

**Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
Justice Council  
Charter**

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**Mission Statement**

This council oversees the development and organization of justice-oriented projects of MPUUC. It will affirm, promote and work toward Justice, based on Unitarian Universalist principles and guided by the Mission Peak mission statement both outside and within our congregation.

**Responsibilities**

- Council members communicate to the council the highlights of what Justice activities members are doing, especially those activities that are successful or that need additional help.
- Decide what needs to be communicated with other councils or the board (external communication usually done by the executive team member).
- Communicate to the council what other councils or the board want to be communicated with us (executive team member usually brings this communication to council).
- Determine how best the congregation can respond to the justice needs in our community and the wider world, so that MPUUC will be viewed in the larger community as an organization that works for justice. This includes finding the interests, commitment, energy and funding people are able/willing to put into a project. It also includes making sure that the needs of all members are reflected, making sure no one person or group is overlooked
- See Addendum for suggested programs and projects.

**Activities**

The Justice Council Serves its mission through various justice activities:

- Bimonthly Council Meetings
  - Council meetings shall be open to any active Member of the Congregation who would like to attend.
  - Minutes will be kept at each council meeting and shall include who is in attendance and what decisions were made (including approval of previous meetings draft minutes).
  - The minutes (including draft minutes) of all council meetings shall be made public as soon as practical by posting them to members only section of web site.
  - The minutes will be given as a report to the Board by the chair (or their designee)
- Annual Super Council meeting
- Other meetings or activities of all or part of council as needed for an activity or planning

**Interactions**

- Dialog with the minister, the Board and the congregation at large on justice priorities for the congregation
- Interacting with the Denominational Affairs committee
- Working with other congregations, UU or Interfaith, on Justice projects
- Working with the minister and the worship committee to ensure justice-themed services from time to time.
- Working with the Fellowship Committee to plan for special events, workshops, trainings, etc.
- Interacting with communications and publicity teams

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Participants**

The council consists of members who are:

- Representatives of or liaisons to existing social justice activities. Each justice project will have a representative or a liaison that represents its activities and needs to the council.
- If a representative of a justice project quits or resigns, that justice project will appoint a replacement.
- People who oversee the justice-oriented activities for MPUUC, including:
  - understanding the will and needs of the congregation regarding which justice activities we should be involved in as a congregation
  - approving the starting of a new justice project, and ending an existing one
  - understanding status and needs of a justice project once it is started
  - learning about and solving any reported problems
- The council will be convened by a member from the executive team of MPUUC on a regular basis, every other month, and more often if needed. The Executive Team member will chair the council, with the assistance of the board representative.
- Parish and community minister are ex officio members.

## **Desired Skills for Council Participants**

- Commitment to addressing injustices
- Understanding the ethical and faith community's role in engaging in justice work
- Ability to communicate status and problems of projects either by word of mouth or in writing
- Ability to work on a team towards a common goal
- Ability to recruit and organize others in a task

## **Covenant of Right Relations**

(To be reviewed with new council members and annually with the full council)

1. I recognize that this group is a means to discovery. We may approach this process via many paths.
2. I understand and accept that each member's experience and perception is valid.
3. I will do my best to speak and write openly, honestly, and respectfully, with clarity, tact, and compassion.
4. I will do my best to listen carefully, with an open mind and open heart to what others say.
5. I will do my best to assume good intentions in others.
6. I will seek to resolve conflict peacefully and respectfully.
7. I will contribute my enthusiasm, time and talents in a manner appropriated to my abilities and acknowledge the contributions of others.
8. I will do my best to practice compassion towards myself and others.

## **Addendum – Suggested Programs and Activities**

- Determine how best the congregation can respond to the justice needs in our community and the wider world
  - a survey
  - an organized campaign of 1-on-1 conversations with members, as is done in congregational organizing, using training like that of the California Justice Ministry
  - a justice table after the service with information about projects people are working on,
  - a dialog with interested individuals,
  - examining all areas of congregational life, and making recommendations to the Board and other relevant committees about how to make Mission Peak more welcoming, safe and relevant to the full spectrum of people.
  - be the contact when other organizations come to Mission Peak with a community outreach program request
  - provide outreach to and connecting with individuals who are or feel marginalized and organizations representing them in the community
  - promoting the justice activities of the congregation and recruiting participants (this includes announcements, pulpitorial, articles, justice table, etc.)
  - other means
- Guide the work of justice projects
  - Start new justice projects, identifying the mission, leadership and resource needs of a project
  - Understand the status of existing projects, and troubleshoot any problems they may be having
  - End projects when they have reached a conclusion
- Projects can be local, national or international in scope.
- The council will have representation from these pre-existing activities:
  - The Sandwich Squad
  - Share the Plate (often during the second Sunday collection)
  - The Common Book Read
  - The Sidewalk Talk Project
  - Courageous Love Hero Award
- Possible future projects might include such activities as:
  - Educational forums on important justice issues
  - Support for in international activities like the Holdeen Project in India, or the Partner Church program
  - Involvement in activities of the UU Service Committee
  - Involvement in congregational organizing efforts, such as PICO
  - Involvement in the Poor People's Campaign
  - Support for the UU Justice Ministry of California
- With the minister and the Board, contribute to the formation of a congregational response to a community justice issue