



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MINISTRY FOR EARTH

Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.

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Hundreds of UUs joined the RISE for Climate, Jobs, & Justice National March
In San Francisco, September 2018. Photo by Aly Tharp

Mission: To be a Unitarian Universalist wellspring of bold, accountable, faithful action for environmental justice, climate justice, and the flourishing of life.

Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) combines the energies and inspiration of over 7,000 constituents and UU activists to empower bold, accountable, faith-grounded action for environmental justice. With a sense of urgency and concern for Earth and all life, we work collectively and in partnership within the framework of race-and class-informed environmental justice and climate justice principles, striving to center the leadership and needs of frontline communities. We ground our work in the Seventh and proposed Eighth Principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part" impels us to act on behalf of all life; our commitment to "building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions" guides our organizational priorities, internal operations, and programming choices.

Programs: UUMFE is committed to innovative leadership and organizing in the face of the climate crisis that affects all but disproportionately impacts low-income communities and communities of color. By fostering the leadership of groups most affected and working collaboratively with other UU and environmental/climate organizations, UUMFE is able to nimbly respond to needs and opportunities as they arise.

—CREATE— CLIMATE JUSTICE

Create Climate Justice, conceived by UUMFE, the Unitarian Universalist Association's Green Sanctuary Program and the UU Office at the United Nations, is an innovative multi-organizational initiative, providing a comprehensive organizing framework. UUMFE provides staff, infrastructure and administrative support. The initiative currently has three priority focus areas:

- 1) strengthening UU communications and mutual support networks for climate justice;
- 2) mobilizing UUs in solidarity with Indigenous front-line communities; and
- 3) supporting the Just Transition to an ecological civilization through partnerships and civic engagement. UUMFE provides staff, infrastructure and administrative support.

UUMFE also developed and manages the CreateClimateJustice.net online platform, a powerful networking, resource-sharing and communications tools to connect activists for mobilization.

UUMFE sponsors and support several circles of activists, including:

- The UU Young Adults for Climate Justice (UUYACJ) network of UU activists aged 18 to 35 support each other in engaging in direct action campaigns, worship services, education and training, mobilizing and organizing UUs for the work of climate justice, and more.
- The Environmental Justice Practitioners Network (EJPN) is a regular online gathering of UU environmental and climate justice leaders and community partners launched in 2015 by the UUA Green Sanctuary Program and developed in partnership with UUMFE since 2016.
- The BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) UU Environmental Justice caucus holds a monthly gathering focused on the intersections of racial, environmental and climate injustices, inspired by the UU Seventh Principle and the Eighth Principle.

Finances: Through the generosity of individual and congregational supporters and grantors – including the UUA and several major donors – UUMFE is in a good financial position.

- FY 2019-20 income = \$227,249 (donations = \$76,416; program grants & targeted donations = \$83,071; FY 2018-19 program grants balance and reserve carry-forward to FY 2019-20 budget = \$10,785 + \$56,977)
- FY 2019-20 expenses = \$208,367 (programs = \$87,834; administration = \$34,377; fundraising = \$3,946; FY 2019-20 carryover to the 2020-21 budget includes \$41,781 grants balance and \$40,429 reserve)
- End of FY 2019-20 cash = \$18,882 (in addition to the FY 2019-20 program grants/reserve carry-forward)

History: UUMFE was founded to meet the need for individuals and congregations to live out more fully the UUA Seventh Principle in worship, education and community justice programs.

Beginning in 1989 as the Seventh Principle Project, the group published the first edition of the *Green Sanctuary Handbook* in 1991 and established the Green Sanctuary accreditation program. In 2006, the newly named UUMFE began providing Earth Day materials for congregations and led in the adoption of the UUA 2006 Statement of Conscience on the Threat of Global Warming/Climate Change. In 2008, the UUA assumed ownership of the Green Sanctuary Program and UUMFE began expanding its focus and actions to environmental justice, partnering with organizations such as 350.org, frontline communities, UU state advocacy networks, Interfaith coalitions, and other UU groups.

In 2012, UUMFE published *Our Place in the Web of Life*, an environmental justice curriculum used widely in most Green Sanctuary accreditation plans. In 2014, UUMFE led an “EJ Collaboratory” for representatives of more than a dozen UU groups and organizations committed to environmental justice. This catalyzed the formation of Commit2Respond, a collaborative denominational campaign for climate justice; UUMFE provided key leadership and program support for C2R from 2014 through its end in 2017.

In its efforts to empower new leadership and organize the UU base in ways that align with the Principles and organizing frameworks of the broader Environmental Justice & Climate Justice, UUMFE began exploring horizontal/non-hierarchical organizing models (ie, Sociocracy) in 2018. This shift informed UUMFE's role as a co-founder of Create Climate Justice, the UU multi-organizational initiative, the development of CCJnet, an online organizing tool, and the campaign's strategy to connect place-based, identity-based, role-based, and campaign-based networks/communities. In 2019, due to staffing limitations, the UUA contracted with UUMFE for Program Director Aly Tharp to serve as an interim climate strategist through June 2021. As the UUA adds a new staff person to hold their climate justice portfolio, UUMFE continues to address the need for grassroots leadership development and empowerment to ensure the sustainability and efficacy of UU climate justice ministries.