

# IMPACT

# REPORT

JULY

JUNE

2023-2024

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Thank You

## OUR MISSION

Grounded in our Unitarian Universalist faith, we are confronting systemic injustice and building a more compassionate society in New Jersey by:

- **Educating** ourselves and others on social and political issues
- **Mobilizing** individuals and congregations to act for justice
- **Advocating** for equitable and sustainable public policy



## OUR VISION

We envision a just New Jersey free from systemic oppression and greed, full of engaged people committed to each other, to our communities, and to the earth.


# A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

One of the challenges of social justice advocacy work is determining how we should measure success. There are a multitude of frameworks that have been proposed to do just that. Perhaps you are familiar with the SMART criteria; SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, and Time-related. Proponents argue that it is an effective tool that has proven applicable across a wide range of disciplines. Certainly, it can be quite helpful. However, the longer I do this work the more convinced I am that what differentiates our faith-based and values-centered perspective is our focus on relationships.

That's part of what we mean when we say Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal faith. Measuring and quantifying relationships is inherently difficult. Yet, we know that the long-term work of dismantling oppressive systems can only happen when relationship is at the forefront.

Relationship building takes time. So with that in mind, we present our impact report for this year. Our hope is that it reflects the ongoing commitment to build real relationship—within our congregations, our coalitions, our communities and our larger world. As an organization, we have a bold vision for a just New Jersey. The path to success is paved in relationship.

In faith, with love, and for justice,



Rev. Charles Loflin  
Executive Director



PC Michael Skelly

“  
The longer I do this work, the more convinced I am that what differentiates our faith-based and values-centered perspective is our focus on relationships.  
”

# OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2023-2024



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First UU Fellowship of  
Hunterdon County



**Kevin Pierre**  
UU Congregation at  
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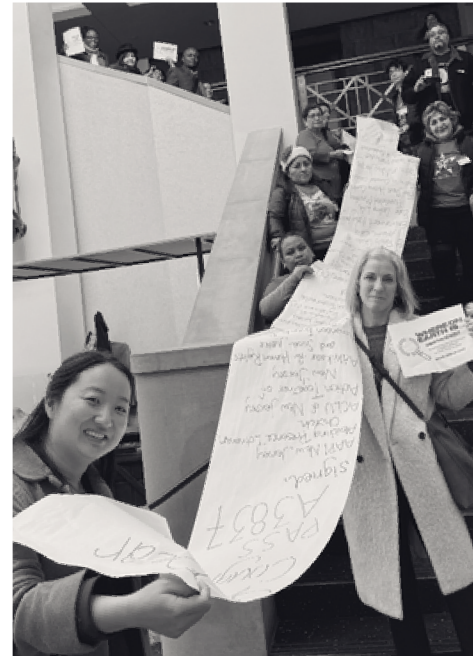
# A WITNESS FOR LOVE...

## ...IN THE STATE HOUSE

UU FaithAction NJ was present in the NJ State House for legislative hearings concerning Language Access, the Clean Energy Bill, and environmental justice legislation... and for the celebratory signing of Language Access into law!

We also raised our voice in the State House by co-signing coalition letters to state legislators and by mobilizing UUs to contact their representatives.

Since July 2023, UUs have sent 495 messages and made 35 calls to their representatives in response to our Action Alerts. In addition, our supporters have sent 135 messages and made 184 calls during our monthly Action Hours. We have also distributed 2,830 postcards to our congregations.



Typically our coalition letters are delivered as typed memos... but on December 14, 2023, members of the NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice hand-delivered this letter with 50 feet of organizational signatures, illustrating our collective might.



Our 219 phone calls, if three minutes each, add up to 11 hours of direct advocacy! (That's longer than Season Five of *The Crown*!)



If every letter and email sent were a Post-it note, we would fill three 4' x 3' bulletin boards!



Our 2830 postcards could wrap the NJ State House rotunda ten times!



**From left to right:** Ted Fetter and Rev. Charles with coalition partners at an Assembly committee hearing on Language Access; Rev. Charles with Gov. Murphy at the bill signing for Language Access; *First Friday Action Hour* participants on Zoom; Peggy Middaugh with allies at a Senate committee hearing on environmental justice legislation (PC Michael Skelly).



From top: March to End Fossil Fuels; rally outside CoreCivic v. Murphy; counter-protesters at State Board of Education meeting.

## ...IN THE STREETS

This past year, UU FaithAction NJ has joined our partners in *good trouble* at demonstrations, marches and rallies.

In August, we “Watched the Court” at the CoreCivic v. Murphy; in September we rallied behind LGBTQ+ inclusion and equity policy by the State Board of Education and we “Marched to End Fossil Fuels” in NYC; in November and December we rallied in Trenton for clean energy legislation and for the “People’s Lame Duck Agenda”; and in March we assembled with the Poor People’s Campaign in Trenton.

IF YOU'RE NOT AT THE TABLE, THEN YOU'RE ON THE MENU. UU FAITHACTION NJ GIVES UU VALUES A SEAT AT THE TABLE.

Phil Lubitz,  
UU FaithAction NJ Board

## ...AT THE TABLE

This past year, we were at the table with the **Office of the Attorney General** and **coalition partners** to discuss Safe Storage legislation. We were at the table with **Terry Schuster**, NJ Dept. of Corrections Ombudsperson, to discuss corrections reform. We were at the table with the **Office of Senate Majority Leader Ruiz** to discuss amendments to the Reproductive Equity Act. And we have been at the table with **Victoria Kuhn**, NJ Dept. of Corrections Commissioner, with **Samuel J. Plumeri, Jr.**, NJ Parole Board Chairman, and with **returning citizens** and other community leaders to help plan the upcoming Working Summit organized by **Cuqui Rivera** of the Latino Action Network.

# ...IN COALITION

Justice work is relational work. Accountably dismantling oppression in all its forms to create a more compassionate society in New Jersey requires building community and working in coalition.

All of our task forces work in coalition with fellow New Jersey-based advocacy groups advancing shared policy priorities. In setting policy priorities, our task forces seek to follow the lead of those coalition partners most directly impacted by the issues being address.



UU FaithAction NJ is also a proud member of the Coalition of Unitarian Universalist State Action Networks (CUUSAN). Members of our Board and staff serve on the Finance Team, Tech Team, and Communications Team of CUUSAN. By serving our national coalition, we are investing in the vitality of Unitarian Universalist grassroots social action beyond our state.





# OUR TASK FORCES

At UU FaithAction NJ, we focus our efforts on five issue areas, in order to dedicate sustained, strategic attention to these causes and to build lasting relationships with partners.



## Criminal Justice Reform

**Chair: Tom Moran**

[criminaljustice@uufaithaction.org](mailto:criminaljustice@uufaithaction.org)

Our 2023-2024 priorities were to advance the 2nd Look NJ bill (S2338), to advance free communications for incarcerated persons (S2526/A3988), and to force enforcement of the Isolated Confinement Restriction Act.



## Reproductive Justice

**Co-Chairs: Carol Loscalzo, Jami Thall**  
[rjtfchair@uufaithaction.org](mailto:rjtfchair@uufaithaction.org)

In 2023-2024, our Abortion Access committee focused on the Reproductive Equity Act. Menstrual Equity cmte. targeted their efforts on legislation to increase access to menstrual products in NJ. Maternal Health cmte. worked to raise awareness of the racial disparities in maternal health outcomes. Sex Ed cmte., along with our new LGBTQ+ cmte., responded to attacks on comprehensive sexuality education in our public schools and policies to protect our trans students.



## Immigration Justice

**Chair: Marty Rothfelder**

[immigration@uufaithaction.org](mailto:immigration@uufaithaction.org)

Our 2023-2024 legislative priorities were Language Access (passed) and the Values Act.



## Environmental Justice

**Chair: Peggy Middaugh**

[environment@uufaithaction.org](mailto:environment@uufaithaction.org)

Our 2023-2024 legislative priorities were Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency (S237/A1480), the Green Amendment (SCR43), Organic & Regenerative Agriculture, Forestry (S2424), and NJ Student Learning Standards. We have particularly advocated for solar, offshore wind, and public transportation as just means for cleaner energy.



## Reparations

**Chair: Rohn Hein**

[reparations@uufaithaction.org](mailto:reparations@uufaithaction.org)

Our 2023-2024 priorities were the establishment of a New Jersey Reparations Task Force and to advance reparations in new ways, such as the Affordable Housing Reform bill (passed).

# 2023-2024 TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

## **Criminal Justice Reform**

- Setting up a strong working relationship with NJ DOC Ombudsman Terry Schuster; the Ombudsperson's office has produced three reports on prison conditions that may well not have happened without the alliance of prison reform advocates.
- Participation in Cuiqui Rivera's planning core group for a Working Summit in January 2025. The Working Summit and Cuiqui's unique ambitions set the stage for additional strategic working relationships.

## **Immigration Justice**

- Passage of the Language Access bill into law
- Our "Justice For All" Gala, with special guests from our coalitions
- Special task force meetings focused on sharing experiences in pursuing various immigration oriented congregational initiatives

## **Reproductive Justice**

- Passage of legislation providing free menstrual products in NJ schools
- Successful campaign for all New Jersey UU congregations to provide menstrual products in all restrooms
- Engaging postcard campaign in support of the Reproductive Equity Act
- Partnered with Beacon UU & Fountain Baptist to screen "Birthing Justice"
- Mobilized UUs to attend school board meetings to defend LGBTQ+ inclusion
- Our Thrive Coalition enabling us to work more effectively and collaboratively

## **Environmental Justice**

- The Green Amendment was passed favorably out of the Senate Environment Cmte.
- The Clean Energy Standards bill was passed favorably out of the Senate Environment Cmte. and included strict Environmental Justice provisions
- The Dirty Energy Bill was NOT moved forward
- Off Shore Wind moved forward in spite of industry wide challenges

## **Reparations**

- March Action Hour for Affordable Housing and subsequent passage of bill A4/S50, to set a course for future enforcement of the Mount Laurel Doctrine.

# FINANCIALS

## Treasurer's Report and Proposed 2024-25 Budget

INCOME	PRIOR YEAR (FY 2022-23)		CURRENT YEAR (FY 2023-24)		PROPOSED BUDGET (FY 2024-25)
	Budget Amt	Actual	Budget Amt	Projected	
Congregational Giving	47,000	50,480	47,000	45,000	<b>45,000</b>
Individual Donations/ Fundraising events	165,500	153,271	166,000	154,700	<b>125,000</b>
Grants	-	-	8,000	-	-
Interest/Other Income	2,000	8,180	15,000	12,300	<b>6,000</b>
Withdrawal from Reserve	30,500		12,000		<b>54,000</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 245,000</b>	<b>\$ 211,931</b>	<b>\$ 248,000</b>	<b>\$ 212,000</b>	<b>\$ 230,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Office/Board/Dues/ Partner Support/ Task Force	27,000	22,040	41,200	25,000	<b>31,800</b>
Payroll Expenses	206,700	164,899	190,000	170,000	<b>183,600</b>
Professional Expenses	5,000	5,971	9,000	5,000	<b>6,000</b>
UUFANJ Meetings	5,000	2,687	6,600	6,000	<b>6,600</b>
Other	1,300	836	1,200	2,000	<b>2,000</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 245,000</b>	<b>\$ 196,432</b>	<b>\$ 248,000</b>	<b>\$ 208,000</b>	<b>\$ 230,000</b>
NET INCOME	-	15,499	-	4,000	-

### Prior Year Income and Expense Summary

For the fiscal year ending on 30 June 2023, total income was about \$2,500 below budgeted amount. Congregation giving included a special closeout donation of \$4,887 from UU-Plainfield. Expenses were under budget, resulting in a net surplus of \$15,499.

### Current Year Income and Expense Summary

For the current fiscal year (1 Jul 2023-30 June 2024), projected income is \$212,000 and projected expenses are \$208,000, which is below the budgeted amount of \$248,000. The lower expenses were primarily due to less hours worked by staff and also lower professional expenses due to GA being held virtually this year.

### Proposed Budget for FY 2024-25

The proposed budget of \$230,000 provides for cost of living pay increases for staff, a new part-time staff organizer (starting in Jan 2025) professional expenses, specific funding for each of the UUFANJ Task Forces, and bookkeeping support services. The budget assumes withdrawing about \$54,000 from Reserves, that is considered to be an investment to increase future capacity. Additional fundraising is anticipated to hopefully reduce the amount of reserve funds to be withdrawn.

# THANK YOU!

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our member congregations, our dedicated volunteers and our generous donors who sustain our work. **THANK YOU!**

## Our Congregations

Baptistown	First Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hunterdon County
Bordentown	Dorothea Dix Unitarian Universalist Community
Cherry Hill	Unitarian Universalist Church in Cherry Hill
East Brunswick	The Unitarian Society, A Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Hackettstown	Skylands Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Lanoka Harbor	Unitarian Universalist Ocean County Congregation
Lincroft	Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County
Montclair	The Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair
Morristown	Morristown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
Newton	Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sussex County
Orange	First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County
Paramus	Central Unitarian Church
Pomona	Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore
Princeton	Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton
Ridgewood	The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood
Somerville	Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills
Summit	Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit
Titusville	Unitarian Universalist Church at Washington Crossing
Wayne	Lakeland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

## Our Volunteers

Our work is powered by many dedicated volunteers. Thank you to *everyone* who joined us in putting our UU faith into action this past year. And a special thank you to our **Board of Trustees (pg. 2)**, our **Task Force Chairs (pg. 7)** and our **Congregational Liaisons (below)** for your leadership.

### ***Our Current Congregational Liaisons***

Shane Weber	Judy Stevens	Anita Young
John DeMasi	Jo Sippie-Gora	Ira Mendelsberg
Susan Druckenbrod	Christine Dunbar	Missy Staples
Rohn Hein	Bill Slezak	Carol Satchell
Cheri Tibberts	Sally Gellert	Mike Wilson
Jen Palmer	Janet Longo	Carol Swift
Barry Bendar	Mike Loney	

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**@uufaithactionnj**

**WE THANK YOU**  
**FOR YOUR SUPPORT & COMMITMENT TO**  
**BUILDING JUSTICE**  
**AND COMPASSION IN NEW JERSEY**