



UUSJ

WELCOME!

Inspired Faith, Effective Action



...supporting congregational action for social change

Presented by Annette Marquis and Jennifer Toth,
Multicultural Growth and Witness

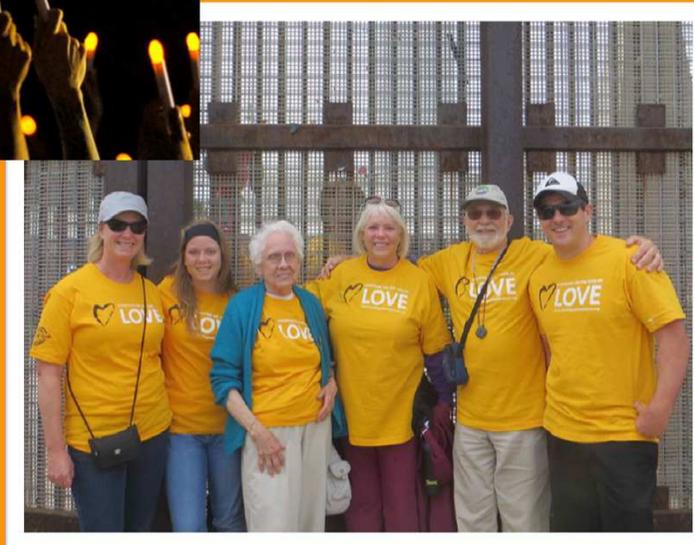
Before SSL, we didn't have anything people felt so unanimously positive about. It has made congregations feel empowered that they can make a difference.



Rev. Terry Sweetser
*UUA Vice President for
Stewardship and Development*



**The Road from Phoenix:
Compassionate
Immigration Reform**



“Not a slogan, a way of living!”



—Valley UU Congregation,
Chandler, AZ

Annette- pics of your work?



Spiritually Grounded Social Justice

- **UU principles and sources**

interconnectedness; universal love; inherent worth and dignity; sacred relationships

- **Religiously grounded justice work**

sustains us; provides vision and theological grounding; is transformative; increases authenticity, clarity, and effectiveness

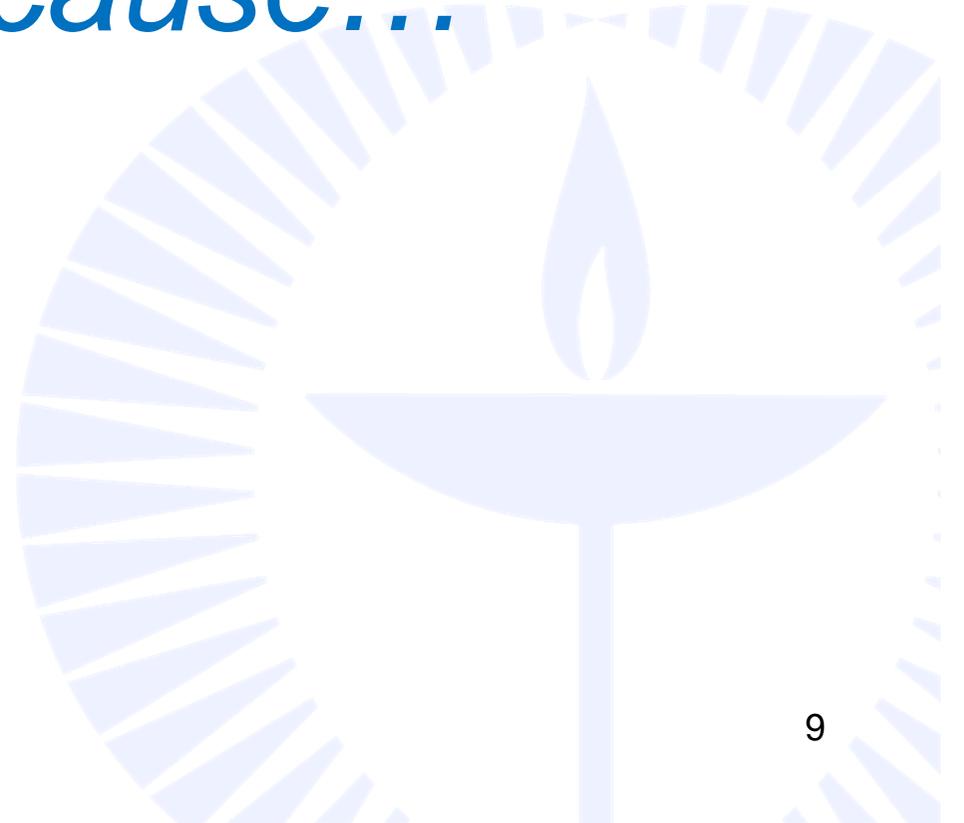
- **Spiritually grounded congregation-based ministry**

fosters spiritual growth; builds community; mobilizes and inspires; authentically explores privilege and oppression; builds partnerships and bridges; provides vision and goals; changes culture

What are your core faith values?

- **What values do you see in the world that are not an expression of your faith?**
- **What are your deeply held beliefs?**
- **What daily practices can you engage in to live them out?**
- **How does your faith community nurture your spirit and help you sustain your commitment to these values?**
- **What can your congregation do to reflect those values?**

Social justice is spiritual for me, is an expression of my faith, because....





Story of Self
Story of Us
Story of Now

Adapted from the work of Marshall Ganz
and modified by the New Organizing Institute

Story of Self, Story of Us, Story of Now

- *Collective visioning*
- *Creating shared story*
 - *Self: values that move YOU to act*
 - *Us: values calling us to collective action*
 - *Now: urgent challenges to those values and call to action*
- *Combining story of self, us, now to create shared relational commitment*

Story of Self: Values that Move You to Act

- *Sharing your motivating values*
- *Establishing ground for trust, empathy, understanding, common purpose*
- *Courage of introspection*
- *Key focus: Choice in the face of challenge*
 - *Moments when values moved us to act*

Story of Us:

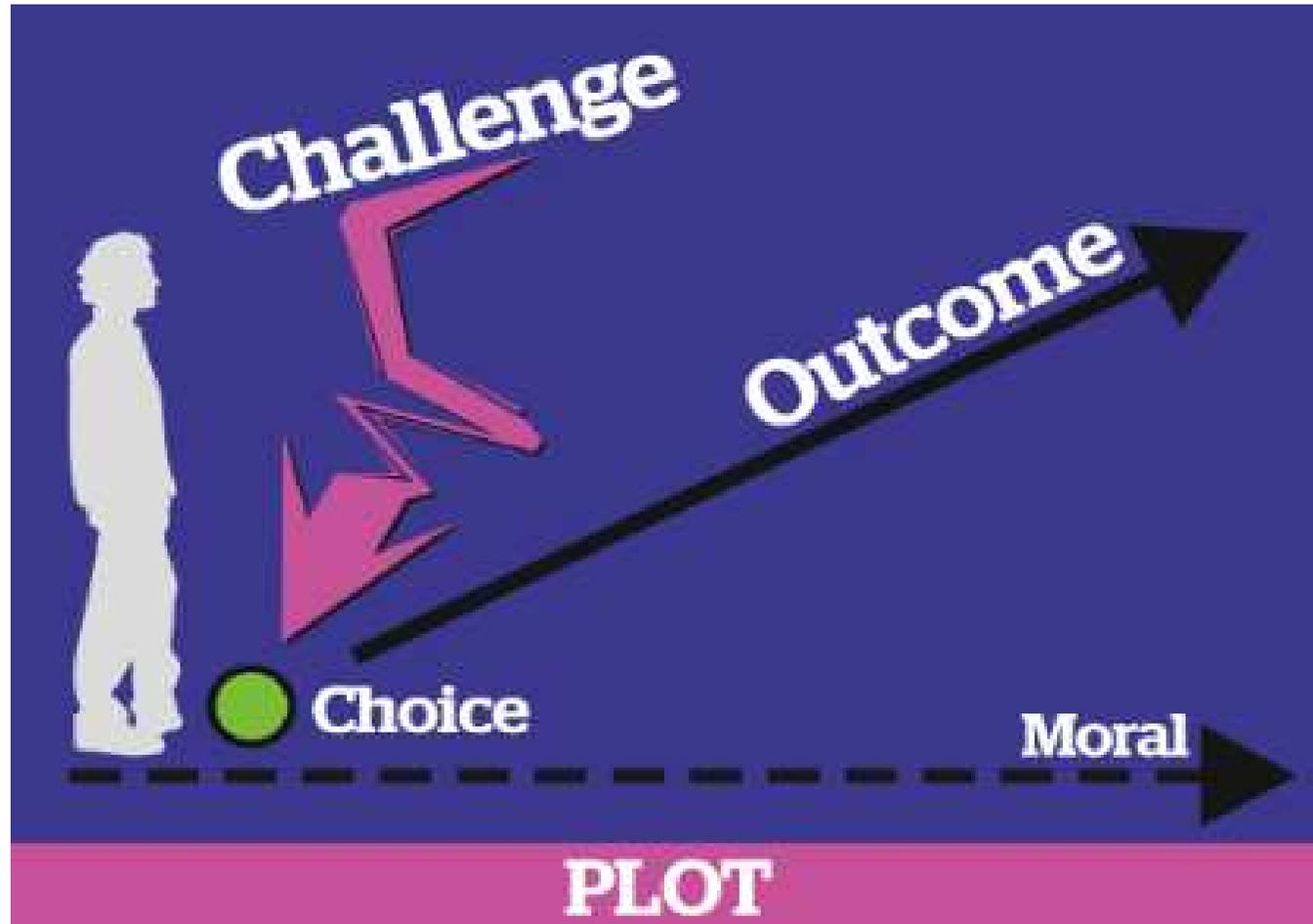
Values that Inspire Others to Act Together

- *Identifying with each other as a group*
- *Lifting up choices in a group's history: founding, crises and conflicts, big events*
- *Courage of empathy*
- *Key focus: Shared story that calls forward shared values*

Story of Now: Urgent Challenge, Hope, and Call to Action

- *Bringing urgency alive*
- *Calling forward the promise of hope and prophetic vision*
- *Courage of imagination*
- *Key focus: Choice that must be made*
 - *Action that leads to a better future*

Key Elements: Challenge, Choice, Outcome

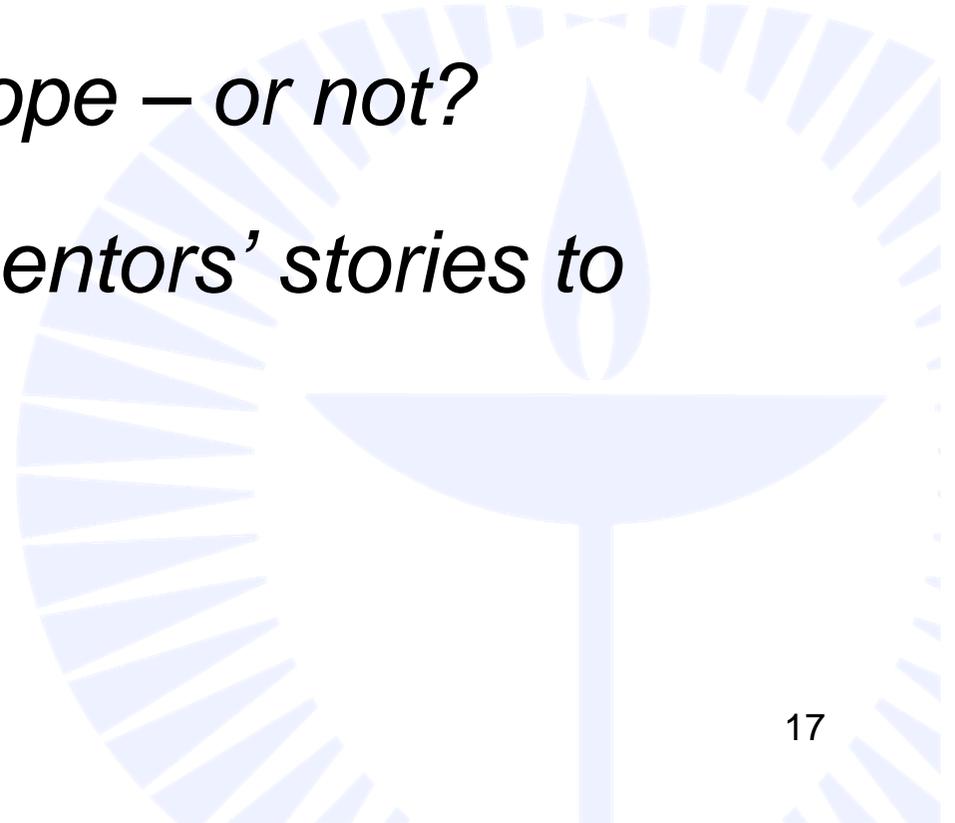


Challenge

- *Why was it a challenge?*
- *What made it so challenging?*
- *Note: Challenge doesn't automatically mean misfortune. Could be a crossroads; something positive you took on; etc.*

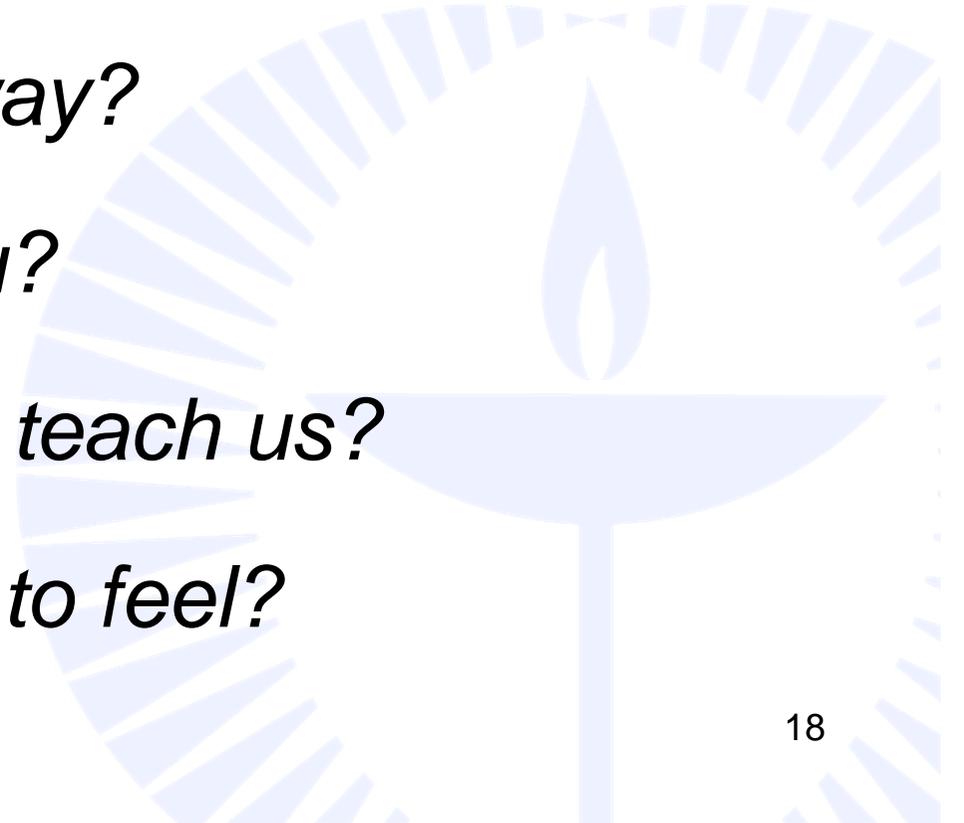
Choice

- *Why did you make the choice you did?*
- *Where did you get the courage – or not?*
- *Where did you get hope – or not?*
- *Did you draw from mentors' stories to decide how to act?*
- *How did it feel?*



Outcome

- *What was the impact of your choice?*
- *How did the outcome feel?*
- *Why did it feel that way?*
- *What did it teach you?*
- *What do you want to teach us?*
- *How do you want us to feel?*



Story of Us:

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Developing Your Story of Now

- **Goal**

Describe urgent challenge, hopeful vision, and a specific choice to make right now

- **Narrative Structure**

- **Challenge:** *Faced by community in past or now, made real by story, not stats*

- **Outcome:** *Hope, past collective achievements, vision of better future*

- **Choice:** *Specific, actionable, strategic, urgent*

- **Hopeful Action**

Good leadership = bringing people together to take inspired, strategic action

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Forming Right Relationships

- Requires partnership with and taking leadership from the communities most affected by the issue being worked on.
- When considering a particular project, find out what is already happening in the community and talk to the individuals and group(s) most affected before taking action. Be conscious of the safety of those most at risk.
- Be willing to take a supporting role on issues that do not directly affect us. Receive leadership from affected groups.

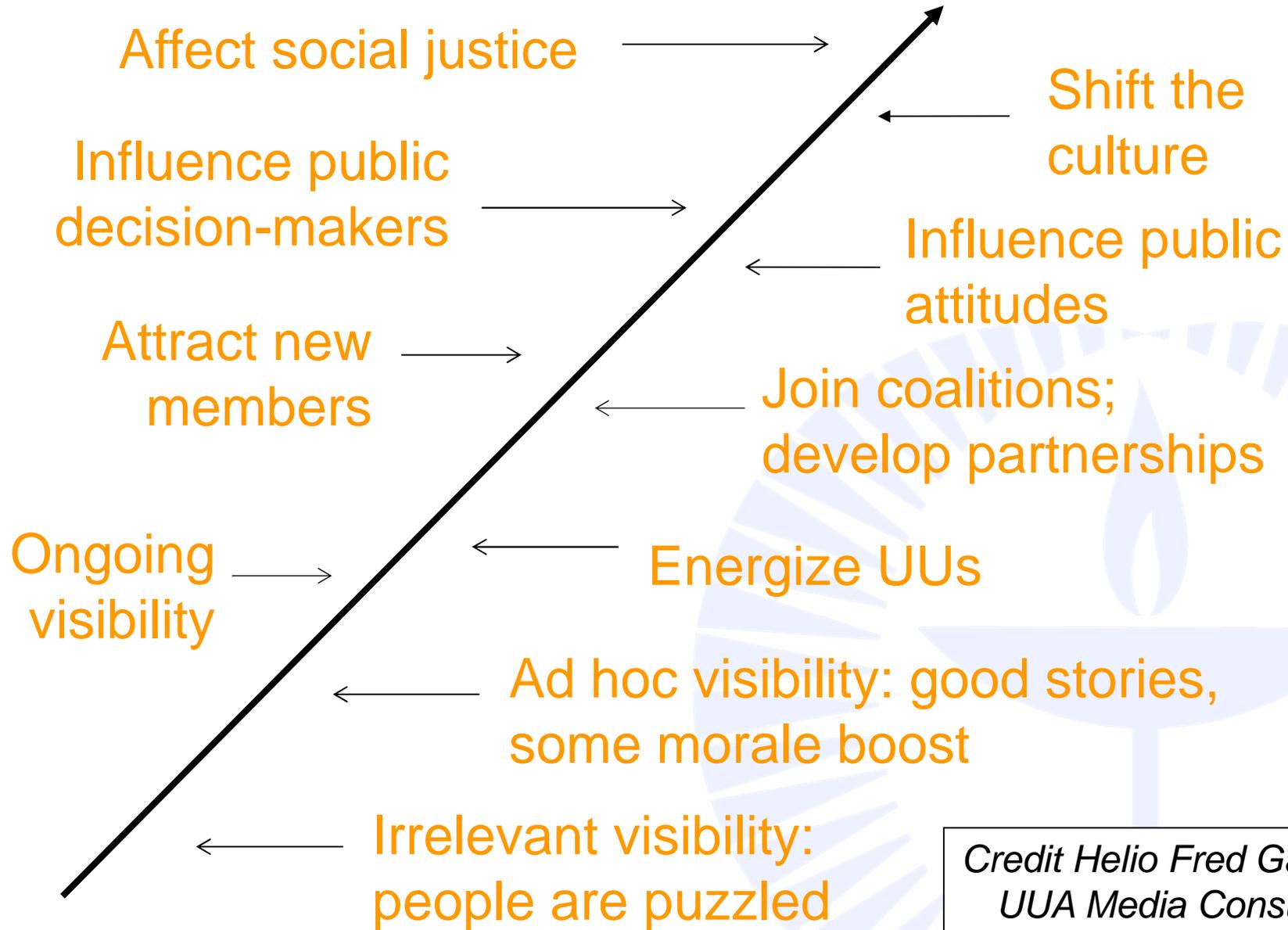
Congregational Identity & Community Outreach

- *Who are we? What is our ‘social location?’*
- *What is our **history and public profile** in the community?*
- *What are our **assets and resources** for social justice?*
- *What are **our** demographics and our **community’s** demographics?*
- *What are the **power dynamics** in our community?*
- *Who are our **allies and potential partners**?*

Mapping Connections

- *Connecting with larger community.* Consider the many relationships the congregation has in the local community and beyond. Where do congregants volunteer? Which boards do they serve on? Where do they work? Who uses, rents our building? State, national connections?
- *Partnerships between congregation and community organizations, interfaith partners*
- *Connecting with TXUUJM, 'SSL' & UUA*

Assessing Congregation's Social Justice Impact on Greater Community



*Credit Helio Fred Garcia,
UUA Media Consultant*

Criteria for Choosing/Assessing Where to Put Your Energy

- *GROUNDING*
- *ACCOUNTABILITY*
- *FIT*
- *OPPORTUNITY*

Grounding	Accountability
Fit	Opportunity

Grounding

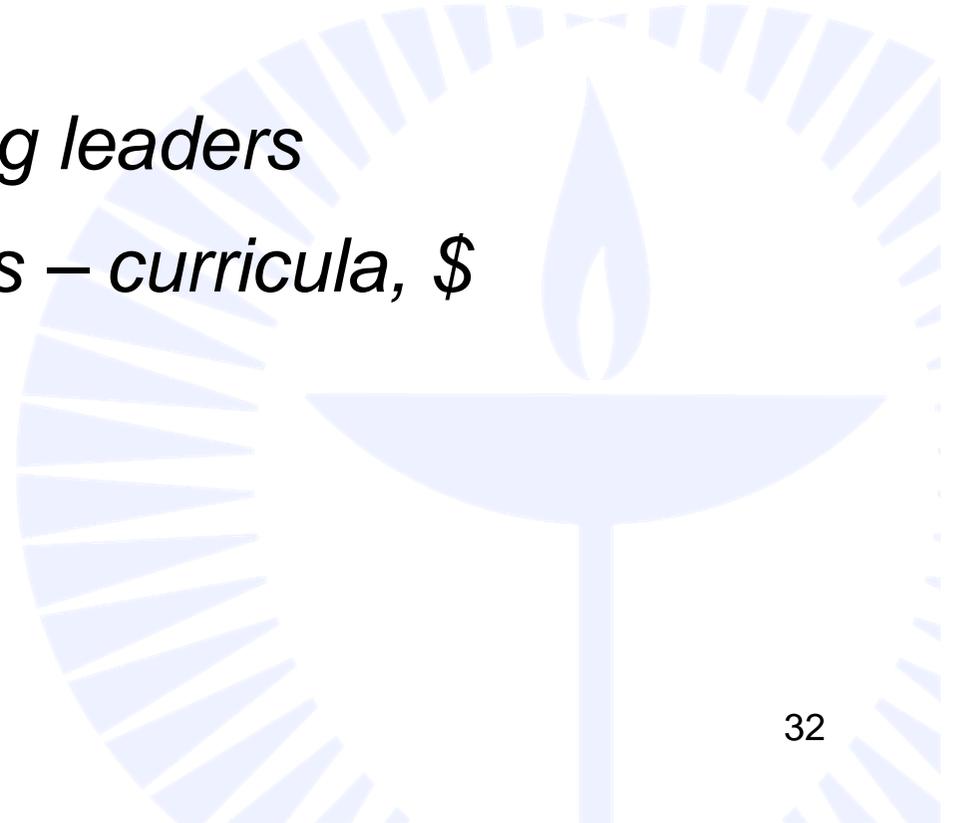
- *Does the issue have authentic and deep UU roots?*
- *Does it link to the current identity, theology, and lived experience of the congregation?*
 - *Theology/philosophy*
 - *Worship & congregational life*
 - *Social action history & today*

Accountability

- *Is the issue of concern to marginalized groups in the congregation and in the community?*
- *Are we in relationship with those groups?*
- *Is right relationship reflection built in to the project and its way of operating? Can we be sensitive partners? Are we educated on the issues? Do we follow others lead?*

Fit

- *Is there a match between our resources, aspirations, and ability to make a real difference?*
 - *Informed and inspiring leaders*
 - *Institutional resources – curricula, \$*
 - *Partners*



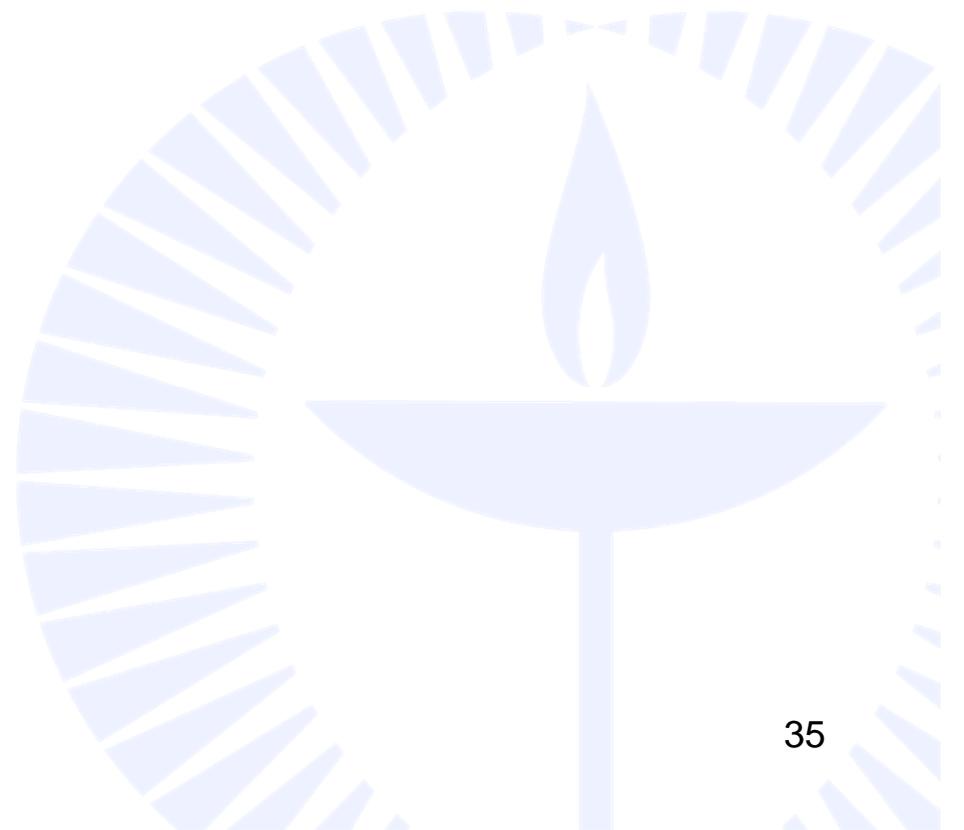
Opportunity

- *Can we make a real difference as a respected participant?*
- *Is this a “hot” issue and a good time to act?*
- *Is there a local, state or national campaign or coalition we can join?*
- *Are there debates in the public arena, legislation that UUs can influence?*

GAFO

Potential	Ideal
High Fit and Low Opportunity	High Fit and High Opportunity
Study, educate, and monitor for development.	Dedicate time, energy, and resources.
Issues:	Issues:
Unlikely	Potential
Low Fit and Low Opportunity	Low Fit and High Opportunity
Do not dedicate time and resources. Can monitor for development.	Study, educate, and monitor for development.
Issues:	Issues:

Practice GAFO



Opportunity

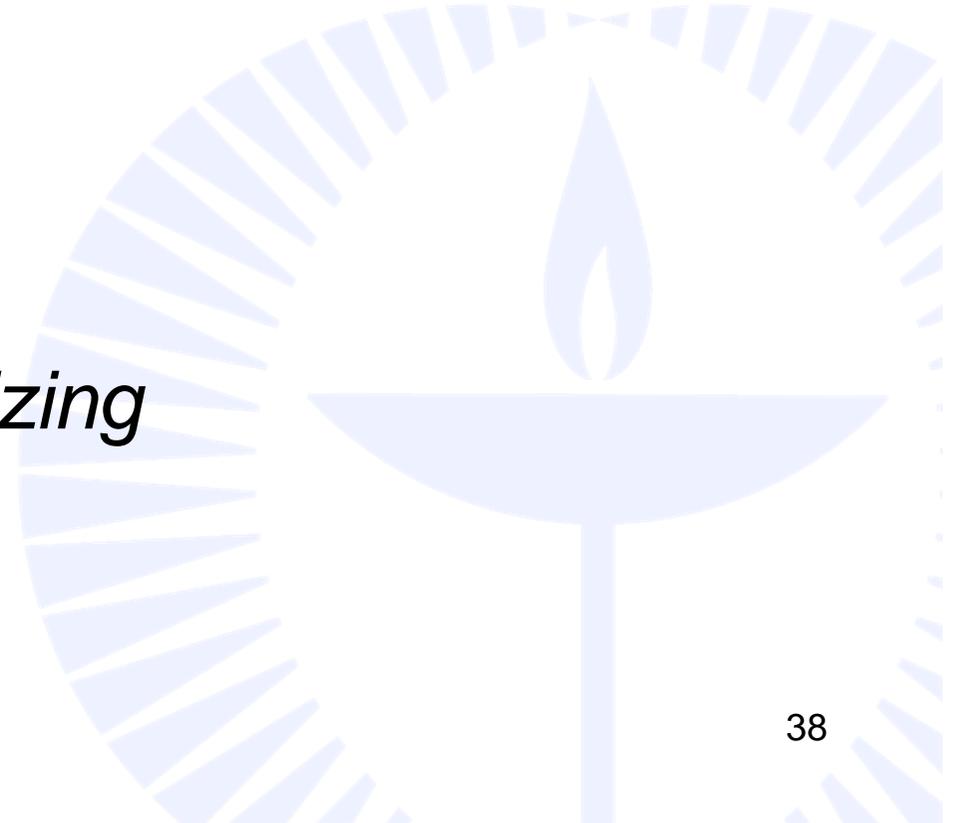
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Social Justice
as a Vibrant Ministry at the
Heart of the Whole Congregation



A Balanced Social Justice Program: Five Main Approaches to Taking Action

1. *Service*
2. *Education*
3. *Witness*
4. *Advocacy*
5. *Community Organizing*



Building Bridges Between 5 Kinds of Social Justice

- *For example: Bridge between education and advocacy*
 - *Action at the end of film showing*
 - *Partner group represented*
- *For example: Justice Sundays*
 - *Include sermon, service piece, advocacy piece, partner, possibly even a witness opportunity*

Planning the Year: Less is More

- *Fewer events; big build up – less activity and more communication*
- *Coordination: between justice teams and also between worship, social justice, RE, planning, Annual Retreat*
- *Possibility for creating a liturgical calendar*
- *Lots of reinforcement of same work; messages*

Grounding & Partnering

- *Tie justice efforts to our UU identity; tell your story; keep creating the story of us - monthly Report in Worship - Story of now*
- *Using GAFO to describe justice ministry*
- *Every justice team maintaining a partnership; opportunities for congregation to interact with partners; spiritual discussions with partners*
- *Sharing the plate with social justice partners⁴¹*



**Creating Healthy &
Sustainable Social Justice
Ministry**

Tend to Spiritual Life of Social Justice Committee & Justice Teams

- *Small group ministry practices--*
- *Centering faith/spirit/heart*
- *Prayer, reading, song*
- *Community-building reflection on meaningful questions (Appreciative Inquiry)*
- *Meditative visioning*
- *Team practices: spirit, reflection/action/reflection, sharing stories*

A Culture Caring Community

- *Check-ins and reflection; get to know each other's stories*
- *Effective and reflective meetings & activities*
- *Be there for each other*
- *Provide childcare and youth activities*
- *Maintain a covenant of faithful, right relations*
- *Lean into discomfort and help each other stretch and grow*

Leadership Development & Recruitment

- *One-to-ones & Story telling sessions*
- *Power analysis*
- *Ask for input – ask opinions about decisions, give people choices—creates investment*
- *Ask for one thing – not to come to a meeting or join the team (later)*
- *Cultivate and empower leadership of people of many identities, ages, and experiences*

Sustainable and Vibrant Social Justice

- *Plan social time and retreats; have fun!*
- *Celebrate accomplishments*
- *Evaluate progress and let people know about it*
- *Rotate leadership roles – recruit people for smaller roles – readings etc.*
- *Provide a diversity of involvement options*
- *Community care comes first—not deadlines—don't let your leaders burn out. Love them!*

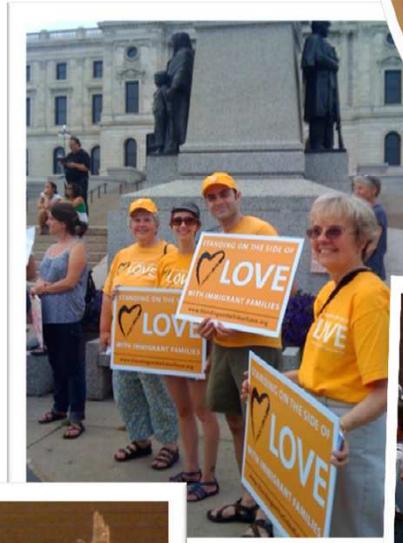
Creating Sustainable Justice Ministry

- **Involving more people in the congregation**
- **Community outreach to partners**
- **Tending to spiritual community**



The Love People!

The Yellow Shirt People!



The Power of SSL



Standing on the Side of Love

"A newcomer to our congregation this morning said that one of the reasons he and his wife came was because they saw our large 'Standing on the Side of Love' banner at the front of our driveway, and thought they might like a religion that would say such a thing."

—Rev. Michael Tino, UU Fellowship of Northern Westchester



Standing on the Side of Love Online Store
www.sslonlinestore.com

Standing on the Side of Love is faith in action, and our bright yellow T-shirts, banners, and signs identify us as a united group, with a clear message. Visit the SSL Online Store today to join the community of Love People.

📅 14 hours ago · Like · Comment · Share

👍 169 people like this.



Robert Korhn Super, Keep Up The Good Work...God Bless.

13 hours ago · Like



Trent Wilson UUs have always stood on the side of love. abolition, women's rights, desegregation and equality, minority rights, worker's rights, glbtq rights, standing on the side of the environment, immigrant rights. reaching out to pick up those who are pushed down by the rest.

it's reassuring to know there are people who always seem to stand on the right side of history, on the side of love ;-)

9 hours ago · Like · 🔄 3 people



Stacey Freedenthal That sign is exactly what drew me in, as well, to the First Universalist in Denver. Love it!

9 hours ago · Like · 🔄 1 person



ht



Standing on the Side of Love

- *Great for getting people engaged and energized – tied to UU identity*
- *Great for forming partnerships*
- *Open source for congregations*
- *Many congregations using it as an umbrella for social justice ministry*
- *Centering on love and Beloved Community*

Storytelling



“Story of Self, Story of Us, Story of Now”

Lessons Learned: When we stand on the side of love in advocacy setting

- Be prepared, and more importantly, be receptive.
- Have talking points, but not a script. Aim to engage in dialogue, not deliver a speech.
- You don't have to be a policy expert! It's better to speak from the heart, offer stories, and share what you know, rather than memorize facts and figures
- Be persistent and follow up!

Closing

Questions?

Stay in touch!

amarquis@uua.org

jtoth@uua.org

You are the Beloved Community!