

Congregation-Based Community Organizing

A Social Justice Approach to Revitalizing Congregational Life



Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations



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The section titled “Unitarian Universalist Theological Grounding for CBCO” was contributed by Rev. Burton D. Carley, minister of First Unitarian Church (“The Church of the River”) in Memphis, Tennessee. First Unitarian Church is a founding member of Shelby County Interfaith.

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Cover Photos of CBCO Action on Affordable Housing at General Assembly 2004 in Long Beach CA. Hundreds of Unitarian Universalists at General Assembly joined the Greater Long Beach Interfaith Community Organization to advocate for affordable housing with city officials and with HUD for national action. Our actions helped persuade the City Council to establish a year-round homeless shelter in Long Beach and to develop a plan for affordable housing. UUs raised over \$70,000 for the shelter through donations at GA. For more information see <http://www.uua.org/ga/ga04/3200.html>

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Overview

The Unitarian Universalist (UU) community of the twenty-first century seeks both to revitalize congregational life and to fulfill its spiritual mandate to pursue social, economic, and racial justice and create a better world. Congregation-based community organizing (CBCO) is a model of social activism that promises significant success in the ways congregations meet these goals. *Congregation-Based Community Organizing: A Social Justice Approach to Revitalizing Congregational Life* explains the objectives, accomplishments, and process of CBCO and the benefits that congregations can potentially reap by becoming involved in it.

This guide begins with a theological grounding for CBCO in pursuit of social justice and analyzes what prevents many contemporary Unitarian Universalists from being more assertively engaged. The guide then describes how CBCO builds community, makes concrete changes to promote the public good, and develops community leaders. It describes the benefits reaped by participating congregations, including the building of interfaith, interclass, and interracial relationships; the addition of new congregational members; the development of leaders; and the new dynamism that transforms congregational life. The guide also analyzes the challenges to congregational participation in CBCO and the ways in which congregations can meet those challenges.

This guide was prepared for UU congregations and clergy through the Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), relying heavily on the work of the Jewish Fund for Justice (JFJ), with its kind permission. We are very much indebted to the JFJ and grateful for its help. Of course, we take responsibility for any errors. We hope that this guide will provide the basis for much broader discussion about CBCO within and between UU congregations.

Unitarian Universalist Theological Grounding for CBCO

Ralph Waldo Emerson once observed that there is a crack in everything God has made. The ancient Hebrew story about the Garden of Eden suggests that right at the mythological beginning of time there was the possibility of things going wrong. As we live in an imperfect world and are imperfect people, the primary act of faith in the goodness of life is to be engaged in the kind of restorative work that heals, binds, and makes whole what is fractured and broken.

Part of the mission of UU congregations is to move outside their walls and join in the building of bridges across the barriers that separate people from one another. It is the work of restoring, creating, and maintaining right relationships.

At the heart of being in right relationship is the concept of covenant. It is the very basis for how we create congregations by the voluntary promises we make to one another. A covenant creates right relationship through partnership without dominance or submission. It affirms the dignity of difference and recognizes dependence. It creates a bond of trust upon which all other work is built. The basis of that trust is the acknowledgment of the integrity of the other and a mutual pledge to achieve together what no one can achieve alone.

Congregation-based community organizing offers a means to be part of the restorative work to which people of faith are called. It also deepens and expands the possibility for us to be in right relationship with people outside our own congregations—to form, through citizen politics, a covenant that makes the many one and heals the us-versus-them polarization of people.

Shifting the Paradigm

Unitarian Universalists have had a rich history of pursuing social justice, and that tradition continues in the work of our congregations and through the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, other UU social justice affiliate organizations, and Beacon Press. We have worked for civil and human rights; for rights for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people; for a healthier environment; for economic justice; and for peace and world community. We have worked in defense of civil liberties and in support of the labor movement. We have addressed issues in our neighborhoods, our communities, our states, our nation, and our world.

We have a great many social justice achievements to be proud of, but we continue to face challenges within our congregations related to reaching our potential to engage in efforts for social justice. These problems need to be addressed, both for the benefit of our congregations and for more effective social action.

What Gets in the Way of More Effective Justice Work?

First, we frequently lack the relationships. For good reason, we have cherished our identity as a place for spiritual seekers. Personal conviction and matters of conscience are of major importance—a foundation of Unitarian Universalism independent of other religious denominations. Many of us come from other religious denominations, and some of us choose not to be reminded of our personal religious histories other than to say that we “can’t go there anymore.” We cherish our personal, spiritual, and denominational independence.

Having said this, we have fewer enduring relationships with people of color, low-income people, and people of other religions and backgrounds. Often these relationships need to be deepened by an authentic acknowledgement and understanding of our differences in relation to systemic power and privilege. Of course, this situation is not an intentional outcome of our cherished independence, but it is an outcome nonetheless.

As a denomination, we are firmly planted in the white middle class. Others frequently see us as the religious choice of professionals, intellectuals, and academics. This stereotype is not altogether without a factual basis, and our socioeconomic status has caused us to grow distant from the problems of poverty and racial inequity. At the same time, although we may not be able to pinpoint it, we yearn for community and feel a deep, existential loneliness individually and as a people without it. Strong, right relationships build strong communities, and strong communities make change possible.

We may falsely assume that the problems of poverty and systemic racism do not affect us. These problems are not just about “the other.” In fact, there are Unitarian Universalists who live in poverty or on the edge of it, or who experience racial discrimination, despite our denominational middle-class status. But even for the majority of Unitarian Universalists who are doing well economically, the problems of poverty and systemic racism affect options and opportunities. The existence of poverty and systemic racism affects where we choose to live, where we can afford to live, where our jobs are located and how we travel to those jobs, where we send our children to school, and where we feel safe. Issues like skyrocketing housing costs, the deterioration of public schools, unemployment, access to health care, and environmental hazards are issues that concern us, too. The problems of “the other” are actually our problems as well. But we often fail to realize that we cannot build a future by building walls to keep problems out. The many service projects that UU congregations have organized reflect our awareness and concern for the problems of poverty. However, the pervasiveness of poverty and systemic racism also affects how we feel about ourselves, our cities, our government, and our country. The existence of poverty and racism chips away at our own sense of human dignity.

We must acknowledge our communal self-interest in pursuing solutions to the problems of poverty and systemic oppression. We must understand that we are inextricably linked to others and that our future is bound up in the future of society. Hillel understood this concept when he wrote the famous words, “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself alone, then what am I?”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., expanded the same point this way: “In a real sense all life is inter-related. All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the inter-related structure of reality.”

We Unitarian Universalists capture these principles when we “covenant to affirm or promote justice, equity and compassion in human relations” (first principle) and have “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part” (seventh principle).

We are all connected. What happens to poor and oppressed people matters to us.

We lack the avenues to pursue social justice. Ideally, the church or fellowship is both a center for UU life and a broader communal institution that helps us relate to non-UU groups and institutions in our neighborhoods. Both purposes foster that sense of community for which so many of us yearn. But in practice, many of us have come to view and utilize the church only as a place to meet the spiritual needs of our own members and give our children a UU education, while we ignore our own need to connect with the wider community, including those different from ourselves. We have the opportunity to change the culture of church life so that we expand the reasons why people join and participate in churches. Community and social justice are core values of congregational life, along with the pillars of meditation, music, and study. They need to be a part of the life force of the congregation in its entirety, not just seen as the responsibility of the Social Justice Committee. Moreover, social justice committees need to be brought into the mainstream of congregational life and given the resources they need to be effective.

We focus on short-term solutions instead of long-term change. Sophisticated and well-intentioned congregational social action committees sometimes experience frustration at not knowing how to go about making a true difference in people’s lives and not knowing how to get involved in systemic social change work. Although congregations sponsor important “direct services” (food drives, feeding the homeless, staffing homeless shelters, and mentoring students), volunteers often become frustrated as they see problems persist or even worsen over time, despite their efforts. They come to realize that their efforts, although necessary and important, fall short of being enough.

Few congregations know how to take the next step of engaging in sustained efforts to address the underlying causes of poverty and systemic oppression through advocacy or organizing around issues such as affordable housing, living-wage jobs, safe neighborhoods, quality education, criminal justice reform, and access to health care. Furthermore, social justice committees that want to engage in systemic social change work may have to confront congregational members who are apprehensive about getting involved in advocacy or “controversial” issues and organizations.

Social action requires that a congregation take a position on social issues. Our great tradition of freedom of conscience and respect for everyone’s opinion means that individual congregational members are free to participate or not participate, and free to agree or not agree. Before a congregation can organize activities, some degree of consensus needs to be forged. Our members do not take orders well—they want to make up their own minds. We even encourage that. Our congregations do not often engage in congregation-wide decision making processes and endeavors regarding social justice. Yet we find that our strategy of full disclosure, full discussion, and full participation in decision making—the orientations we call UU values, which are anchored in our principles—brings us together and leads us to collective action.

A Movement Afoot, A Way to Connect

Despite these barriers, signs indicate that churches and fellowships are now poised to become more involved in community-wide efforts to address the causes and consequences of poverty and systemic oppression. We are starting to see work in social justice as part of the congregational rejuvenation process.

Most important, a growing number of UU ministers and parishioners are emerging as local leaders in social justice work; they are influential in our denomination and have found a way for their congregations to engage in community building and social change work through a model of local activism called *congregation-based community organizing*. It is a model they want to spread broadly within the UU movement.

Congregation-Based Community Organizing

We have strongly affirmed, as one of our principles, a faith and a belief in democracy—both within our denomination and in our society at large. A force for democracy is growing in the United States; the uninvolved are participating, the voiceless are speaking, and the powerful are beginning to listen. Marginalized people in countless neighborhoods across the country are influencing decision making institutions that control their quality of life. Blacks, whites, Latinos, and Asians are rolling up their sleeves together to secure living wages, affordable housing, safe neighborhoods, effective public education, a healthier environment, and other improvements for their families and communities. Unitarian Universalists are joined by Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists in planning strategies together. They are working with school boards, city councils, and state governments to improve public education and create a more equitable health care system. And in the process, they are listening to one another's life stories and building strong new relationships across the barriers that normally keep people apart.

Operating largely outside the media spotlight, these efforts represent a significant force for change and for renewed democracy and democratic participation. This force is *congregation-based community organization*.

This model of local and statewide activism (also referred to as *broad-based*, *faith-based*, or *institution-based community organizing*) unites people across race and class, primarily through congregations from diverse religious traditions, with a base in low- and moderate-income congregations. Congregation-based community organizations sometimes also include community groups, unions, and public schools as members, along with religious congregations. Community organization in which the basis of membership is individuals remains another option. Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) is one such organization. Although community organizing has gone on for over 120 years, the congregation-based variety—in which the basis of membership is the congregation or other organizations, as locally determined—is the focus here.

In the United States there are approximately 160 local CBCO groups, with more than 4,000 member institutions (Swarts, forthcoming). The congregations and institutions that make up the CBCO movement have a combined membership of more than 1 percent of the U.S. population, a figure rarely reached by social movements in U.S. history. The significance of such numbers is indicated by the fact that “only 58 associations in American history have ever exceeded the 1% threshold [more than 1 percent of Americans in their memberships]” (Warren and Wood, 2001).

Currently, over one hundred of those member institutions are UU churches and fellowships. Although CBCO has traditionally been organized in cities, more suburban areas are getting involved, and some networks are developing a regional approach. Most of our congregations are affiliated with one of four national networks and one regional network: Direct Action Research and Training (DART), the Gamaliel Foundation, the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), People Improving Communities Through Organizing (the PICO National Network), and the InterValley Project (IVP), a regional network in New England. These networks provide training and organizers and are increasingly organizing at statewide levels.

The model of CBCO holds great potential for deepening congregational involvement in social justice. It provides an outstanding venue for congregational participation. It has the capacity to transform Unitarian Universalism in a way that enables us to truly understand and work for social change in community with others, as well as the capacity to meet the needs of congregations by developing and training leaders whose skills can enrich congregational life.

Unitarian Universalist involvement in the process of CBCO can help answer pressing questions about love, power, and the role of UU congregations in our communities and nation. To quote Dr. King, “There is nothing wrong with power if power is used correctly . . . the problem is that concepts of power and love are usually seen as opposites . . . but power without love is reckless and abusive. Love without power is sentimental and anemic.” Finally, CBCO has the potential to build congregations and to increase their multicultural and racial diversity.

What CBCO Achieves

Community Change

Congregation-based community organizing addresses a wide range of issues. These issues are well researched, and innovative strategies are often applied. The following is a random list of examples of what CBCO has been able to achieve. In each of the following examples, at least one UU congregation is involved with other faiths and institutions in making life better and in working for economic, social, and racial justice.

The **First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston, Texas**, is a member of The Metropolitan Organization (TMO), an Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) affiliate. TMO has racked up a very impressive list of accomplishments:

- TMO originated Houston’s After-School Achievement program. A budget increase of \$3 million for after-school programs is directly attributable to TMO’s efforts.
- TMO successfully opposed a proposed 1 percent property tax cut, which, if passed, would have resulted in direct cuts to city services.
- Working with the AFL-CIO and Catholic Charities, TMO organized to have the city of Houston invest \$100,000 to create a worker development center.

In Nebraska, Together One Community, another IAF affiliate, has achieved major reforms. Two of our congregations, **First and Second Unitarian Churches of Omaha**, are members. Participation and organizing has meant the following:

- Increased funding for libraries.
- Funding for project Ishmael, a youth enrichment program.
- Funding for a youth diversion coordinator.
- Increased awareness and funding for sewer separation projects in older neighborhoods.
- Establishment of an Office of Independent Police Auditor.
- In cooperation with United Food and Commercial Workers Local 271, support to meatpacking plant workers in a successful campaign to establish unions and union representation.

In New Hampshire, the **Unitarian Universalist Churches of Manchester and Nashua** and the **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Milford** are members of the Granite State Organizing Project group of the InterValley Project (IVP). IVP organizations have been able to produce very significant changes affecting the lives of thousands of people in area organizing campaigns, including the following:

- The creation of over 150 jobs through the regional manufacturing partnership.
- The creation of job training in the screw machine industry, which has graduated over 550 apprentices into high-skilled, high-paying jobs.
- The creation of employee-owned firms through employee buyouts and through the creation of two employee-owned home health care companies...Through early plant closing fights they saved 3,000 jobs and the health care benefits of thousands of retirees.
- The creation of over 250 units of democratically owned affordable housing units and two community land trusts.
- Winning of millions in public service and development dollars for community policing, firefighting, housing inspection, public education, brown field redevelopment, and environmental protection.

The **First Unitarian Universalist of Columbus, Ohio**, is a member of BREAD, a Direct Action Research and Training (DART) local organization. BREAD has grown to over forty-four member congregations representing forty thousand citizens of Columbus. In education, BREAD continued to push the Columbus public schools to use research-based strategies, such as direct instruction (DI), in low-performing schools. The eight schools using DI have doubled the number of children passing the Ohio fourth grade proficiency test in reading.

Over the past three years, BREAD also initiated and maintained a Jubilee Housing Campaign to address the dramatic shortage of affordable housing in central Ohio. As a result, the Columbus–Franklin County Affordable Housing Trust Fund was created. This fund will target at least half of its resources to low-income families. The city and county have invested \$6.2 million in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

BREAD pushed to increase the access of center city neighborhoods to outer belt jobs by increasing public transportation opportunities. As a result of this action, the Columbus bus service added thirty-eight thousand hours of new bus service. BREAD worked on and supported the awarding of \$684,000 to expand the work under the federal Access to Jobs Initiative.

Two Cleveland-area congregations, the **UU Society of Cleveland** and **West Shore UU Church**, are members of Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope (NOAH). NOAH congregations registered nearly 4,000 people to vote and had 250 people at the polls on Election Day 2004 to help protect the voting process. The county experienced a 21 percent increase in voter turnout, a significant achievement.

The **Unitarian Universalist Church of Tampa, Florida**, is a member of HOPE (Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality), a DART network affiliate. Among many other initiatives, HOPE did the following:

- Saved a \$650,000 Direct Instruction (DI) reading curriculum grant balance from being diverted away from DI activities.
- Stopped the elimination of a HOPE-initiated Alternative to Out-of-School Suspension program, instituted in 1996 and expanded the program district-wide in 1999.
- Helped win the expansion of substance abuse and mental health treatment in the county health care plan for the poor with an initial startup cost of \$2 million.
- Helped win a successful challenge to the use of secret evidence by gaining a public hearing for, and the release of, Dr. Mazen Al-Najjar, a Palestinian professor living in the U.S., after three and a half years of detention with no charge or trial.
- Won a commitment that children will no longer be suspended from school for tardiness.

As in New Hampshire and Texas, PICO in California is organizing statewide. It launched a major new campaign to win affordable health care coverage for children in the state. Leaders from twenty PICO federations in California formed a partnership with the 100% Campaign, a group of children's advocacy organizations. The California legislature passed legislation that would provide health insurance for every child in California. Four of our churches—**Unitarian Universalist Church of Long Beach, UU Church of Palo Alto, First UU of San Diego**, and the **UUs of San Mateo**—are members of PICO.

PICO-sponsored small schools legislation was signed into law that sets aside \$25 million of school construction bonds to create incentives to districts to build new small high schools and to reconfigure larger high schools into smaller communities.

The San Diego Organizing Project helped lead a coalition that won a Community Benefits Agreement for the largest redevelopment project in San Diego history. It includes the following:

- Environmental Green Building (LEED) standards for over 1.5 million square feet of development.
- A commitment to build 200,000 square feet of affordable housing for families earning from 30 to 60 percent of the area median income.
- \$1.5 million to seed affordable housing near downtown.
- 35,000 square feet of housing for families earning 100 percent of the area median income.
- A first-source hiring agreement targeting local residents and former offenders for new jobs .
- A \$1.5 million pre-apprenticeship training program and commitments to recruit low-income residents and former offenders.
- Adoption of San Diego's new Living Wage and Responsible Contractor ordinances for subcontracted on-site permanent jobs.
- Protections for the port and maritime industry.
- A job placement center for community residents.

Oakland Community Organizations (OCO) organized seven hundred parents from ten low-income schools who won an agreement to place a qualified teacher in every classroom and improve instruction and curriculum in their schools.

In Massachusetts, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), which includes a dozen of our Boston-area congregations, engaged in a statewide campaign, Health Care for All, that won passage of legislation that will extend health insurance coverage to hundreds of thousands of Massachusetts residents. GBIO was also successful in an affordable housing campaign that led to the establishment of a state housing trust fund of \$100 million. It secured a \$23 million commitment in new funding for affordable housing from the city of Boston and raised a \$6 million zero-interest loan fund to finance the construction of Nehemiah homes (affordable housing for average working families).

GBIO obtained a \$30 million annual increase in the state capital budget for housing and a \$2 million increase in funding for Boston public schools for textbooks and instructional supplies. GBIO also organized with the Justice for Janitors campaign to win significant pay and benefit increases for area janitors. Furthermore, it organized successfully for inclusionary zoning ordinances in Quincy and Newton.

Congregation-based community organizing is an effective way to improve civic life; extend democracy; empower poor and working-class people; improve our health care, education, and housing systems; support and strengthen the family; and build strong communities. At the same time, CBCO values and honors the religious, ethnic, and racial diversity that has shaped America.

Developing Community Leaders

Participation in CBCO produces strong community leaders. Networks conduct multiday leadership training sessions, and education continues “on the ground” as leaders develop and conduct issue campaigns. Leaders-in-training learn the technical skills of organizing, including weighing alternatives, negotiating differences, and developing strategic plans. They also learn concrete skills such as clarifying one’s self-interest, viewing and accepting conflict, and analyzing the power dynamics of institutions. Volunteer leaders are expected and encouraged to share key roles and responsibilities—making decisions, recruiting new members, selecting issues, developing strategies, planning issues campaigns, negotiating with public officials, and speaking to the media. Being a CBCO leader is often a transformative experience. Key to the success of CBCO is that it develops leadership among lay people, not just among clergy.

Why the CBCO Movement Seeks UU Participation

Historically, the CBCO movement has been predominantly Christian, with a low level of non-Christian participation. A CBCO can be more effective in claiming moral authority, however, if it represents a broad, diverse base of religious groups. Congregation-based community organizing operates on the basis that there is power in numbers. Having UU membership is helpful, because it signals to other non-Christian congregations that they are welcome to become CBCO members. So it is not unusual to see a UU congregation joining a CBCO group and then being joined by a synagogue, a mosque, or occasionally both.

Unitarian Universalist clergy are particularly adept at delivering interfaith messages, prayers, and meditations; our UU contributions in an interfaith setting are quickly recognized. Unitarian Universalists often bring useful skills, resources, and relationships to community organizing. We can offer these vital strengths to a social change organization, and good organizers will pick up on and use them both in training and in research and action.

The Process of Joining

A congregation goes through several steps when it joins a congregation-based community organization:

1. *Initial exploration of CBCO.* Usually a couple of staff members, the minister, the social justice committee, the anti-racism task force, or a combination of these people are the impetus for a congregation to investigate joining a CBCO group. The process begins with meetings between the congregation’s clergy and key leaders and the CBCO organizer. If there is interest on the part of the congregation after these initial meetings, the clergy, members of the board, and the social justice committee may attend some public meetings or actions sponsored by the CBCO to learn more. To broaden its information base, the UU congregation may wish to talk with community leaders, other congregational members, UU clergy involved with the relevant network in other places, clergy from local member congregations, and the UUA Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness.
2. *Forming a core group.* A core group of approximately five to twenty members is formed, usually including a clergy member. The core group continues to research the CBCO group and begins to educate the congregation about CBCO. If the congregation eventually decides to join the CBCO group, this core group will lead the campaign within the congregation and relate to core groups from other participating congregations.
3. *Training the core group to lead the initiative.* The core group attends training workshops led by the relevant network CBCO (for example, DART, IAF, PICO, or Gamaliel), which teach participants about building power and how to involve a broad number of congregation members. Members are trained to conduct one-to-one meetings and house meetings (described below) and to chair committee meetings, among other things.

4. *Building support for CBCO within the congregation.* As is the case with any congregational project, congregational acceptance is critical before participation can move ahead. Clergy support for this type of work is essential. The key step in obtaining congregational buy-in is to have the core group lead a process of conversations and relationship building through one-to-one meetings, house meetings, or both. One-to-one meetings are meetings between two individuals; they last approximately one hour, are set up by appointment, and provide a means of building relationships (as opposed to “getting business done”). During these meetings, both people share their personal stories, discuss what motivated them most in life, and identify their values and highest concerns. House meetings are in someone’s home, with a group of people present. These meetings convey the purpose of the congregation’s potential membership in the CBCO group; identify issues, hopes, and dreams; build community; and identify additional leaders.
5. *Deciding to join.* Once buy-in has been established, the board of directors votes to join the organization. Joining a CBCO group requires the payment of dues. Dues vary among CBCO groups. Some charge a flat fee, whereas others charge a percentage of budget (commonly 1 percent). Others simply recommend a “head tax” based on congregational membership. Whatever the method, dues are sometimes negotiated to accommodate congregational differences and support participation.

What the Congregation Does Once It Joins

A congregation’s participation in a CBCO group may take shape in one of several ways. The congregation works with a CBCO organizer using a road map that looks like the following:

1. *Continuing the process, or conversation and relationship building within the congregation.* Once a congregation has formally joined a CBCO group, the core group continues to meet with congregational members through one-to-one meetings, house meetings, or both.
2. *Identifying issues to address.* Through one-to-one meetings, complementary house meetings, or both, concrete issues emerge. Issues most often identified by congregants—for example, access to health care, affordable housing, or care of the elderly—become the focus of action. For an issue to move forward, it must have strong support as a priority from CBCO member congregations.
3. *Researching the issues and developing solutions.* Once an issue has been chosen, a congregation works independently as a group or with other members of the CBCO. It researches the identified problems and possible solutions by holding seminars with experts, meeting with public or private officials, and talking with people who are knowledgeable about the issue.
4. *Meeting with public officials, corporate officials, or both.* The next step is to present solutions to public officials, corporate officials, or both and ask for their support and assistance—a step that may require confrontational tactics. Typically, the leadership holds a series of smaller meetings with officials that culminates in a large public meeting, often involving thousands of people, where the officials are asked to publicly announce their support for the campaign.
5. *Winning the issue and moving on to the next one.* Once the issue is resolved, the CBCO group moves on to a different issue. CBCO groups are designated to address multiple issues over time in order to bring in and maintain interest from the largest number of people possible. CBCO groups are *not* single-issue-campaign organizations.

Through each of these steps, the clergy and a core leadership team from the church or fellowship take leadership roles by speaking at, organizing, running, and hosting meetings large and small. In addition, they attend local, regional, and/or national training to develop their leadership skills.

Congregational Benefits from Participation

A recent study by Interfaith Funders and the University of New Mexico identified some benefits associated with CBCO participation. These benefits are as follows:

1. *More and deeper relationships among congregants and with members of other faith traditions.*
2. *Leadership development.* Leaders learn new skills, such as public speaking, conducting one-to-one meetings, holding one another accountable, selecting a “winnable” issue, and running an effective meeting. They also find their faith enlivened through this new connection with social justice.
3. *Increased lay leader involvement in congregational work and public action.*
4. *A heightened public profile for the congregation within the community.*

Other benefits of CBCO participation that we might add include the following:

1. *More effective social justice work.*
2. *Building interfaith and interracial relationships.*
3. *Bringing in new people in new ways.*

Kate Lore, of the First Unitarian Church of Portland (Oregon), reports the following:

Our church has been involved in an IAF affiliate called the Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG) for the past 8 years. Our MACG core team has done good work at First Unitarian over these years.

We have introduced the notion of relational work to the governing board, the choir and many other church groups. We have brought First Unitarian into community-wide negotiations around affordable housing and good jobs, health care issues, school funding and the ramifications of the Meth epidemic in local Portland neighborhoods.

Throughout it all, we’ve played a major role within MACG, as leaders of work groups and forum participants. Consequently, we have developed over 60 new leaders.

Over the past 5 years, 66% of new members have listed the social justice ministry of this church as a primary reason for joining. They routinely state a long-held yearning to be part of a church community that “walks its talk.” Overall membership at First Unitarian Church of Portland has almost tripled since the arrival of Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell in 1992. Time and time again, her passion for social justice is listed as the main reason for this surge in numbers.

Meeting the Challenges of Joining and Participating

Because participation in CBCO requires us to enter a tradition and culture with which we are not familiar, it poses particular challenges to the UU community. Participation requires a purposeful, steadfast commitment on the part of the congregation. Challenges will arise initially as the clergy, social action committee, and board of directors decide to join, and then as active participation takes shape. The various challenges and ways in which some congregations have met them are described below.

1. *The religious differences between Unitarian Universalists and theologically conservative, economically liberal congregations.* In joining a CBCO group, we enter into a largely traditional Christian culture with which we share a commonality of self-interest in the reduction and elimination of poverty. Although

some traditional religious groups have had experience working with people from diverse faith traditions, groups with more traditional orientations frequently approach us with great caution because of our highly nuanced and individualized approach to religious expression. And we frequently don't have the skills to engage with Christians and theologically conservative congregants.

Because CBCO uses religious values as a key impetus for motivating people to act, meetings often involve prayer or biblical study and reference the religious mandate to pursue solutions to community problems. Christian norms of prayer and Christian hymns may make Unitarian Universalists uncomfortable. Because these conservative faith traditions are so important in providing motivation for action, Unitarian Universalists have found it wise to honor them while taking our turn to provide the invocation with an interfaith prayer or meditation or offering suggestions for alternatives. There are plenty of opportunities for "elevator speeches," and limited dialogue since we tend to arouse curiosity; however, because our mission in a CBCO group is to address problems and issues, theological squabbles serve no one's purpose.

In a culture where relationships are key, each member congregation can take the opportunity to share feelings with the group. Building relationship across faiths leads to a better understanding of religious differences and creation of the trust needed to bridge those differences. In some CBCO groups, for example, before each opening prayer a statement is made that reflects respect for each person's individual faith. As suggested earlier, UU participation has made the entry of Muslim and Jewish, congregations into CBCO life less difficult. Our tradition of honoring many faith traditions serves us well here.

2. *The fact that systemic change takes time.* Because CBCO is based on the premise that issues cannot be won until relationships are created and power is amassed, a new group often takes a couple of years to build relationships and put together a strong organization before it even chooses an issue to address. This way of operating is different from that of typical social action projects that have a beginning and an end—and that commonly have a far smaller impact. So the building of relationships that cross class, race, and faith lines may be seen as an outcome of organizing, as well as a means to get things accomplished. Because one accomplishment is followed by another, relationship building may be the most important outcome of all.
3. *The congregations' lack of experience in organizing around poverty issues.* Congregations meet this challenge by educating themselves about the issues before they get into the process, often inviting guest speakers from the CBCO group and experts on the issues to help orient them to the field. In addition, many congregations have called upon their own members who work on poverty-related issues to help familiarize them.
4. *The UU propensity toward individualism.* Historically, Unitarian Universalists have had an understandably negative reaction to authority and conformity. We value dissent, and we recognize and honor disagreement in matters of conscience. We do not like to sacrifice our individual liberty to be part of a group process. This propensity can lead to a dilemma when an organization, through a vote, takes a stance that may be contrary to the views of some congregational members.

Although a CBCO group may take a stance that is contrary to the views of some congregational members, it generally would not take a stance that was contrary to the majority opinion within a congregation. Rather, the group chooses issues and takes stances based on broad consensus of the congregations that are members of CBCO groups. Participating congregations find comfort in the democratic nature of the organizing process and the relational culture that encourages people to share opinions openly and honestly.

5. *Competing demands for time and energy.* Members of our congregations lead busy lives, and CBCO groups demand a time commitment from both clergy and congregational members. In some instances, congregants may question why clergy are making CBCO a higher priority than other congregational matters.

Some participating congregations have done an exceptional job of bringing this CBCO work not just to the clergy or a committee but to a larger group of congregational members who commit to an ongoing engagement in the work. Clergy participation is still necessary, but it requires less time because the effort is being driven by members who share the work with one another.

CBCO work can be demanding and time-consuming, both in the short run and in the long run. It is the unusual parishioner who can engage in this work year after year and not burn out. It is important that members of the congregation who participate understand that CBCO work is not a continuous, lifetime commitment—that they can take time out and that there are other ways they can contribute to their spiritual communities and work for social change. Thus, recruitment needs to be continuous to make it possible for those on the core committee to maintain a healthy rotation.

6. *Competing financial priorities.* As mentioned, congregations pay dues as members of a CBCO group. In a climate of competing financial needs, it may be necessary to establish the self-interest of the congregation early in the process. Sometimes saying “We don’t have the money” can be a smokescreen for other reasons why congregational members do not want to join a CBCO group. Some congregations that reported initial difficulty in gaining approval from their boards of directors to pay dues have reported later that the paying of dues actually helped their congregations. Paying dues gave the congregation a stronger sense of accountability, as they had to demonstrate to the board how the congregation was contributing to and benefiting from CBCO involvement.
7. *Tensions between middle- and low-income communities and between white and people of color communities.* Broadly speaking, members of the upper and middle class have to confront fears caused by stereotypes when they meet low-income people or enter low-income areas. Similarly, low-income people have misconceptions about middle- and upper-income people. A similar dynamic occurs across racial lines.

The one-to-one process and working together to achieve shared goals are excellent antidotes for these tensions, and they create a level playing field. As people get to know one another individually, they discover their shared humanity and values. They see one another as people rather than simply as members of a class or group and learn to appreciate one another’s unique experiences and shared concerns.

Additionally, the CBCO creates partnerships that empower historically marginalized groups and create opportunities for those groups with more institutional privilege to act as good allies.

8. *The different orientation of urban and suburban congregations.* CBCO groups have been most successful at recruiting urban congregations and those based in first-ring suburbs. The more suburban a congregation is, the less likely it will feel a connection to the city. Each congregation needs to determine its own self-interest, and in that process, suburban congregations come to see that their self-interests are linked with the self-interests of city dwellers in many ways. Some CBCO groups have started to work on the regional level, and some state-level organizing work has been carried out by national networks.

Congregations will reap the rewards of participation if they can move beyond the challenges described above, accept that everything about their participation can’t be perfect, and realize that the benefits of participation far outweigh the costs.

Conclusion

Congregation-based community organizing is an effective way to fulfill our mandate to work for a better world fully consistent with UU values, principles, and theology. Part of the mission of UU congregations is to move outside our walls and join in building bridges across the barriers that separate people from one another. It is the work of restoring, creating, and maintaining right relationships. Over a hundred of our fellowships and churches are engaged with local network affiliates, where they build multiclass, multirace, and multifaith organizations through grass-roots organizing. At the Unitarian Universalist Association, we wish to encourage and expand congregational participation in this movement.

Toward that end, we have identified many of the probable benefits of participation, and the costs and barriers as well. We have focused on the process that new participants are likely to use in deciding whether or not CBCO is a way to go for their church or fellowship and on the challenges congregations are likely to face.

Finally, through this guide we mean to be encouraging. There is a colleague in or near your district who would be a good person for you to contact (see “Unitarian Universalist Ministers Advisory Council on Congregation-Based Community Organizing” at the end of this guide). Also, the Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness is standing by to assist you.

Please feel free to phone (or e-mail) Fred Seidl, UUA Organizer and CBCO Consultant, at (716) 465-7230 (e-mail: Fseidl@uua.org) or Susan Leslie, Director of the UUA Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness, at (617) 948-4607 (e-mail: Sleslie@uua.org). We’ll be happy to hear from you.

Resources for Congregation-Based Community Organizing

CBCO Networks

Direct Action Research and Training, P.O. Box 370791, Miami, FL 33137-0791, (305) 576-8020. www.thedartcenter.org

Gamaliel Foundation, 203 N. Wabash Ave., Ste. 808, Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 375-2639. www.gamaliel.org

Industrial Areas Foundation, 220 W. Kinzie St., 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60610, (312) 245-9211. www.industrialareasfoundation.org

Interfaith Funders, 2719 Denver Ave., Longmont, CO 80503, (720) 494-9011 <http://www.interfaithfunders.org/index.html>. Interfaith Funders (IF) is a network of faith-based and secular grant makers committed to social change and economic justice. Interfaith Funders works to advance the field of faith-based community organizing (FBCO) and to educate and activate IF members' constituencies.

InterValley Project, 2 York Dr., Durham, NH 03824, (603) 397-5015. www.intervalleyproject.org

PICO National Network, 171 Santa Rosa Ave., Oakland, CA 94910, (510) 655-2801. www.picocalifornia.org

Written Sources

Gecan, Michael. *Going Public*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2002. Reflections of a well-traveled community organizer on relationships, power, effective organization, and "public cultures."

Neumark, Heidi. *Breathing Space: A Spiritual Journey in the South Bronx*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003. Through poignant, intimate stories, Neumark charts her journey alongside her parishioners as pastor, church, and community grow in wisdom and together experience transformation.

Swarts, Heidi. *Invisible Actors: Community Organizing in American Urban Politics* [working title]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, forthcoming. Compares the processes, strategies, and outcomes of ACORN and CBCO (one PICO affiliate and one Gamaliel affiliate) and includes the experience of UU congregations.

Warren, Mark. *Dry Bones Rattling: Community Building to Revitalize American Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001. A cogent in-depth look at the history and practice of the Industrial Areas Foundation.

Warren, Mark R., and Richard L. Wood. *Faith-Based Community Organizing: The State of the Field*. Jericho, NY: Interfaith Funders, January 2001. <http://commorg.utoledo.edu/papers2001/faith/contents.htm>. Basic concepts and definitions concisely presented; a must read.

Winkelman, Lee. *Faith-Based Community Organizing: Building Democracy for the New Millennium*. Jericho, NY: Interfaith Funders, 2001. A nicely done brochure, perfect for introducing FBCO to audiences.

Video

Baldwin, Alec, Bob Hercules, and Bruce Orenstein. *The Democratic Promise: Saul Alinsky and his Legacy*. Berkeley: University of California Extension Center for Media and Independent Learning, 1999. Also available from Independent Television Service, 501 York St., San Francisco, CA 94110. <http://www.itvs.org/>. The story of the Industrial Areas Foundation and Alinsky from 1940 to the present.

Resources from the Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness

Congregation-Based Community Organizing Handbook. A basic primer on CBCO. Includes stories of UU congregations' experiences. See <http://www.uua.org/programs/justice/cbco.html>.

One Congregation's Story: ARISE – First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany NY's experience with their CBCO, produced by the Rev. Samuel Trumbore. CD-ROM (5 mins.). For a free copy write to Audra Friend, Assistant to Office for Congregational Advocacy and Witness, at afriend@uua.org. It's guaranteed to inspire!

CBCO Website <http://www.uua.org/programs/justice/cbco.html>. This comprehensive site includes resources, information on national networks, local CBCOs, UU congregations that are members, success stories, videos of CBCO Presentations at General Assembly plenary sessions, and more.

CBCO-L provides a forum for members and ministers of UU congregations participating in or interested in congregation-based community organizing. To subscribe go to www.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/cbco-l.

Find A Local CBCO Near You!

ALASKA

Anchorage, AK Anchorage Interfaith Sponsoring Committee www.anchoragefact.org/

ALABAMA

Birmingham, AL Birmingham Area Interfaith Sponsoring Committee 334-328-7165
 Fairhope, AL Baldwin County ACT II 251-928-3430

ARIZONA

Flagstaff, AZ Northern Arizona Interfaith Council Sponsoring Committee (NAICSC) www.naicsc.org/
 Phoenix, AZ Valley Interfaith Project viphxaz@sprintmail.com
 Phoenix, AZ Arizona Interfaith Network www.arizonainterfaith.org/
 Tempe, AZ East Valley Interfaith Sponsoring Committee E_Valley_Interfaith@yahoo.com
 Tucson, AZ Pima County Interfaith Council (PCIC) pcic@mindspring.com
 Yuma, AZ Yuma County Interfaith Sponsoring Committee YCInterfaith@msn.com

CALIFORNIA

Anaheim, CA Orange County Congregation Community Organization www.occco.org
 Berkeley, CA Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action (BOCA) www.berkeleyboca.org
 Chula Vista, CA JOB - Justice Overcoming Barriers in San Diego www.justicesandiego.org/
 Escondido, CA Congregations for Civil Action 510-727-8833
 Fresno, CA Faith in Community 559-276-2304
 Hayward, CA Congregations Organizing for Renewal (COR) www.corcommunity.org
 Hollywood, CA Hollywood Interfaith Sponsoring Committee 323-468-0978
 Long Beach, CA Greater Long Beach Interfaith Community 562-984-2727
 Los Angeles, CA One LA – IAF (213) 273 8420
 Los Angeles, CA East & South Los Angeles Sponsoring Committee 323-526-1640
 Los Angeles, CA LA Voice www.lavoicepico.org
 Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles Metropolitan Sponsors (213) 273 8420
 Martinez, CA Contra Costa Interfaith Sponsoring Committee 925-313-0206
 Modesto, CA Congregations Building Community 209-575-9000
 National City, CA MAAC Project- Community Development ncpeterson@maacproject.org
 Oakland, CA Congregations Rebuilding Community in Rwanda 510-655-2805
 Oakland, CA Oakland Community Organizations www.oaklandcommunity.org
 Oakland, CA The Oakland Coalition of Congregations (OCC) (510) 625-9490
 Sacramento, CA Sacramento Valley Organizing Committee (916) 648 2260
 Sacramento, CA PICO California Project www.picocalifornia.org
 Sacramento, CA Sacramento Area Congregations Together www.sacact.org
 San Bernardino, CA Inland Congregations United for Change <http://home.earthlink.net/~icuc1>
 San Carlos, CA Peninsula Interfaith Action www.piapico.org
 San Diego, CA Gamaliel/Acorn Organizing Project in San Diego (312) 357-2639
 San Diego, CA San Diego Organizing Project www.sdot.net
 San Francisco, CA Bay Area Organizing Committee baoc123@sbcglobal.net
 San Francisco, CA San Francisco Organizing Project 415-452-3700
 San Jose, CA People Acting in Community Together - San Jose www.pactsj.org
 Stockton, CA People and Congregations Together - Stockton 209-466-7540
 Watsonville, CA Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action (COPA) IAFORGNZR@aol.com

COLORADO

Denver, CO Metropolitan Organizations for People www.mopdenver.org
 Windsor, CO Congregations Building Community www.cbcpico.info

CONNECTICUT

Hartford, CT Interfaith Coalition for Equity and Justice (ICEJ) icej@earthlink.net
 Middletown, CT United Action Connecticut jayklemundt@yahoo.com

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington, DC Washington Interfaith Network (WIN) <http://windc-iaf.org/index.html>

Find A Local CBCO Near You!

FLORIDA

Daytona Beach, FL	FAITH - Fighting Against Injustice and Toward Harmony in Daytona Beach	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/faith.php
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	JAB - Justice for All in Broward in Ft. Lauderdale	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/jab.php
Gainesville, FL	Affiliated Congregations to Improve Our Neighborhoods	www.afn.org/~action
Gainesville, FL	North Central Florida Interfaith Sponsoring Committee	352-379-7822
Jacksonville, FL	ICARE - Interchurch Coalition for Action, Reconciliation & Empowerment in Jacksonville	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/icare.php
Lakeland, FL	PEACE - Polk Ecumenical Action Council for Empowerment in Lakeland	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/peace2.php
Melbourne, FL	South Brevard Area Interfaith Sponsoring Committee	321-254-1595
Miami, FL	PACT - People Acting for Community Together in Miami	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/pact.php
Orlando, FL	FOCUS - Federation of Congregations United to Serve	www.focusorlando.org/
Pensacola, FL	Greater Pensacola Community Organizing	www.grpensacolacommorg.com/news/
Riviera Beach, FL	PEACE - People Engaged in Active Community Efforts in West Palm Beach	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/peace1.php
Sarasota, FL	SURE - Sarasota United for Responsibility & Equality in Sarasota	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/sure.php
Tallahassee, FL	TEAM - Tallahassee Equality Action Ministry in Tallahassee	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/team.php
Tampa, FL	HOPE - Hillsborough Organization for Progress & Equality in Tampa	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/hope.php
	FDOF - Federation of DART Organizations (statewide network)	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/fdof.php

GEORGIA

Atlanta, GA	ABLE	www.gamaliel.org/ABLE/default.htm
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IOWA

Davenport, IA	Quad Cities Interfaith (QCI)	www.qcinterfaith.org/
Des Moines, IA	Des Moines (AMOS)	turnpr@msn.com

ILLINIOS

Aurora, IL	Aurora Area Religious Organized Network (AARON)	(815) 740-1775
Chicago, IL	Metropolitan Alliance of Congregations (MAC)	www.gamaliel.org/MAC/MACindex.htm
Chicago, IL	United Power for Action and Justice	www.united-power.org/
Chicago, IL	Industrial Areas Foundation	(312) 245 9211
Chicago, IL	Pilsen Neighbors Community Council (PNCC)	www.fiestadelsol.org/
Hazel Crest, IL	South Suburban Action Conference (SSAC)	CalvaryGLN@aol.com
Joliet, IL	Joliet Area Churches Organized Body (JACOB)	yahwehrevolution@aol.com
Libertyville, IL	Lake County United	www.lakecountyunited.org/
Madison, IL	United Congregations of Metro-East (UCM)	www.ucmetroeast.org/
Rockford, IL	Council of Neighborhood Organizations (CNO)	(815) 229-7411
Wheaton, IL	DuPage United	www.dupageunited.org/

INDIANA

Evansville, IN	CAJ - Congregations Acting for Justice in Evansville, Indiana	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/caj.php
Gary, IN	Interfaith Federation (IF)	www.interfaithfederation.org

KANSAS

Kansas City, KS	Wyandotte County Interfaith Sponsoring Committee	913-281-0000
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KENTUCKY

Lexington, KY	BUILD - Building a United Interfaith Lexington through Direct Action	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/build.php
Louisville, KY	CLOUT: Citizens of Louisville Organized & United Together	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/clout.php

LOUISIANA

Abbeville, LA	Congregations Organizing People for Equality (COPE)	337-234-8139
Baton Rouge, LA	Working Interfaith Network (WIN)	www.br-win.org
Lake Providence, LA	East Carroll Interfaith Sponsoring Committee	318-559-8200
Marrero, LA	Jeremiah Group	Jonessoule@aol.com
Montroe, LA	Northern and Central Louisiana Interfaith	PerkyP51@aol.com
New Orleans, LA	All Congregations Together	http://actnola.org
New Orleans, LA	Louisiana Interfaith Together (LIFT)	www.picolouisiana.org
Thibodaux, LA	BISCO (Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing)	985-446-5364

Find A Local CBCO Near You!

MASSACHUSETTS

Andover, MA	Merrimac Valley Project	
Dorchester, MA	Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO)	www.gbio.org/
Springfield, MA	Pioneer Valley Project	
Worcester, MA	Worcester Interfaith	

MARYLAND

Baltimore, MD	Baltimoreans United for Leadership Development (BUILD)	www.buildiaf.org/
Baltimore, MD	Baltimore Regional Initiative Developing Genuine Equality (BRIDGE)	Catmsw5@cs.com
Capitol Heights, MD	PRISCM Partners for Renewal in Southern and Central Maryland	JINorton@gamaliel.org
Silver Spring, MD	Action in Montgomery (AIM)	www.aim-iaf.org/

MAINE

Portland, ME	Pioneer Valley Project	
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MICHIGAN

Detroit, MI	Metropolitan Organizing Strategy for Enabling Strength (MOSES)	(313) 962-5290
Grand Rapids, MI	MOP: Michigan Organizing Project in Muskegon and Grand Rapids	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/mop.php
Kalamazoo, MI	ISAAC	(269) 341-4213
Lansing, MI	GLADE: Greater Lansing Association for Development & Empowerment in Lansing	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/glade.php
Saginaw, MI	The Ezekiel Project	(989) 755-1602

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis, MN	ISAIAH	www.gamaliel.org/ISAIAH/default.htm
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MISSISSIPPI

Jackson, MS	AMOS Network (Mississippi)	(601) 364 1091
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MISSOURI

Kansas City, MO	MORE2 - Metro Organization for Racial and Economic Equity	http://more2.org
Kansas City, MO	Kansas City Church Community Organization	www.cco.org
St. Louis, MO	MCU- Metropolitan Congregations United for St. Louis	www.mcustl.org/Index.html

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte, NC	Helping Empower Local People (HELP)	(704) 372 5812
Durham, NC	Metro Durham Sponsors Inc. (Triangle Sponsoring Committee) , Durham CAN / R.O.A.R	(919) 530 8515
Winston-Salem, NC	Communities Helping All Neighbors Gain Empowerment (CHANGE)	www.changeiaf.org

NEBRASKA

Omaha, NE	Omaha Together One Community (OTOC)	www.otoc.org/
Lincoln, NE	Rural Nebraska	

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Concord, NH	Community Actively United for Social Equality (CAUSE)	Nhcause@aol.com
Manchester, NH	Granite State Organizing Project	
Nashua, NH	Granite State Organizing Project	

NEW JERSEY

Hoboken, NJ	Interfaith Community Organization (ICO)	www.industrialareasfoundation.org/ico/
Camden, NJ	Camden Churches Organized for People	www.camdenchurches.org
Cherry Hill NJ	NJRC - New Jersey Regional Coalition	harnesen@njregionalequity.org
Jersey City, NJ	The Jubilee Interfaith Organizing Project (JIO)	JINorton@gamaliel.org

Find A Local CBCO Near You!

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque, NM	Albuquerque Interfaith	(505) 268 3991
Alcade, NM	No. New Mexico Interfaith Sponsoring Committee	505-852-2376

NEW YORK

Albany, NY	A Regional Initiative Supporting Empowerment (ARISE)	(518) 331-3190
Bronx, NY	South Bronx Churches (SBC)	sbc@industrialareasfoundation.org
Brooklyn, NY	East Brooklyn Congregations (EBC)	EBCTEAM@aol.com
Brooklyn, NY	Central Brooklyn Churches	718-302-9840
Brooklyn, NY	Community Action Project	www.capbrooklyn.org
Buffalo, NY	VOICE-Buffalo (VOICE)	(716) 842-6571
New York, NY	Lower Manhattan Together (LMT)	LMTiaf@msn.com
New York, NY	Upper Manhattan Together (UMT)	metroiaf@verizon.net
Rego Park, NY	Queens Citizens Organization (QCO)	qco@nyct.net
Riverhead, NY	LION - Long Island Organizing Network	SacredJourney02@yahoo.com
Rochester, NY	Interfaith Action	www.iapico.org/
Schenectady, NY	A Regional Initiative Supporting Empowerment (ARISE)	
Syracuse, NY	Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS)	(315) 476-1128
Valley Stream, NY	Long Island CAN (Congregations, Associations, and Neighborhoods)	licaniaf@yahoo.com

OHIO

Columbus, OH	BREAD: Building Responsibility, Equality and Dignity in Columbus	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/bread.php
Cincinnati, OH	The AMOS Project, Inc.	(513) 751-2222
Cleveland, OH	Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope (NOAH)	(216) 398-0374
Dayton, OH	LEAD: Leaders for Equality & Action in Dayton	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/lead.php
Springfield OH,	JAM: Justice Action Mercy in Springfield	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/jam.php
Toledo, OH	TUSA: Toledoans United for Social Action in Toled	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/tusa.php
Youngstown, OH	Alliance for Congregational Transformation (ACTION OF YOUNGSTOWN)	(330) 744-7979

OREGON

Portland, OR	Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG)	www.macg.org/
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PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia, PA	Philadelphia Interfaith Action (PIA)	pia@industrialareasfoundation.org
Erie, PA	Congregational Action to Lift with Love (CALL)	814 456-6189
Pittsburg, PA	Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN)	(412) 621-9230
Sharon, PA	Shenango Valley Initiative (SVI)	(724) 346-4165
Allentown, PA	Congregations United for Neighborhood Action	610-434-1260
Philadelphia, PA	Eastern Pennsylvania Organizing Project	www.epop-leaders.org

RHODE ISLAND

Providence, RI	Rhode Island Organizing Project	
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TENNESSEE

Nashville, TN	Tying Nashville Together (TNT)	http://tyingnashvillettogether.org/
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TEXAS

Austin, TX	Austin Interfaith	AustinInterfaith@sbcglobal.net
Austin, TX	Interfaith Education Fund (IEF)	(512) 459 6551
Austin, TX	IAF Texas	
Corpus Christi, TX	Corpus Christi Area Church of the Reconciliation	(361) 852 9677
Dallas, TX	Dallas Area Interfaith	www.dallasareainterfaith.com/
Eagle Pass, TX	Border Organization	(830) 773 2590
El Paso, TX	El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Committee (EPISO)	episo1@aol.com
Fort Worth, TX	Allied Communities of Tarrant (ACT)	http://swuuc.org/fjuuc/ACT/
Houston, TX	The Metropolitan Organization (TMO)	http://tmohouston.net/
Lubbock, TX	West Texas Organizing Strategy	wtosorganizer@aol.com

Find A Local CBCO Near You!

Nederland, TX
San Antonio, TX
San Antonio, TX

Triangle Interfaith Project
Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS)
The Metro Alliance

(409) 722 5565
copsmetro1@aol.com
copsmetro1@aol.com

VERMONT

Burlington, VT Vermont Interfaith Action

VIRGINIA

Charlottesville, VA	Charlottesville Area Interfaith Sponsoring Committee	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/caisc.php
Norfolk, Virginia	Empower Hampton Roads (E.H.R.)	angelajames@ameritech.net
Richmond, VA	RISC: Richmonders Involved to Strengthen our Communities	www.thedartcenter.org/network-directory/risc.php
Roanoke, VA	Faith Works in the Roanoke Valley	540-982-0045

WASHINGTON

Pasco, WA	Citizens Alliance of Central Washington	www.cwiaf.org/
Seattle, WA	Sound Vision	(206) 762 9830
Seattle, WA	Sound Alliance	www.soundorganizing.org/
Spokane, WA	Spokane Alliance	www.spokanealliance.org/
Toppenish, WA	Central Washington IAF	(509) 865 4431

WISCONSIN

Appleton, WI	Equality, Solidarity, Truth, Hope, Empowerment, Reform (E.S.T.H.E.R.)	www.gamaliel.org/Esther/default.htm
Cudahy, WI	WISDOM	www.gamaliel.org/Wisdom/default.htm
Cudahy, WI	Justice Overcoming Borders (JOB)	www.gamaliel.org/Job/DEFAULT.htm
Green Bay, WI	Justice Organization Sharing Hope and United for Action (JOSHUA)	www.joshua4justice.org/
Kenosha, WI	Congregations United to Serve Humanity (CUSH)	www.cushwi.org/
Madison, WI	Dane County United	www.danecountyunited.org/
Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee Inner-city Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAHA)	www.micahempowers.org/
Racine, WI	Racine Interfaith Coalition (RIC)	www.gamaliel.org/RIC/default.htm

WEST VIRGINIA

Wheeling, WV Hopeful City in Wheeling, WV (304) 233-0171

WYOMING

Torrington, WY Goshen Faith Community Concerns 307-532-5556

DART - Direct Action Research and Training	www.thedartcenter.org
Gamaliel - Gamaliel Foundation	www.gamaliel.org
IAF - Industrial Areas Foundation	www.industrialareasfoundation.org/
IVP - InterValley Project	www.intervalleyproject.org
PICO - PICO National Network	www.piconetwork.org

UU Congregations in CBCOs

ARIZONA

Chandler, AZ	Valley UU Church, Chandler	www.vuuu.org
Paradise Valley, AZ	UU Congregation of Phoenix	http://phoenixuuu.org
Tucson, AZ	UU Church of Tucson	www.uuctucson.org
Tucson, AZ	UU Congregation of NW Tucson	http://uucnwt.org

CALIFORNIA

Long Beach, CA	UU Church of Long Beach	www.uuclb.org/
Palo Alto, CA	UU Church of Palo Alto	www.uucpa.org
San Diego, CA	First UU of San Diego	www.firstuusandiego.org/
San Francisco, CA	First UU Society of San Francisco	www.uusf.org/
San Jose, CA	UU Fellowship, Cupertino	http://www.sanjoseuu.org
San Mateo, CA	UU's of San Mateo	www.homestead.com/uusm/
Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara UU Church	www.ussb.org/

CONNECTICUT

Hartford, CT	Unitarian Society	www.ushartford.com/
Manchester, CT	Unitarian Universalist Society: East	www.uuse.org/
Stamford, CT	UU Society of Stamford	www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/8338

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

All Souls Church, Unitarian	www.all-souls.org/
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FLORIDA

Daytona Beach, FL	UU Society of the Daytona Beach Area	www.community.daytona.fl.uua.org
North Palm Beach, FL	First Unitarian Church in N. Palm Beach	uniuni@bellsouth.net
Tallahassee, FL	Unitarian Universalist Church	www.nettally.com/uuct/
Tampa, FL	UU Church of Tampa	www.uutampa.org/

HAWAII

Honolulu, HI	First Unitarian Church of Honolulu	http://home.hawaii.rr.com/uuchurch/
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ILLINOIS

Chicago, IL	Second Unitarian Church of Chicago	www.secondunitarian.org/
Deerfield, IL	North Shore Unitarian Church	www.nsuc.org/
Evanston, IL	Unitarian Church of Evanston	http://ucevanston.org/
Hinsdale, IL	Unitarian Church of Hinsdale	www.uch-online.org/
Naperville, IL	DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church	www.duuc.org/

IOWA

Ames, IA	Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames	http://uufames.org/
Des Moines, IA	First Unitarian Church of Des Moines	www.ucdsm.org/

INDIANA

Evansville, IN	UUC Evansville	http://uuevansville.org
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LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge, LA	UU Church of Baton Rouge	www.peacestones.org
New Orleans, LA	First UU Church of New Orleans	www.firstuuno.org

MARYLAND

Annapolis, MD	UU Church of Annapolis	www.uuca-md.org
Bethesda, MD	Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church	www.cedarlane.org/
Camp Springs, MD	Davies Memorial UU Church	http://dmuuc.org
Columbia, MD	Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia	www.uucolumbia.net/
Rockville, MD	Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville	www.uucr.org

UU Congregations in CBCOs

MASSACHUSETTS

Bedford, MA	First Parish in Bedford UU	www.uubedford.org
Belmont, MA	The First Church in Belmont, Unitarian Universalist	www.uubelmont.org/
Boston, MA	Community Church of Boston	www.commchurch.org
Boston, MA	First and Second Church of Boston	www.fscboston.org
Boston, MA	King's Chapel	www.kings-chapel.org/
Gloucester, MA	Independent Christian Church Universalist	www.uusg.net
Lynn, MA	UU Church of Greater Lynn	www.uucgl.org/
Merrimac Valley, MA	UU Congregation in Andover	www.uuandover.org/
Quincy, MA	United First Parish Church in Quincy	www.ufpc.org/scc.htm
Springfield, MA	Springfield UU Congregation	http://users.rcn.com/uugs
Westwood, MA	First Parish of Westwood, United Church	www.firstparishwestwood.org/
Worcester, MA	UU Church of Worcester	http://fender.homelinux.net/~willow/uuworc/

MICHIGAN

Bloomfield Hills, MI (Detroit)	Birmingham Unitarian Church	www.bucmic.org
Kalamazoo	People's Church	www.peopleschurch.net/

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis, MN	First Universalist Church	www.firstuniv.org
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MISSISSIPPI

Jackson, MS	Unitarian Universalist Church of Jackson	www.uujackson.org
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MISSOURI

St. Louis, MO	First Unitarian Church, St Louis	www.firstuustlouis.org/
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NEBRASKA

Omaha, NE	First Unitarian Church of Omaha	www.firstuuumaha.org
Omaha, NE	Second Unitarian Church of Omaha	www.seconduitarianomaha.org/

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Manchester, NH	Unitarian Universalist Church	http://www.bit-net.com
Milford, NH	Unitarian Universalist Congregation	www.schoolshows.com/uucm/
Nashua, NH	Unitarian Univesalist Church	www.uunashua.org

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque, NM	First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque	www.uuabq.org
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NEW YORK

Albany, NY	UU Society of Albany	http://fuusalbany.org
New York, NY	Community Church of New York	www.ccnny.org/
New York, NY	Fourth Universalist Society	www.fourthuniversalist.org
New York, NY	Unitarian Church of All Souls	www.allsoulsnyc.org/
Niagara Falls, NY	First Unitarian Universalist Church of Niagara	www.firstuunf.org/
Williamsville, NY	UU Church of Amherst	www.uuchurch.amherst.ny.uua.org

NORTH CAROLINA

Durham, NC	All Souls Church, Unitarian Universalist	www.rtpnet.org/~ascuu
Durham, NC	Eno River UU Fellowship	www.eruuf.org
Winston-Salem, NC	Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Winston-Salem	www.uufws.org

UU Congregations in CBCOs

OHIO

Columbus, OH	First Unitarian Universalist of Columbus	http://firstuucolumbus.org/
Cleveland, OH	West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church	www.wsuuc.org
Cleveland Heights, OH	Unitarian Universalist Society of Cleveland	www.geocities.com/uusocietyofcleveland
Youngstown, OH	First Unitarian Church	http://uuyo.org

OREGON

Hillsboro, OR	UU Community Church of Hillsboro	www.uuccwc.org/
Portland, OR	First Unitarian Church of Portland	www.firstunitarianportland.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Lancaster, PA	UU Church of Lancaster, PA	www.uuclonline.org
Philadelphia, PA	UU Church of the Restoration	www.firstuu-philly.org
Pittsburgh, PA	Allegheny UU Church	www.alleghenyuu.org/
Pittsburgh, PA	First Unitarian Universalist Church	www.first-unitarian-pgh.org/
Pittsburgh, PA	Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills	www.geocities.com/uucnhweb/index.html
Pittsburgh, PA	UU Church of the South Hills	www.sunnyhill.org
Reading, PA	First UU Church of Berks County	http://uuberks.org

RHODE ISLAND

Providence, RI	Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel	http://bellstreetchapel.org
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TENNESSEE

Memphis, TN	First Unitarian Church of the River	www.churchoftheriver.org/
Nashville, TN	First UU Church of Nashville	http://firstuunashville.org
Nashville, TN	Greater Nashville UU Congregation	http://gnuuc.freesevers.com/

TEXAS

Amarillo, TX	Amarillo Unitarian Universalist Fellowship	www.auuf.org/home.asp
Dallas, TX	First Unitarian Church of Dallas	www.dallasuu.org/
El Paso, TX	UU Community of El Paso	www.uuelpaso.org
Fort Worth, TX	First Jefferson UU Church	www.swuuc.org/fjuuc
Houston, TX	First UU Church of Houston	www.firstuu.org/html/service.htm
Lubbock, TX	First UU Church of Lubbock (TX)	http://members.tripod.com/~UULubbock/
Midland, TX	Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland	www.uumidland.net/
Odessa, TX	Unitarian Universalist Church of Odessa	915-366-7337
San Antonio, TX	First UU Church of San Antonio	www.swuuc.org/sanantonio

VIRGINIA

Arlington, VA	UU Church of Arlington	www.uucava.org/
Williamsburg, VA	Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists Church	www.wuu.org/

WASHINGTON

Richland, WA	Community Unitarian Universalist Church	www.communityuu.org/
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WISCONSIN

Madison, WI	First Unitarian Society	www.fusmadison.org
Madison, WI	James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation	www.jruucmadison.homestead.com/
Milwaukee, WI	First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee	www.uumilwaukee.org/
Racine, WI	Olympia Brown UU Church	www.obuuc.org/

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