this work? How can I stay centered, grounded, and nourished despite the challenges of working for justice?

We incorporate into all of our offerings opportunities to find and practice spiritual sustenance in many forms (worship, reflection, music, poetry, creative and embodied practices, time in nature, and more). While our programs are rooted in Unitarian Universalist values and practices, and many of our participants are affiliated with UU congregations, our programs are open to people of all traditions.

WE OFFER... IMMERSION LEARNING + EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Many of UUCSJ's programs are described as offering opportunities for "immersion learning", instead of "service", because we want to emphasize the equal relationships between all involved. People are the experts of their own lives and we have much to learn from the glimpses into their experience they offer us on our immersion learning journeys. To learn deeply about systems of injustice, and ways to resist, we need to learn from the people most impacted and on the frontline of community-based organizing. When we are immersed in relationships and experiences that allow us to hear people's stories first hand, when we directly encounter their struggles and victories, and when we share collective experiences and our common aspirations for justice, we have not simply learned something — we can also become transformed in the process.

This kind of change inspires new commitments to and deeper engagement in the work of justice-making. The greatest "service" we can do is to allow this work of personal transformation to guide our long-term commitments to learning about and taking action for justice. When we travel to new destinations to learn from our partners, whether in Nicaragua, the U.S./Mexico border, New Orleans, or West Virginia, we believe that our "service" really begins when we get home, returning to our communities with new perspectives, awareness, and inspiration that will compel and inform our ongoing activism.

WE BUILD... EYE-TO-EYE PARTNERSHIPS

We can't create effective change in the world without involving, and following the leadership of, the people whose lives are most directly impacted by the social justice issues in which we are engaged. We say, "most impacted" recognizing that we are all implicated in systems of oppression, experiencing

harms and benefits of these systems to different degrees based on our social locations and access to power and privilege. In the process of partnering with those who are on the frontlines of justice struggles, we learn as much, or more, from our partners and members as they might learn from us.

When we're working to end oppression in the world, the last thing we want to do is re-create it — that's why eye-to-eye partnerships are so important. One of our goals is to foster an exchange, a true meeting of equals, because we believe that we *are* all equal. We want to make sure that we come into partnership treating everyone with the dignity and respect that we all deserve. When we start working with a partner, we don't assume to know what the best course of action on a given issue is — we ask questions, we listen, we discuss, and *together* we forge the best solution. We offer concrete acts of solidarity, while honoring the vision, expertise, and self-determination of people on the ground. Collaborating with our partners makes the work of social justice deeper and richer, and it is also the only way to make the work effective and sustainable.

OUR RESOURCES + PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- **Immersion Learning Journeys** for individuals, congregations, and youth groups to Nicaragua, the U.S./Mexico border, Houston, TX, New Orleans, LA, and West Virginia
- **National and regional trainings and workshops** in partnership with the UUA and UUSC, including collaborations on GROW Racial Justice for young adults, Youth Ministry Revivals and Goldmine Youth Leadership Schools, the UU-UNO Intergenerational Spring Seminar, immersion learning partnerships at UUA Regional Assemblies, General Assembly workshops, and more
- **Global Justice Internships** for Young Adults and **Skilled Volunteer Placements**
- **Youth Visits to Boston** that incorporate elements of our Activate justice trainings as well as local experiential learning projects in partnership with local grassroots justice groups
- **Tools for strengthening congregation-based justice activism**, including webinars, toolkits, curricula, online videos and resources, including several new offerings related to Love Resist's work to expand sanctuary, solidarity, and accompaniment and end money bail (**LoveResists.org**)
- **Comprehensive online study guides** for individuals and congregations to learn about issues such as Immigration Justice, Climate Justice, and First Nations Solidarity, as well as broader themes, including spiritual practice & social justice, legacies of systemic injustice, showing up respectfully by crossing boundaries, bearing witness, and taking action as allies and accomplices. These study guides are free and available to all to use at **UUCSJ.org/study-guide**