

UUJEC Annual Report: June 2025



UUJEC envisions a world
that nourishes and sustains all living beings,
where all people share the riches of the planet,
where all voices are heard, where democratic process is practiced,
where the inherent worth and dignity of every person
is recognized and affirmed as set forth in our UU principles.

The UUJEC works to overcome racism, economic injustice, and other forms of oppression, by its support for religious, community, and worker organizations that are democratic and accountable, and that affirm human rights and dignity.

Our History

UUJEC was founded in 1989 to concentrate on systemic problems of economic injustice. Early gatherings at the Rowe Camp and Conference Center in Massachusetts brought together a core group of clergy and nonclergy activists who wished to inspire congregations to work for a more just society through study, teaching, advocacy, and direct action to address national- and global-governance structures and features of society that buttressed economic injustice.

In our first year, UUJEC started a quarterly newsletter, *The Call*, and distributed an enhanced version of the UU Purposes and Principles in the language of economic justice (see page 5). In 1993, we held a Los Angeles conference focused on human rights. With more than 100 people present, that conference marked the emergence of UUJEC as a nationwide organization.

From the start, UUJEC has provided congregations with action-oriented materials through its General Assembly (GA) booth each year, as well as via engagement with local chapters and representatives, at national and regional conferences, and more recently through its Web site and regional conferences. As a response to growing inequality in wealth distribution, both nationally and globally, UUJEC helped organize marches countering the WTO in Seattle and the FTAA in Miami, and worked to develop and promote the Congregational Study/Action Issue, *Escalating Inequality*, adopted in 2014.

Subsequently, UUJEC developed its own curriculum for *Escalating Inequality* and used its Web site to help distribute alternative curricula and materials developed by several UU congregations across the country. We have also expanded our resources to include materials for engaging on the Statement of Conscience *Our Democracy Uncorrupted* and on healthcare justice and a curriculum on reparations.

At GA this year, we endorsed *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. Though the second vote overturned its initial win, individuals returning from prison have issues finding housing, so will look at the intersection of those issues.



Composite image of board members, clockwise from top left: Mona, Dick, Lucy, Kit, David, Carl, Cindy, Sally, Terry, Judy, and Dean.

CO-CHAIRS: Ms Sally Jane Gellert, Woodcliff Lake, N.J. ★ Terry Lowman, Ames, Iowa/Miami, Fla.

TREASURER: Jane Bannor, Chicago, Ill. ★ **SECRETARY:** Kit Marlowe, Cape May, N.J.

Dr. Dick Burkhart, Seattle, Wash. ★ David e. Delk, Portland, Ore. ★ Rev. Judith Deutsch, Corrales, N.M. ★ Rev. Dr. Lucy Hitchcock, Salem, Ore. ★ Ms Mona Lee, Seattle, Wash. ★ Carl McCargo, Springfield, Mass. ★ Cindy Piester, Ventura, Calif. ★ Dean Wanderer, Springfield, Va.

Annual Report Executive Summary

Achievements since 2024 Annual Meeting

1. Presented 9 Webinars¹ on subjects related to environmental & economic justice (see page 7). Many recordings are on YouTube; see <https://uujec.org/webinars>.
2. We said goodbye to our administrator, Rachel Bennett Steury, who moved on to full-time FEMA work. We ultimately decided to work without a paid employee.
3. We endorsed the CS/AI *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*.³

Communications

UUJEC News & Views, our quarterly newsletter, provides articles on economic-justice topics, photos from our events, UUA updates, etc. We are on Facebook and Twitter/X and recently joined Bluesky @UUJEC.bsky.social (see page 3).⁴

Finance Committee/Treasurer's Report (by Treasurer Jane Bannor)

UUJEC contributions continue to decline with income for 2024 of \$4,408 and expenses of \$12,465. Our end-of-year balance (Dec. 31, 2024) was \$17,535. As of June 1, 2025, our checking account balance is \$4,566, as \$12,000 was been moved to a CD at a local community bank. (see pages 5, 8). After 2025 year-to-date income of \$2,300 and expenses of \$2,305 our combined balance is holding fairly steady at \$17,357. (see pages 3, 8).⁵

Peace, Equity, and Climate Justice Task Force Report (by Chairperson Cindy Piester)

It is our goal to address the intersection of peace, equality, and climate. There no longer is such a thing as a winnable war, as vast quantities of military emissions circle back to us all and assist in the erosion of a livable planet, particularly for the most vulnerable, including youth and future generations. PE&C networks to join with like-minded individuals across all divides. (see pages 4, 7).¹

Healthcare Task Force (by Chairperson Rev. Judith Deutsch)

We continue to work to support Medicare for All, oppose "Medicare Advantage" and the government's overpayment to its corporations and underservice to the people, and look at ways to improve access to health care in our country (see page 4). We collaborate with Radical Elders and the People's Response Network.⁶

Reparations Task Force and Team (by Chairperson Carl McCargo)

Chairperson Carl McCargo continues to meet with legislators and UUs, primarily in Massachusetts, supporting Reparations and specifically H.R. 40. Our GA visitors had considerable interest our 6-session curriculum. E-mail reparations@uujec.org for info (see pages 5, 6).⁷

General Assembly

We had a booth in both Exhibit Halls: in-person and virtual. We supported an on-demand workshop, *Bread and Roses: Mutual Aid and Food Justice*, and endorsed *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* (see page 5). We look forward to a fully virtual GA 2026.³

Membership

With our uncomplicated dues structure, we welcome new and returning members.⁸

UUJEC Board of Trustees

The Board meets monthly. Nominations are open through October for our December election.⁹

We work toward justice with other organizations

Some of the UU and nonUU partners with whom we have worked recently are UUSJ (Washington, D. C.), UUMfE, UU CSW, UU state advocacy networks, Radical Elders, AFL-CIO, National Nurses United, Healthcare-NOW!, Public Citizen, Green Amendments For the Generations, Climate Crisis Policy, Veterans for Peace.

Superscript "footnote" numbers will be found at the point in the full report where details may be found.

Accomplishments Since Our July 2024 Meeting

1. The newly renamed Peace, Equity, and Climate Justice task force planned and held 2nd-Thursday Webinars on environmental topics, inviting participation from members and friends of UUJEC, UU climate organizations, and other advocates and experts.
2. At GA 2025, we endorsed the Congregational Study/Action Issue *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*.
3. Cochairpersons Sally Jane Gellert and Terry Lowman attended the CUUSAN (State Advocacy Network) program on Wed., June 18, before GA's opening.
4. Board member Cindy Piester again served as a badged virtual participant to the U.N. Conference of the Parties, COP29, courtesy of WILPF, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.
5. Cochairperson Sally Jane Gellert attended the UUSJ "Day on the Hill" on Tues., June 17.

Our board continually reevaluates what we can realistically accomplish, how to build membership, and how to organize to best serve our members, collaborate with other UU groups, and promote our Unitarian Universalist principles, even without major consistent funding. We know that grants, especially from the UU Funding Program and the Live Oak Endowment Fund, have made a huge difference in our reach, so we will continue to pursue grants for our future work.

Communications⁴

UUJEC publishes a quarterly newsletter, *UUJEC News & Views*, with articles on topics of economic justice, reports and photos from our events, reports on our coalition work exemplified by letter-signing on national and regional campaigns, and information on UUA matters. Past newsletters have covered our Webinar series, healthcare justice, UUJEC's involvement in GA, major UUA elections and governance issues, environmental justice, and similar subjects. *News & Views* is circulated via e-mail to about 1325 subscribers, is posted to our Web site, and is distributed at all UUJEC events. Board member Ms Sally Jane Gellert is our newsletter editor.

Web Site & Forum²

The transition to our new Web site, <https://uujec.net> has stalled, due to time constraints, but continues. Our original site, <https://uujec.org>, continues to be maintained by board member Terry Lowman, though new material there should mostly be links to uujec.net. Once the transfer is complete, uujec.org will be the surviving domain.

In addition, to open our board e-mail discussions to a wider audience, we encourage interested folks to check out our new forum: <https://uujec.net/discussion>. Each task force has a section, and large-scale UU programs and events, such as GA, UUA by-laws, Study/Action Issues, Meet the Moment, and the like, have had or will have a forum as well. Please visit our forum (which enables e-mail subscription and reply), to read and register to join in our board conversations. The two sites currently exist in tandem, so we encourage all to explore both sites, enjoy, learn, and comment.

Finance Committee/Treasurer's Report⁵ (by Treasurer Jane Bannor)



With frugality and common sense, UUJEC's modest income continues to support our needs. In 2024 we decreased our administrative and conference expenses, ending the year with a balance of \$17,535. For the year, individual and congregational donations decreased by 18% to \$3,932 while expenses, at \$12,465, were 15% below budget.

Through June 2025, UUJEC's balance has declined slightly, to \$17,357. Both individual and congregational donations so far this year are somewhat below expectations, but ex-

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penditures are significantly below budgeted amounts, as the Board voted to discontinue paid staff support. We continue to value our partnership with a local Chicago community bank, where we hold a certificate of deposit, and we're striving to update our banking processes to enable greater use of electronic transfers, which is said to minimize possibilities for fraud.

Board members are looking to renew our relationship-building and fund-raising efforts to improve the group's outreach to new members as well as to potential and current donors in the coming year. As we head into a virtual retreat next month, we will solidify plans suggested by our early internal discussions.

Peace-Equity-Climate Task Force (née Green New Deal) Report² (by Chairperson Cindy Piester)



UUJEC's Peace, Equity, & Climate Task Force (PE&C) formed, hashed out our vision and direction, and has proceeded to build an ever-expanding network, making new connections and validating old ones. All the while, we brought in vital new members whose energy has contributed vibrancy and increased solidarity despite the plethora of challenges confronting us all during these difficult times. Rev. Lucy Hitchcock served to keep our focus on actions that would move our work forward.

Together we are building on a collective model, working as a team to accomplish our wide-ranging goals to support one another's work; uphold democracy; and promote peace, equity, and climate concerns. We have integrated ourselves and are building a task force with collective decision-making and shared responsibilities at its core.

This approach has allowed an expansion of the various groups and organizations that stand with us. It has yielded a wide variety of high-value, cutting-edge webinars as free, readily available, educational, actionable resources for UUs and our congregations. Our presenters include internationally-known experts as well as our own humble truth-speaking voices.

Many who participate as part of PE&C play a key role in their communities addressing our core issues. David Delk has spoken to a number of UU congregations. His excellent presentation, *Threats to Democracy: the Military Industrial Complex and Beyond*, can be found on our web site. Gary Robinson, who arranged for internationally-known author and activist Dr. Neta Crawford to join us from the U.K., gave a rousing UU-focused intro to her talk. PE&C Chairperson Cindy Piester, for the third year in a row, served as an NGO badged virtual participant at UN Climate Conference COP 29, held in Azerbaijan. Cindy was badged thanks to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. This has helped to inform PE&C's advocacy for urgent climate action and expand its networking reach within UU circles as well as with other domestic and international organizations. Cindy has written, spoken on national radio, and given COP-related presentations through out the year.

Healthcare Task Force Report⁴ (by Chairperson Rev. Judith Deutsch)

We are working on two related items:

1. Getting representatives to endorse and otherwise support H.R. 3069, Representative Jayapal's Medicare for All (single payer) bill and getting senators to endorse and otherwise support S. 1506, Senator Sanders' Medicare for All (single payer) bill;
2. Getting senators and representatives to vote against legislation that includes Medicaid cuts.



We take note of Medicare's 60th birthday, and its current endangered status, with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) looking to bring bureaucratic prior authorization into Traditional Medicare. Prior authorization is partially what makes the privatized Medicare imposter, "Medicare Advantage" so dysfunctional. Plans are for this to begin in January 2026.

Reparations Task Force & Team Report⁷ (by Task Force Member Jane Bannor)



We are continuing work on this important issue, including supporting H.R. 40 and considering other options for UU Reparations. Much of our work involves supporting the 2023 AIW passed at General Assembly 2 years ago, titled *Next Steps into Anti-Racism and Reparations*. Members of the task force are available remotely or in person to present programs to congregations and social-justice teams on ways to expand your anti-racism work. This year, to expand our own knowledge of racism and how we can heal from it, members of our task force took part in the 4-session Stolen Beam series, developed by Amherst, Mass. We strive to give Reparations visibility and minimize its divisive effects. We believe that the factors that gave rise to the U.S. legacy of Chattel Enslavement also fuel our culture's "isms" in our 21st century. We welcome new members to our Reparations Task Force; please e-mail us at uujec@uujec.org.

Labor Day: Ongoing Support of Workers and Unions

As a UU organization, the UUJEC encourages religious celebrations of liberation, resistance, sustainability, and accountability. The Labor Day weekend in September and the harvest holidays during the autumn months are especially important. Food justice and "ethical eating" are important themes in economic-justice work. Last year's *World on Fire: Humanitarian Work and Climate Change* statement recognizes the significance of labor union organizing.

On August 7, we will host a Web seminar with Michael Szpak, religion labor coordinator of the AFL-CIO. In addition, our religious Labor Day resource list is available to all Unitarian Universalist groups and individuals who are planning events for the holiday. Labor organizations are involved with all of the major UUJEC concerns, including our antiracism work, Medicare for All/Medicare (dis)Advantage, and our efforts to oppose extreme income and wealth inequality. As congregations develop autumn activities, the UUJEC encourages religious support for today's working people and for labor organizing in the 21st century. For the harvest holidays, multicultural celebrations of healthy living and environmental protection will be helpful. Health equity and housing are important themes, particularly as extreme weather events become more frequent. We are preparing for the 2025 Labor Day weekend with appropriate outreach activities—watch social media and e-mail.

General Assembly: Actions of Immediate Witness, On-Demand Workshops, Meet the Moment³

At GA this year, we sponsored the on-demand workshop was *Bread and Roses: Mutual Aid and Food Justice*, led by One Island Family (Key West). It was described as follows:



Are you curious about mutual aid organizing? Start with community gardening and community meals. This delicious workshop provides resources that your congregation can use in its social justice work. The speakers are mutual aid activists in Florida. Video produced by the Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community. Terry Lowman; Helen (Lyn) Dalzell; Rev. Robert Murphy

We also participated in in-person discussions related to *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* and maintained in-person and online exhibit booths.

UUJEC's focus is on housing justice, its intersection with the criminal injustice system, and how weather emergencies affect the most vulnerable. In addition, we continue to advocate for democracy and due process rights for all, including the most vulnerable: children, elders, gender-nonconforming, and those who speak out about issues such as Palestine, peace, and seemingly anything disfavored by the current federal administration. At your group's in-gathering, we encourage you to make your water ceremony more than a travelogue of distant vacations.

(COMMENTARY ON NEXT PAGE)

How Did We Meet the Moment?

The theme of GA this year was Meet the Moment, and we did our best with a small crew. The UUA has more resources, but they didn't do as well as they have in previous years.

The biggest issue was Friday's introduction of the CS/AIs—the Congregational Study/Action Issues. For the first time this year, alternative programming was scheduled opposite the general business session. Delegates were told that it would not interfere with “critical delegate business”. Some of us feel that all business at a general session should be considered critical, and did not attend the alternative events, but others took leadership at their word and missed most of the CS/AI discussion. After protests, the UUA board decided to redo the CS/AI presentations and discussions, which in turn led to a disruption of Saturday's general session, with almost 30 minutes of dead time (with a few music videos to keep us from getting too restless) and encouragement for us to not talk about the Actions of Immediate Witness, so that we could finish close to on time (the session ran long by about 30 minutes, the first time I remember a general session being extended [my first GA was in Salt Lake City in 2009]). Friday's vote was a majority for our preferred CS/AI, *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. That flipped in the ranked-choice vote after Saturday's session, when in the second round, *Abolition Is Faith Formation* emerged with a majority. In the past, we have been told that redoing a problematical election was impossible. Either we are getting more serious about repairing harm, or the outcome on Friday was not the preferred result. In any case, there is substantial intersection between the 2 topics, so we are looking to focus on their convergence.

A further problem was the session I attended of the youth cohort Meet the Moment programming. The first day was introductory, with little intergenerational discussion. That was disappointing, but understandable, and we heard more from the youth on the second day. However, late in the third day's session, a young adult stood up and said that the youth were not happy with the sessions, that they were too adult-centered. Instead of ad-

addressing the issue, the moderators were poised to go ahead with the programming until an older adult stood and took them to task, pointing out that many of us had come to hear from the youth about what *they* want. The remaining time was spent trying to work out a way to do better, but it certainly cast an overall damper on the experience. I am hoping that, as promised, the UUA will make materials from all 11 cohorts easily available to all UUs.

Sally Jane Gellert, Cochairperson, UUJEC
GA Delegate, Central Unitarian, Westwood, N.J.

Membership⁸

Our membership includes both individuals and congregations. We welcome new and returning members to join our task forces and to participate in our webinars, actions, GA activities, conferences, and our annual meeting. We work in partnership with a variety of groups, both within and outside of the UU universe, including Unitarians for Social Justice (UUSJ), UU Ministry for Earth (UUMfE), and Interfaith Power & Light. UUJEC currently has about 1325 e-mail subscribers who receive the quarterly *UUJEC News & Views* and updates on our events. With our simple dues structure, we welcome you to sign up here: <https://uujec.org/membership>.



Wednesday's opening was all virtual. Sally watched from the convention center lobby.

Dues and Donations

Annual dues are as follows: **Regular Adult Membership** \$40 or sliding scale, **Congregational Membership** \$1/member, **General Donation** can of course be of any amount you wish to give. All support, whether a financial donation, sharing our social media posts, or attending our programs, is always welcome and appreciated.

UUJEC Board of Trustees ⁹

The UUJEC Board has been involved with both policy and implementation of programs. There is no reasonable way to track all their hours of contributions. The board meets monthly by video conference. The executive committee works by e-mail between board meetings.

We have been consolidating our efforts recently, focusing on our periodic Web seminars. Although *Housing: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* lost to *Abolition Is Faith Formation* in the “do-over” ranked-choice vote, we know that there is a lot of overlap between the issues, and their major class-inequality components. Also, there are 3 newly passed Actions of Immediate Witness: *Defending LGBTIQ Freedom Amid Funding Crisis: A Call for Global Solidarity*, *Faithful Defiance of Authoritarianism, a Call to Action: Reaffirming Our Covenants for Democracy and Freedom!*, and *We Declare and Affirm: Immigrants Are People Who Have Inherent Worth and Inalienable Rights*, and we consider each of these to be important, again with overlap in respect to our democratic society. We will do our best to curate meaningful resources. We are actively looking for UU congregations/fellowships/societies to try our 6-session Reparations curriculum (you can e-mail our Reparations team at reparations@uujec.org to learn more). We will connect with interested UUs—and others—on all of these topics, always looking to amplify work that is already being done. We are happy to provide online and offline resources.

We are always interested in attracting dedicated economic-justice advocates to join our task forces and even our working board! Please e-mail us at uujec@uujec.org to get connected, and be sure to check out our forums at <https://uujec.net/discussion>. We have a staggered board for institutional continuity, with members serving 3-year terms. As a membership organization, it is very important, both legally and morally, to have our members participate in our annual meetings and in our annual elections. Current board members come from various regions of the country, from Oregon to New Jersey. Our main locations are in Massachusetts and Illinois.

Webinars since our last annual meeting¹

- ★ Sept. 12, Marcy Winograd, *Stop REACH's War on the Central Coast*
- ★ Nov. 14, Steve Morse & John Braxton, *Labor, Veterans, and Militarism: Post Election*
- ★ Dec. 14, Cindy Piester, *COP 29 and UU: Peace, Equity & Climate Justice Imperative*
- ★ Jan. 9, Jan Booher, *Beloved Community: Building a Village in the Face of Climate Chaos*
- ★ Feb. 13, David e. Delk, *Threats to Democracy: The Military Industrial Complex and Beyond*
- ★ Mar. 11, Gary Butterfield, *NO MAS – Veterans Call for UU Support in Addressing the Climate Impacts of Military Air Shows*
- ★ Apr. 10, Nick Buxton, *Just Peace on a Burning Planet: Why Our Collective Survival Depends on Rethinking the Military*
- ★ May 8, Mark Taylor-Canfield, *Defending Our First Amendment*
- ★ June 9, noon, Dr. Neta Crawford, *Climate & Military*

Financial Report for Calendar Year 2024⁶

	<u>2024 Budget</u>	2024 Actual	<u>2025 Budget</u>
Opening Balance		\$25,592	\$17,535
<u>Income</u>			
Individual Donations	\$5,200	\$3,089	3500
Congregational Donations	\$800	\$843	\$900
Donations for books/t-shirts etc.	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Income, Ann Mtg <u>Contribs</u>	\$0	\$0	\$50
Interest Income	\$500	\$476	\$500
Fraud Reimbursement	\$0	\$0	\$0
Conference Registrations	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grant Income	\$2,000	\$0	\$0
Grant Transfers from Prev Years	\$5,908	\$0	\$1,624
	\$14,408	\$4,408	\$6,574
<u>Expenses</u>			
Bank/PayPal/Credit cd fees/ FRAUD	\$75	\$2,064	75
Internet Security, hosting (GoDad)	\$500	\$106	\$150
Website fees (Brinks, Zoom,Mailc)	\$700	\$568	\$700
Annual MA State filing fee, duplicating	\$50	\$70	\$70
Postage	\$50	\$0	\$50
Fundraising, Letter Printing, Mailing	\$600	\$0	\$600
Other Expenses	\$75	\$0	\$75
Brochure Printing, Publicity	\$50	\$0	\$50
Printing/Copying for GA/other	\$83	\$0	\$100
Other Office Expenses	\$75	\$0	\$50
Board & Staff GA, <u>Conf Travel</u>	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
General Assembly Booth, Signage	\$500	\$750	\$750
Speakers, Reg'n Fees for GA	\$1,200	\$0	\$600
Webinar Honoraria	\$1,800	\$1,175	\$1,400
Conference Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$800
Annual Mtg - Lunch, Rm Rent, <u>Spkr</u>	\$250	\$200	\$250
<u>Genl Assembly Shipping To and Fro</u>	\$0	\$0	\$50
Staff/Webmaster @ 7 Hours/Wk*	\$7,000	\$5,821	\$9,100
Employer's FICA + Employee <u>Contrib</u>	\$1,400	\$1,711	\$2,675
CPA/Legal consultation	\$0	\$0	\$0
Retreat Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$150
	\$14,408	\$12,465	\$18,695
	-/+	-\$8,057	-\$12,121
Ending Balance		\$17,535	\$5,414