

Process for Becoming a Community Outreach Ministry Team at Unity Church-Unitarian

--A group of congregants (at least 4-5 people) come together to consider working in a particular area of social justice.

--This group is encouraged to take some time to think about what it is that they want to do. During this time (usually from a few months to a year), they are encouraged to think about the following things.

-What is the vision for the team? What are their short term and long term goals? What are the team logistics—when, where and how often will they meet?

-Who will be their community partner (s)? This is for purposes of extending their mission into the community and learning more about this particular justice issue.

-How will they address the three dimensions of

1) **service** (hands-on projects),

2) **education** (of the team, the congregation and the larger community)

3) **advocacy** (looking at the underlying systemic reasons for this injustice and how to advocate for it).

****How will they develop spiritually?** What will be the group's spiritual practice(s)? When and how will they take time to reflect on their work so that the dynamic of **action and reflection** is built into their outreach in the community and the world?

--Group fills out written application that includes the above questions and that goes to the Executive Team for approval.

--Upon receiving approval, there is a Sunday Investiture for the team. This is a time for the congregation to pledge their support towards the spiritual and justice work of the newly formed team.

--Team renewal happens every two years as the team fills out another written application.

Unity Church—Unitarian Community Outreach Ministry Program

Community Outreach Ministry Team (COMPT) Application Form

Note: Please read the Unity Church-Unitarian Ends, Values, and Vision Statements for 2014-2018 (also available at www.unityunitarian.org) and let that be your guide in filling out this application. Whenever possible, the people interested in forming a ministry team should discuss and form the answers to these application questions together.

MINISTRY TEAM INFORMATION

Name of Ministry Team: _____ Date of Application: _____

1. Organization and Coordination of Ministry Team

Team Leader _____ Phone: _____ E-mail _____
Address _____
Fax _____

Team Leader _____ Phone: _____ E-mail _____
Address _____ Fax _____

Typical meeting frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly):

List the names of persons who are committed to this team:

MINISTRY TEAM PURPOSE (Discuss with interest group)

2. What is the purpose or vision for this ministry? What needs will the project address? How will the work of the team make a difference? What are some of the ways this ministry reflects the Unity Church-Unitarian End, Values, and Vision Statements?

3. Please state how this ministry will address the following dimensions:

- a. Service in the community:

- b. Education with team, congregation and community:

- c. Advocacy in the community:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Discuss with interest group)

4. Describe in detail how the ministry will look. What will it do? Where will it take place? When will it take place? Etc.

5. Participant group-- who will receive goods/services/education/advocacy from this ministry?

6. Short and long term goals of specific project area

1) Short-term goals for project (broad statements of general outcomes within the next year)

2) Long-term goals for project. (broad statements of general outcomes beyond the next year)

7. What outside community group or organization will the Unity Ministry Team partner with to accomplish and expand its ministry?

8. What are the anticipated church resources and support needed to accomplish this ministry?
(Discuss with planning group) Please check those that apply.

- 1) Meeting space? _____
- 2) Room reservations? _____
- 3) Publicity through CommUnity and/or "This Week at Unity"? _____
- 4) Computer services? _____
- 5) Copying services? _____
- 6) Member recruitment? _____
- 7) Leadership development? _____
- 8) Meeting facilitation? _____
- 9) Goal setting? _____
- 10) Fundraising assistance? _____
- 11) Web site development? _____
- 12) Other? _____

9. What are the anticipated financial resources needed related to above short and long-term goals of project in #6 above?

a. Short-term financial resources needed (within the next year)

b. Long-term financial resources needed (beyond the next year)

10. How does this team anticipate generating financial resources?

TEAM DEVELOPMENT (Discuss with interest group)

11. What are the norms, guidelines or rules of conduct with team members?

12. What are the plans for cultivating ministry team leadership?

13. In what areas would the team like training? Please check those that apply.

- a. Developing team goals _____
- b. Developing team norms/guidelines _____
- c. Conducting productive meetings _____
- d. Facilitating regular meetings and/or communication _____
- e. Decision making _____
- f. Balancing spiritual development and social action _____
- g. Planning fundraising activities _____
- h. Recruiting new team members _____
- i. Program evaluation _____
- j. Team leadership _____
- k. Other

14. How does the group envision that this shared ministry will contribute to their spiritual development and growth?

Note: Each team is asked to reapply every two years.

Unity Church—Unitarian Community Outreach Ministry Program

Community Outreach Ministry Team (COMPT) Application Form B

Note: Please read the attached Unity Church-Unitarian Ends, Values, and Vision Statements for 2014-2019 and let that be your guide in filling out this application.

If a question does not apply to your team, please indicate with N/A.

I. MINISTRY TEAM INFORMATION

Name of Ministry Team:

Date of Application:

1. Organization and Coordination of Ministry Team

Team Leader

Phone:

E-mail

Address

Fax

Team Leader

Phone:

E-mail

Address

Fax

Typical meeting frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly):

List the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses, phone numbers of persons who are committed to this team.

II. MINISTRY TEAM PURPOSE

2. What is the purpose or vision for this ministry? What are some of the ways this ministry reflects the Unity Church-Unitarian End, Values, and Vision Statements (see attached)?

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3. What, when, where and how does this ministry project take place? List the community partner of the team.

4. Please describe some ways the ministry team might address the dimensions of service, education and advocacy in the next couple of years. *(Define the word "community" as it applies to the purpose and vision of the team. For example, it might refer to the team itself, to the Unity Church congregation and/or to the wider community beyond the church).*

a. Service in the community

b. Education with team, congregation and community

c. Advocacy in the community

IV. TEAM DEVELOPMENT

5. Has the team developed norms, guidelines or rules of conduct with each other? If so, please describe.

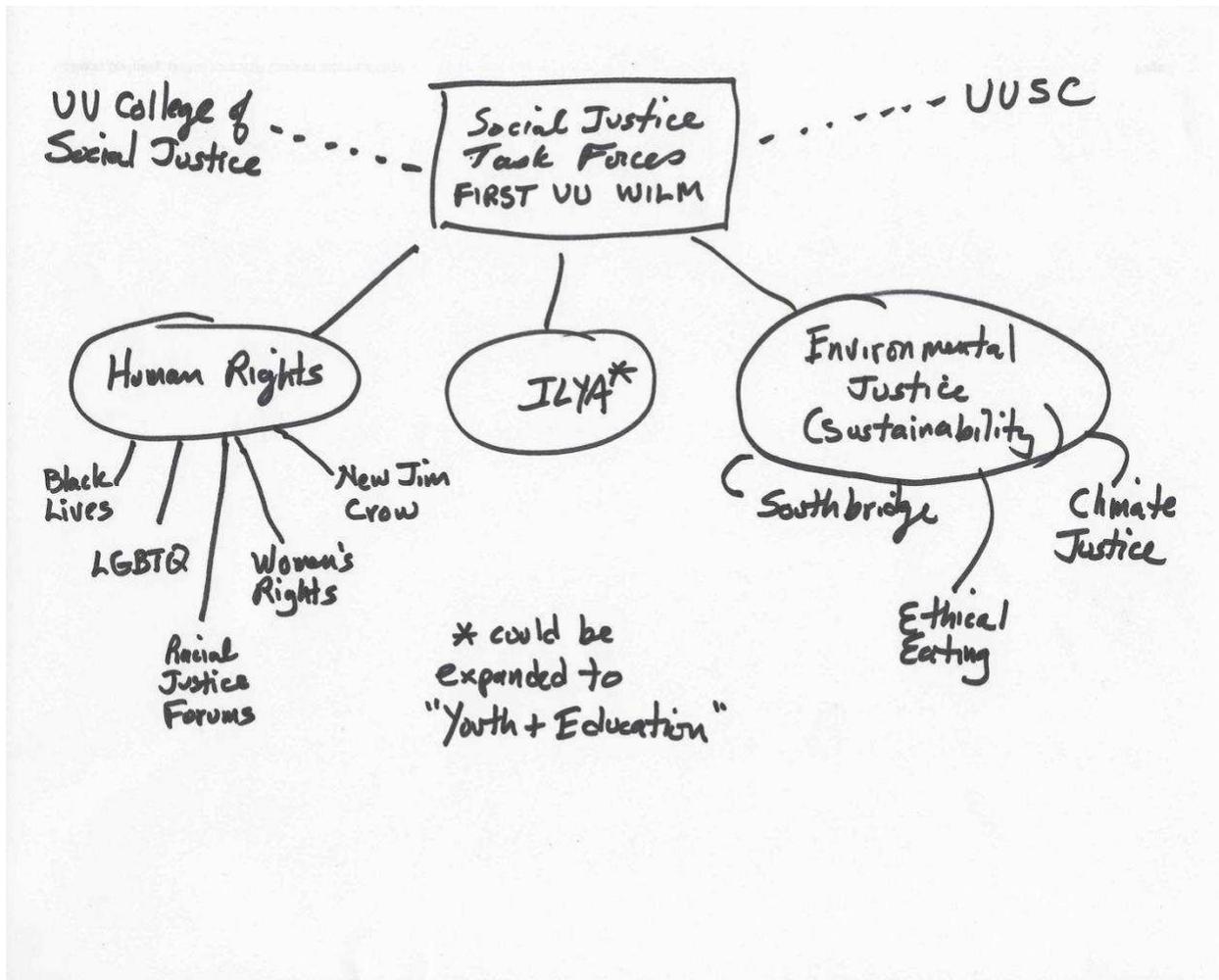
6. Has the team developed a structure for communicating with each other? If so, please describe.

7. How does the team cultivate leadership?

8. How does the ministry team contribute to the spiritual development of members?

Each ministry team will be asked to submit a new application to the Executive Team every two years.

Visualizing the Justice Task Forces Program at First Unitarian Wilmington



November 8, 2016

Justice Task Forces at First Unitarian Church of Wilmington DE

With a desire to enhance and support the relationships of our many social justice activities to the First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, we propose the formation of Social Justice Task Forces (JTFs) within the congregation. These Task Forces will be organized around broadly conceived social justice goals, e.g. racial justice, hunger and homelessness, education, poverty, etc. Each JTF will set specific goals and meet other criteria to be recognized by the Executive Team for limited terms. JTFs may receive benefits such as budget allocation, fundraising opportunities, priority in publicity and meeting space, and staff time—including pulpit attention from the minister.

Modes of Social Action

There are many modes of social action and each can provide a useful way to address an issue. One action or a combination can be valuable in different situations—and they are made more powerful when they are interwoven. A robust church social justice program will, at given times, employ a variety of these strategies:

- a. Education within the congregation
- b. Education beyond the congregation (e.g. public forums)
- c. Fundraising for justice organizations or causes
- d. Service (e.g. tutoring, serving in a soup kitchen)
- e. Advocacy (petitions, letter writing, speaking before the legislature)
- f. Divestment from oppressive companies
- g. Public witness (silent vigils, hanging Black Lives Matter banners, open support for other groups and actions)
- h. Marches, protests, and demonstrations
- i. Boundary-crossing coalitions (interracial and/or interfaith)
- j. Symbolic civil disobedience
- k. Nonviolent disruption (e.g. physically blocking pipeline construction)

Organizing the JTFs

Following best practices drawn from multiple congregations by Rev. Kathleen McTigue, director of the UU College of Social Justice, we propose that no more than one JTF be formed for each 100 members of this congregation. Our current head count would allow for up to three, but the Executive Team may authorize additional JTFs as circumstances dictate.

The Executive Team will develop an application process for official recognition.

It's important to emphasize that groups not directly involved with the work of a recognized JTF may still continue their social action without Task Force status. The formation of JTFs is merely a way to help the church prioritize—and therefore become more effective in its social action. JTFs are designed as umbrella groups that can include a variety of programs and modes of action consonant with their stated aims and goals.

For example, action committees such as Black Lives Matter and Dismantling New Jim Crow could both be under a Human Rights Task Force, but our Emmanuel Dining Room volunteers might fit better in a Hunger and Homelessness Task Force, where they could form partnerships with groups like Family Promise or the Food Bank of Delaware.

Task Forces will be authorized for a limited time (typically two to four years) at the discretion of the Executive Team. They will be reviewed for reauthorization based on meeting explicit goals set by the JTF itself. Each JTF will report annually to the Executive team (and to the congregation in the Annual Report) on how it is meeting its stated objectives. The following criteria are proposed as a basis for authorization of each JTF and its subsequent renewal as a recognized social justice ministry of the congregation.

Justice Task Force Criteria

1. A minimum of five (5) people are required to make a core commitment in writing to form a JTF.
2. Because of the need to have a fully engaged leadership team, persons who make this core commitment may not make a similar core commitment to another JTF. This requirement does not preclude anyone from working on more than one justice issue or supporting another task force's work.

3. Each JTF must define explicit goals for one year's activities, drawing from the list of possible actions ("a" through "m" above). At least three different modes of action should be employed.
4. Issues and actions should be derived from UU values and be connected with UUA and/or UUSC priorities.
5. Each JTF should be willing to ground its activities in spiritual practices, e.g. a Covenant Group structure so that spiritual preparation and regular reflection becomes a part of every action.
6. JTFs should exhibit a willingness and ability to join or work with groups in the wider community already committed to their issue—preferably a multiracial or interfaith group.
7. All JTFs should state how they will form boundary-crossing coalitions across races, cultures, or religions (see Mode "i" above).
8. The lens of racial justice should be consistently used in examining all issues and actions by a JTF, including racial consciousness and analysis of goals and outcomes.

We are indebted to Rev. Kathleen McTigue for leading us during a workshop on Saturday, Oct. 15.

HUMAN RIGHTS TASK FORCE APPLICATION

Thank you for your interest in forming a new Social Justice Task Force at First Unitarian Church. Please provide the following information to help the Executive Team understand your issues, goals, and proposed activities. This is not a bureaucratic hoop to jump through, but rather is intended to guide your core team through an important thought process about your purposes and intentions. If there's something you cannot understand or answer, let us help you think through these questions.

1. Date: October 14, 2017
2. Name of Task Force: Human Rights Task Force

3. Core Leadership of Task Force (minimum of five persons required)

Note: Anyone is welcome to make this commitment, including non-members of the church. Because of the need to have a fully engaged leadership team for each Task Force, persons who make a core commitment to this Task Force may not make a similar core commitment to another Task Force. This requirement does not preclude you from working on more than one issue or supporting another Task Force's work.

Name (type in the box)

Signature (print it out and use a pen)

Additional names may be added on the back of this sheet.

4. MISSION Briefly describe the issue or issues that you seek to address through this Task Force. *What do you see as your over-arching mission?*

Our mission will be to advance the cause of human rights—expressed in many forms and for the benefit of all—in harmony with the principles of Unitarian Universalism.

5. GOALS Identify three or more specific goals or outcomes for your task force. *Be specific. What change do you seek? In whose lives? Over what time period?*

Recognizing that racial justice has been our congregational focus in recent years, the Human Rights Task Force will seek to build on this work, but also to engage in solidarity with those who have other agendas and goals within the larger movement for human rights.

These may include GLBTQ rights, women’s rights, the rights of refugees and immigrants, religious freedom, support for Black Lives Matter and the Coalition to Dismantle the New Jim Crow, economic justice, and other human rights challenges.

Specifically, the Human Rights Task Force will:

- Facilitate congregational education and discussion on human rights issues through outside speakers, workshops, and religious education classes
- Encourage, connect, and support church members or groups who wish to work with community organizations or join local coalitions to advance human rights
- Invite local human rights groups to take advantage of First Unitarian’s facilities and resources
- Promote and support congregational efforts to take part in broader UU human rights efforts such as the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the UU College of Social Justice, Standing on the Side of Love, and other [justice ministries](#) associated with the Unitarian Universalism

6. ACTIONS What specific actions will you take to achieve these outcomes? *Your Task Force should try to employ at least three of the “Modes of Social Action” found at the end of this form. Give examples of your planned actions in each of the three (or more) modes.*

We believe that the Human Rights Task Force can operate in a variety of modes, given adequate participation and interest. These may include:

Education within the congregation

Facilitate congregational education and discussion on human rights issues through outside speakers, workshops, and religious education classes

Education beyond the congregation (e.g. public forums)

Create at least one public form each year for the discussion of a vital and pressing human rights issue in the Wilmington community.

Fundraising for justice organizations or causes

Advocate for at least one monthly special offering each year for a local peace, justice, or human rights group

Service (e.g. tutoring at a school, serving in a soup kitchen)

Serve as a connection point between the congregation and local organizations seeking volunteers, focusing especially on human rights issues

Advocacy (petitions, letter writing, showing up at the legislature)

Acting in concert with other First Unitarian Social Justice Task Forces, establish a formal relationship between First Unitarian Church and [UUDAN](#) (Unitarian Universalist Delaware Advocacy Network), a legislative action coalition of UU congregations.

Public witness (silent vigils, marches, open support for other groups and actions)

Organize at least two congregational public witness events on human rights issues each year. Encourage participation by FirstU members in local and national human rights demonstrations

Boundary-crossing coalitions (interracial and/or interfaith)

Seek relationships with community partners across differences that require humility, cultural sensitivity, and de-centering of whiteness. “Show up” without judgment of any separate agenda when our partners call. Teach these qualities within the congregation and reinforce them in all interactions in the wider community.

Symbolic civil disobedience

Organize symbolic civil disobedience or join campaigns organized by others when appropriate. Provide training in nonviolent civil disobedience before asking anyone to participate in such actions. Follow up with after-action reflection and feedback to the congregation.

Nonviolent disruption (e.g. physically blocking pipeline construction)

Carefully consider circumstances that may require such nonviolent action before recommending participation. Provide those who wish to participate in disruptive civil disobedience with training, buddy systems, legal representation, and post-action reflection and support. Provide feedback to the congregation regarding such events and experiences.

7. SPIRITUAL PRACTICE **How will your Task Force’s work be grounded in spiritual or contemplative practices?** *What rituals or activities will you employ to encourage spiritual preparation and regular reflection as part of every meeting and action?*

Spiritual grounding in the principles of Unitarian Universalism and historical movements will guide the Task Force. It is important to remember that our work for human rights is spiritual work—and that we cannot sustain this work without ongoing reference to the religious foundation that we share.

The Human Rights Task Force will follow and teach the Action-Reflection Model, as described in liberation theology by Gustavo Gutierrez. A workshop in this approach may be found on the [UUA website](#). Leaders of the Task Force will learn these techniques and teach them to constituent groups.

8. CROSSING BOUNDARIES **Describe how your Task Force plans to create boundary-crossing coalitions across races, cultures, or religions.** *See Mode “i” at the end of this form. What boundaries do you believe that you can cross in your work? What obstacles will you need to overcome?*

Human Rights work crosses all sorts of boundaries. As a largely white congregation, we are challenged to enter into new relationships with people who are not like ourselves—whose experiences, education, and resources are often very different from our own.

We must be intentional about crossing these boundaries, humble about our lack of knowledge, non-judgmental and generous in accepting difference, and careful to reserve our prescriptions and trust the oppressed and marginalized communities that we seek to engage as partners.

The Human Rights Task Force will seek to provide training to prepare us for effective cross-cultural engagement. These may include [Soul Works](#), which uses the [Visions](#) model, or other appropriate training.

9. **COALITION BUILDING** **How will you join forces to work with groups in the wider community already committed to your issue?** *Do you have specific partners in mind at this time? What will you do to identify new community partners? To engage with them as partners and supporters?*

Members of First Unitarian Church have developed a wide variety of formal and informal contacts with local human rights partners through Pacem in Terris, Movement for a Culture of Peace, Peace Week Delaware, Wilmington Peacekeepers, Coalition to Dismantle the New Jim Crow, 302 Guns Down, the Delaware Coalition Against Gun Violence, and other groups and movements.

The Human Rights Task Force will need to examine and organize these relationships into a coherent strategy for coalition building in the community. This strategy may also require joining broad coalitions that include grassroots groups unknown to us at this time.

10. **RACIAL JUSTICE** **The lens of racial justice should be consistently applied in examining issues and planning actions undertaken by your Task Force.** *What resources will you use to raise your racial consciousness and analyze your work through this lens? How will your task force work to fight racism?*

Although racial justice is not the only human rights issue facing us in 2017, it seems to many that overt racism and the rise of white nationalism and supremacy are the primary manifestations of many other attacks on human rights, including those on immigrant rights, women's rights, GLBTQ rights, and a growing number of other challenges—including the democratic process itself.

The Human Rights Task Force at First Unitarian Church of Wilmington is already grounded in racial justice and will continue to see this issue as the fulcrum of our human rights work. It is clear that fighting systemic racism in our society carries benefits for many others who suffer from oppression and denial of full humanity. Racism is America's original sin and, as such, it must be seen as the intersection of Broad and Main in our fight for human rights across the land.