

**UUSJ** Unitarian Universalists  
for Social Justice

**20<sup>th</sup>**  
*Anniversary  
Celebration*

*Advancing UU values in the nation's  
capital through engagement,  
education and advocacy*





## OUR MISSION

It is our mission to advance equitable national policies and actions, aligned with UU values, through engagement, education and advocacy.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is to strive for a just, compassionate and sustainable world community.

## CORE VALUES

- We are effective and responsive
- We are faithful to our UU Principles
- We respect others

## MORAL OWNERS

- Unitarian Universalists
- UU congregations
- Impacted communities
- Organizations that represent impacted communities

Thank you to the wonderful volunteers  
of UUSJ's Activities:

- Capitol Hill Advocacy Corps
- Defending our Democracy
- Economic Justice
- Environmental Action Team
- Hospitality and Assistance for visiting Activists
- Immigration Justice Task Group
- Social Justice Community Building
- Voter Mobilization
- Webinar, Briefings, and Workshops
- Write Here! Write Now!*
- Witness



3:30-4:00 **Gather and socialize virtually**, review the program book  
 Music throughout the event courtesy of LEA Morris

4:00 **Greeting and Chalice Lighting:** Chaplain Eleanor Piez,  
 Board Member, UUSJ

**Welcoming remarks** and historical and visionary perspective  
**Policy keynote:** Rep. Gerald Connolly (D-VA) speaks on the  
 prospects for federal social justice actions resulting from the  
 election of November 3

**Centering:** Rev. Rob Keithan, Social Justice Minister,  
 All Souls Church, Unitarian, DC

**Reflections by panelists:** UU organizations and friends of UUSJ's  
 voter work

**Charge to social justice makers:** Rev. Ashley Horan, Organizing  
 Strategy Director, UUA

**Closing remarks of gratitude**  
**Musical finale**

6:00-6:30 **Open discussion** by attendees led by Bob Denniston,  
 Board Chair, and Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director

**It takes a village ...**

Our thanks to all who helped make this possible, including Lori Stone,  
 Rebecca Goolsby, Martha Ades, Peter Bishop, Lavonna Grow, Cynthia Snavely  
 and so many others who worked diligently at the many tasks needed to make  
 this event a reality



# WELCOME

*(Pablo) Pavel DeJesús*  
*UUSJ Executive Director*

Welcome to the UUSJ 20th Anniversary Celebration!

I want to thank you for attending. We are deeply humbled by the show of interest and support.

We come together in common purpose to hear discussion of what our nation needs to move forward for social justice. Guests will share their expertise and experience, and we are indebted to them for this service. We will learn some new things, be reminded of others, and walk away with different understandings, that is the nature of such events. We hope it renews your commitment to live your values and act for justice in any way you can.

Yet we will be united in a belief that we can make a positive difference. We are together in our commitment to strive for social justice. We are resolute in our conviction that the moral arc of the universe bends towards justice. UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Grey has taught, "this is no time for a casual faith" and we are here to learn how we can be less than casual.

We are therefore honored to have Congressman Gerry Connolly share his comments on the way forward. We thank him for his time tonight and efforts to do the people's work.

We cherish the stirring music the artist LEA Morris has shared with us. It will move your heart. We thank LEA for that generosity.

We are grateful for the participation of Rev. Ashley Horan, UUA. We know the charge shared will rouse our spirits for the work that lies ahead.

We are profoundly, deeply, appreciative of our many panelists and other guests playing a role in our celebration. Without their commitments to social justice and friendship, the work ahead would feel daunting.

Once again, thank you for joining us. We are sincerely humbled by and joyous for your presence.

In love and for justice,  
(Pablo) Pavel DeJesús, Executive Director



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF UUSJ

*Robert Denniston*  
*UUSJ Board Chair*

During the 1980s most UU Washington, DC area congregations worked together to launch and support the UU Affordable Housing Corporation (in later years called OpenDoor Housing Fund). In 1998, Jack Edmondson, the Executive Director and member of the River Road congregation, asked Rev. John Beuhrens, President of the UU Association, to explore how the various Washington-based UU entities might cooperate more effectively through a coalition -- possibly an urban ministry similar to the historic UU Urban Ministry in Boston.

After exploratory discussions, Rev. Buehrens embraced the idea and funded a UU consultant, Bob Johnsen, to develop the vision. After conducting over 30 one-on-one meetings with ministers and UU leaders, in April 1999 Bob convened an organizing meeting of 20 UU congregations and organizations to choose among three options that summarized what he heard from his interviews.

Meeting participants decided to support the "big vision" option -- that the interests of both the urban-based organizations and congregations, joined with the suburban congregations, would be better served if UUSJ would support members' social justice efforts through technical assistance, networking, education, and training. Rev. Roger Fritts, then Senior Minister at Cedar Lane UU Church, convened an organizing meeting in July 1999 to start to implement this decision. UUSJ was incorporated in April 2000.

Building on its strengths UUSJ provided educational programs, disseminated "best practices" and offered opportunities for networking with area social justice members.

Over the years, UUSJ moved from having a single-issue focus to multiple-issue priorities each year. Until 2016, priority issues were selected annually, and now every two years. The theme of annual "Skills-Building Workshops" was "Feeding the Flame of Justice." Local public education was the first issue priority, followed in 2003-04 by the needs of children and families. In 2003 a comprehensive "Educational Networking Directory" featuring congregational best practices was developed and 1,000 copies distributed in response to a needs assessment. Marion Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund, gave the keynote address on UUSJ's second celebration of Leadership Day.

UUSJ has been active in many ways to implement the "big vision." Among other things:

- Conducted nearly 80 programs including workshops on priority issues including immigration, LGBTQ rights, climate change, economic justice, dark money in politics, freedom to marry, and voter mobilization. In 2016 conducted a post-election briefing and

posted a six-part video. Experimented with new program offerings such as conducting pre- and post General Assembly briefings, spearheaded area contributions to review of Statements of Conscience and Congregational Study Action Issues, conducted regular conference calls and later workshops for social justice chairs.

- Conducted large energizing events with inspirational national leaders such as former UUA president Rev. Bill Sinkford, Common Cause president Bob Edgar, and Member of Congress Jaime Raskin.
- Co-sponsored with UUs for a Just Economic Community two national conferences, in 2017 Reversing Economic Inequality and 2019 Mobilizing for a Green New Deal. Each included a lobby day with UUSJ providing "how to" training for organized Hill visits.
- Established the awards gala banquets in 2008 to recognize outstanding social justice efforts. The gala proceeds support the UUSJ Social Justice Grant Program.

In 2013, UUSJ added another dimension to our social justice work. Since its inception, UUSJ has been educating about advocacy. Now we would do advocacy -- that is, become advocates to bring critical issues to the attention of public policy-makers. We took into consideration our strategic location in the Capital region where there are strong non-profit and interfaith groups, the fact that we have the highest concentration of UUs in the country, many with significant public policy experience who may be willing to step up to the opportunity to advocate for UU principles.

In 2017 the Board voted to "go national." A volunteer monthly Capitol Hill Advocacy Corps was launched on Valentine's Day, 2017. Volunteers conducted more than 500 scheduled meetings with Congressional staff and occasionally with Members of Congress, and delivered nearly 11,000 personal letters written by UUs across the country through our unique Write Here! Write Now! letter-writing campaign.

The staff over the 20 years included our first Executive Director, Vanessa Eaton, followed by Rev. Dr. Terry Ellen, and now Pablo DeJesus. Our Administrator for 14 years was Rev. Cynthia Snavelly, followed by Administrative Assistants Elizabeth Stevens and currently Paulette DeMers.

No summary of UUSJ history is possible without thanking the many people who have been involved with and supportive of UUSJ over the past two decades. You have made this work possible and for that we thank you. We look forward to moving forward together as we begin our third decade of social justice activism.

# Thanks to Bob Johnsen for his early work in organizing UUSJ



UUSJ was born when UUA President John Buehrens decided the Washington area should have a regional association of UU congregations dedicated to social justice much like the Boston area has had since 1826 with the UU Urban Ministry.

After asking regional leaders whom they would recommend to organize such an effort, he decided to hire Bob Johnsen who at the time was employed by the Joseph Priestly District as a new congregation organizer.

Bob proceeded to interview the ministers of the Washington area large churches, the directors of Beacon House, UU Affordable Housing Corporation, and the UUA Washington Office asking the question, "if there were to be a regional association what would you want it to become." After weeks of interviews, he wrote a report and shared it with those he interviewed. With Rev. Buehrens he convened a meeting at Beacon House of the key stakeholders. At that meeting it was decided to create a regional social justice organization.

Bob was then a member of what's now called the River Road UU Congregation that had a unique social justice fund and had talked with then senior minister Scott Alexander about pledging \$1,000 to the effort and challenging other large congregations to do the same. So, the meeting raised enough money, matched by the UUA, to pay Bob to build the organization over the next year. Bob served as founding director, and a board was created chaired by Rev. Roger Fritz, then senior minister at Cedar Lane Unitarian Church.

Having decided to include the Baltimore area congregations in the organization, the board consisted of two representatives from each participating UU congregation in the Baltimore-Washington region.

Bob led the first board in a strategic planning process which developed a name, a vision, a mission, and three-year goals and objectives for the organization.

# Celebrating UUSJ's Present Work

The mission of UUSJ is to advance equitable national policies and actions that are aligned with the values of Unitarian Universalism.

Through education, engagement and advocacy we strive to act on all Seven Principles central to our faith. UUSJ provides a forum for UUs to assure that our spiritual values are reflected in our quest for just, inclusive public policies at the federal level. UUSJ is the only entity that allows us to come together in community to share our concerns and priorities with Members of Congress.

UUSJ focuses on Four Priority Issues: Immigration Justice, Economic Justice, Environmental and Climate Justice, and Defending our Democracy.



## UUSJ Capitol Hill Advocacy Corps

A pool of more than 35 Advocacy Corps members visits Members of Congress and their staff every month. We advocate for UU values and voices and deliver *Write Here! Write Now!* Letters on issues of UU public concern from UUs across the country. Since our first Advocacy Day on February 14, 2017, we have:

- Made over 1827 visits to Capitol Hill offices
- Conducted more than 446 scheduled and drop-in meetings
- Delivered more than 10,393 *Write Here! Write Now!* UU constituent letters

Team members support our advocacy work by reaching out to congregations nationwide to build a rapid response network, logging letters, conducting research, participating in issue task groups, and more. UUSJ's *Write Here! Write Now!* letter-writing campaign invites congregations nationwide to partner in our monthly letter-writing on our Advocacy Day issue.

## Economic Justice

At the heart of UUSJ's economic justice work are three values--inclusion, equity, and opportunity--that interact closely with our UU principles.

Among UU economic justice advocates, and certainly within UUSJ, we frequently ground our work in our Principles of the worth and dignity of all people; our justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society. Our 7th Principle (respect for the interdependent web of all existence) calls us to expand our vision for justice beyond our species or those lives we easily recognize as sentient.

The proposed 8th Principle challenges us to recognize and confront the interlocking injustices of racism and other oppressions and the roles they play in undermining our denominational commitment to other UU principles.



# Environmental Action Team

UUs frequently rely on our 7th Principle (respect for the interdependent web of all existence) to ground their actions. But equally important in our environmental work is the direction provided by our 1st Principle (the inherent worth and dignity of all people) and our 2nd Principle (justice, equity, and compassion in human relations). These principles point toward an expanded understanding of environmental and climate justice, one that recognizes that the powerful effects of racism, political disenfranchisement, economic inequality, and health disparities multiply the ill effects of pollution and climate change on communities of color in particular.



The Environmental Action Team members have been advancing our values through Education, Involvement, and Advocacy. Most recently we have conducted letterwriting campaigns and action alerts on the topic of “The Unjust Burden of Climate Change on Frontline Communities,”

UUSJ Environmental Team members are looking at how UUSJ might engage more deeply on these issues beyond the Nov. 3 elections and is exploring climate justice, green jobs, decarbonizing energy, ensuring clean air and water, and collaborating with like-minded faith and other potential partners.



# Immigration Task Group

UUSJ’s Immigration Task Group is analyzing priorities for the next two years under the incoming Biden Administration. It will call for immediate steps to reverse and/or rescind the many anti-immigrant executive actions and rule changes of the past four years.

These include reinstating the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and the TPS (Temporary Protected Status) programs and reversing actions that increase fees for US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS),

discourage immigrants from using social services, and expand intrusive biometrics collections.

On asylum issues, the Task Group urges immediately ending automatic detention especially of families and unaccompanied minors and returning to asylum criteria that include victims of domestic, gender, and gang violence. It also advocates re-opening the Mexican border with appropriate processing of asylum requests and ending the Remain in Mexico (MPP) program.

While comprehensive immigration reform may be difficult for Congress to pass, the Task Group will be working on building grassroots support for it in partnership with other faith-based advocacy organizations. It is also committed to changing the negative narrative about immigrants by highlighting their many contributions to the US society, economy and culture, and stressing the moral reasons for treating immigrants with respect and dignity.

# Defending our Democracy

Although much has occurred in the past three weeks and there are ongoing issues, it's worth celebrating some important democracy successes. More people voted in the 2020 elections than have ever voted before. This was the direct result of tireless efforts by many, many different and diverse groups around the country, including UU churches and UUSJ through the UU the Vote campaign. All that effort made a difference in electing a new President who promises to work to unite us rather than divide us.



We need to begin a process of healing, of caring about each other and repairing our democracy. As Unitarian Universalists, we have a lot to offer our fellow citizens in this time of crisis. Our Principles of acceptance and compassion encourage us to help the healing process, rebuild broken relationships, address structural racism, and care about each other. Our support for democracy in our own work and in society leads us to advocate for the re-establishment of a working government and a functioning democracy.

We UUs can begin this process with our friends and family members by acting in ways that convey our basic Principles. We can take them out into the community through public speeches, letters to the editor, social media posts, and connecting with our legislative representatives. This work is essential, and it will be neither easy nor quick. It takes time to move society in a better direction.

UUSJ has an important role to play in this endeavor through its engagement, education, and advocacy. UUSJ provides an excellent means to connect UUs with our members of Congress. Right now, there is an opportunity for UUSJ to expand its reach and assist UU churches throughout the country in defending our democracy.

If you're interested in learning more about or joining us, contact [advocacy@uusj.org](mailto:advocacy@uusj.org)



## Virtual Advocacy



## Storytelling for Advocacy Online Workshop

# 2020 Election & Voting

We are celebrating the prospects for social justice under a new presidential administration.

We are proud of what UUs did to make our democracy work at the federal, state, and community levels. Together we helped expand our democracy and improve its health using political but non-partisan tactics. We are deeply, and sincerely, appreciative for the donations of time, materials, money, know-how, enthusiasm, equanimity, and resilience that made our 2020 project possible--and a major success.

UUs were part of a HUGE voter mobilization effort -- nearly 150 million votes cast -- generating more votes than in any American election. UU the Vote shows that all our efforts together reached 3 million voters. So you sharpened our denominational engagement proving that UUs are a small but mighty voting block and supremely capable of moving other voters.

Numbers are still coming in, Get Out the Vote figures are being separated from mobilization numbers, but so far we know, with Reeb/UUSJ you leveled up our collective mobilization game.

And together we:

1. Wrote 106,000 postcards led by partners on the ground
2. Hosted 36 regional phone/text banks and 9 national UU the Vote phone banks
3. Attended 4-7 actions per week, building a core of 973 new active volunteers
4. Helped 16 congregations engage, building 11 new electoral teams among them
5. Contacted voters in 7 jurisdictions: DC, MD, VA, GA, FL, NC, PA, and TX



We've heard tell:

- In PA: 336 volunteers made 19,918 calls, sent 208,702 texts, and registered 572 voters
- In NC: 204 volunteers from 11 congregations took shifts to make 11,413 calls, with 3,757 voicemails and had 1,128 conversations

This all means we did things like:

1. Wrote postcards to voters in North Carolina who had been purged from the rolls, encouraging them to re-register
2. Wrote to voters in Hidalgo County TX, a border region area hit disproportionately by COVID-19, in both English and Spanish; helped eligible voters apply to vote safely by mail
3. Helped young voters and college students in Virginia register to vote and remote students apply to vote by mail
4. Helped a Latinx advocacy organization in Pennsylvania expand its English-language outreach around voter registration and voter mobilization

5. Created a multitouch campaign (postcards, texts, calls, ministerial appeals) to reach out to bilingual Virginia voters from mixed-status families and help register eligible voters in their family and community.
6. Reached out to voters in Gwinnett County, GA, a heavily Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) county that had the highest rate of absentee ballot rejections in the state, to help them suss out voting options for the general.

But we were present on November 3rd, as well!

- On election day, UUSJ/Reeb took the lead on the national remote voter outreach operation for UU the Vote: we ran an all-day phone bank with live phone bank trainings every 30 minutes and tech support all day, so UUs could spend an hour or two of their election day making calls to critically important swing precincts in NC and PA.
- And Many UUs, including 56 from our congregations, traveled to PA and northern VA to participate in voter guardian programs at polling places, offering interpretation services, clerical support, voter assistance and other kinds of direct support.



So we showed up in force throughout the 2020 election season!

It is true, important races locally and nationally have been defined by close margins, including the Presidential race, therefore: mail-in ballots and votes are still being counted, victors being declared, recounts and runoffs proceed and legal cases loom.



We all need to be vigilant about the role of the Courts. Indeed, UUSJ has much to research on what new legislation is likely to be introduced, what has a chance to pass Congress, and which legislators are key to the success of legislation that will move the nation forward along UU values.

But just now, at this moment, in this season, with Reeb/UUSJ you stood-up to:

- A. Combat voter suppression and help remove the obstacles that keep people from voting. We kept a laser-like focus on this issue.
- B. Build out the strength and capacity of electoral organizations in all participating congregations. We built real, lasting partnerships, both among our congregations and with partner organizations on the ground.
- C. Engage in meaningful projects with measurable impact. We are redefining UU electoral work as a year-round effort that encompasses advocacy and accountability work.

We have profound gratitude for all that you enabled. You should be proud of what you helped accomplish. Your individual and collective engagement shows the power of UU movement building and points to what is possible for UU projects and organizations.

UUSJ invites you to join us as we shift into holding newly elected officials accountable to UU values and principles.

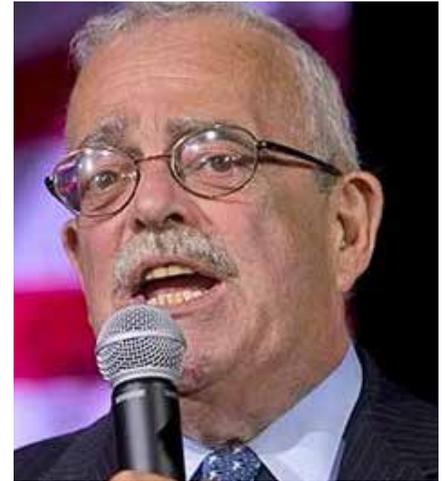
Let's take these election results home for social justice.

Kelsey Cowger, 2020 Voting Organizer for Reeb/UUSJ

# Congressman Gerald E. Connolly

## 11th District of Virginia

Congressman Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly is serving his sixth term in the U.S. House of Representatives from Virginia's 11th District, which includes Fairfax County, Prince William County, and the City of Fairfax. Prior to his election to Congress, he served 14 years on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, including five years as Chairman. Throughout his career, protecting and growing Northern Virginia's economy has been his top priority.



In Congress, he has played a key role in securing federal dollars for transportation improvements in Northern Virginia, including completion of the Fairfax County Parkway, widening the Prince William County Parkway, providing ongoing support for Rail to Dulles, and securing the annual federal commitment of \$150 million for the regional Metro system.

Congressman Connolly is a senior member of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform and serves as the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Operations. In this role, he is responsible for shaping government-wide policy for a broad range of issues, including federal workforce and federal agency oversight, federal procurement and information policy, national drug policy, regulatory reform, the United States Postal Service, the United States Census Bureau, and the District of Columbia.

He also serves on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Using his extensive background in foreign policy, including as a senior staff member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he has become a leading voice on foreign assistance reform, war powers, embassy security, and democracy promotion abroad.

Congressman Connolly co-authored the bipartisan Issa-Connolly Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA), which was signed into law in 2014, and represents the first major overhaul of the federal laws governing IT management since enactment of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996. In 2016, he passed the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act, which allows temporary employees of land management agencies to now be eligible for civil servant positions. He also helped pass the Telework Enhancement Act, which requires the federal government to increase the use of telework by federal employees to ensure continuity of operations by federal agencies during emergency situations, enhance recruitment of a quality federal workforce, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the region's air quality.

Congressman Connolly received an M.A. in Public Administration from Harvard University in 1979. He received a B.A. in Literature from Maryknoll College in Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

He resides in Fairfax with his wife Smitty and has a daughter Caitlin.

# Rev. Ashley Horan, UUA

## Charge to Make Good Trouble

Rev. Ashley Horan is the Organizing Strategy Director of the UUA, where she works with a team of faithful organizers and movement builders to shape the justice work of Unitarian Universalism to be spiritually grounded and politically effective.

Prior to this role, Ashley served for five years as the Executive Director of MUUSJA – the Minnesota UU Social Justice Alliance, and for seven years as core staff with the Beloved Conversations program. She lives in Minneapolis with her partner, Rev. Karen Hutt, and their children, Aspen and Zi.



### The Holy Work of Showing Up

*By Ashley Horan*

How is it with your soul?

This is the question that John Wesley, Anglican priest and the founder of Methodism, was known to ask of participants in small reflection groups. I ask you because, for me, this has been a hard week. So, beloveds, how is it with your souls?

If your response to that question is anything like mine, I want to invite you to pause as you read this. Take a deep breath, say a prayer, sing a song, light your chalice, feel the force of gravity pulling us all toward the same center—whatever helps you feel more rooted and less alone.

Now do it again. And again, and again.

And, once you feel that rootedness and connection, hear this:

You are loved beyond belief. You are enough, you are precious, your work and your life matter, and you are not alone. You are part of a “we,” a great cloud of witnesses living and dead who have insisted that this beautiful, broken world of ours is a blessing worthy of both deep gratitude and fierce protection. Our ancestors and our descendants are beckoning us, compelling us onward toward greater connection, greater compassion, greater commitment to one another and to the earth. Together, we are resilient and resourceful enough to say “yes” to that call, to make it our life’s work in a thousand different ways, knowing that we can do no other than bind ourselves more tightly together, and throw ourselves into the holy work of showing up, again and again, to be part of building that world of which we dream but which we have not yet seen.

## This is LEA

"A great voice singing great songs." That is the simplest way to introduce you to LEA's music. While she often draws comparisons to other female phenoms like Tracy Chapman, Joni Mitchell and Ani DiFranco, LEA's sound seamlessly blends gospel, jazz, country and R&B into her own style - SoulFolk.

LEA was born in Baltimore to a father who toured the world playing trumpet in the funk band Black Heat and a mother who dreamed of opera while performing with her siblings in the Jones Family Gospel Singers. LEA was singing on the pulpit of the Baptist church where she grew up as soon as she could speak. When she discovered the acoustic guitar as a teenager, she began teaching herself to play by writing songs. LEA's final year in high school in Germany at a classical conservatory, where she sang with the jazz ensemble Black & White and co-wrote with the British pop trio Indigo Wild.



LEA's final year in high school in Germany at a classical conservatory, where she sang with the jazz ensemble Black & White and co-wrote with the British pop trio Indigo Wild.

Having shared the stage with luminaries including Odetta, Mavis Staples, Dar Williams and Anthony Hamilton, LEA performs at a far-ranging array of venues, including arts centers, universities, festivals, and places of worship. She is consistently acknowledged by the Washington Area Music Association\* as one of the region's best vocalists, songwriters and recording artists. She is a graduate of the prestigious Artist-in-Residence program at The Music Center at Strathmore in Bethesda, MD and a beloved children's music performer among DC families.

LEA's latest recording, the crowd-funded and highly-anticipated "Let You In," is a collection of songs the artists hopes will cultivate greater compassion for femininity. LEA's stunning vocals and award winning songwriting are supported by rich instrumentation, featuring Howard Levy (of Bèla Fleck and the Flecktones) on the harmonica.

\*Washington Area Music Award Nominations:

Best Contemporary Folk Vocalist - (2012)

Best Contemporary Folk Recording - "Promise" (2012)

Best Contemporary Folk Recording - "Get It Right" (2008) Best Contemporary Folk Recording - "Great Big World" (2007) Songwriter of the Year (2008, 2001)

Best Debut Recording - "Creation" (2001)

Best New Artist (2001)

[www.thisisLEA.com](http://www.thisisLEA.com)



## CASA - Elizabeth Alex

Ms. Alex came to CASA in 2005, and since then has played a critical role in expanding the organization and developing member leaders, including opening offices and creating new member committees in eleven counties in central Maryland and south-central Pennsylvania. Under her leadership, CASA piloted successful membership, racial justice, and youth programming initiatives, which developed to be core elements of CASA organization-wide, and developed a formal member leadership structure to ensure that all strategic organizational decision making is guided by robust member input and fed by a democratic member decision-making process.



## Faith in Public Life - Sara Benitez

Faith in Public Life is a national movement of clergy and faith leaders united in the prophetic pursuit of justice, equality, and the common good. Together, we are leading the fight to advance just policies at the local, state, and federal levels. Our network of 50,000 leaders engages in bold moral action that affirms our values and the human dignity of all.

Sara Benitez, VP of Organizing and Campaign. Sara directs the organizing department where she works to empower clergy and lay leaders of all faith traditions to lead in their communities and promote their values. She is frequently humbled by the many faith leaders who selflessly serve and mobilize their communities for social justice.



## Poor People's Campaign, Repairers of the Breach

### - Rev. Kazimir Brown

Kazimir Brown was born and raised in San Francisco, CA. At an early age, Kazimir knew that she was called to a life of public service. It is from this call that led her to pursue a Master of Public Policy from U.C. Berkeley and a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School. Kazimir is an ordained reverend in the African Methodist Episcopal church. She currently serves as the National Director of Religious Affairs for the Repairers of the Breach and the Deputy Director of Religious Affairs for the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. It is in these capacities that she is able to live out her calling by serving as a conduit between community, faith, and politics.



## Reeb Project for Voting Rights - Pamela Coukos

The Reeb Project for Voting Rights is dedicated to increasing voter participation. We work in solidarity with other UU congregations and progressive partner organizations that center the leadership of people of color, work in communities with historically low voter participation, and advocate for changes to oppressive voting laws.

Pamela Coukos is a co-founder of the Reeb Project for Voting Rights at All Souls Church and a longtime member of All Souls Church. She has deep experience in organizing and mobilizing for electoral and issue advocacy campaigns, including working for national, state, and local candidates across multiple cycles and organizing on the ground and online to support the 2009-2010 fight to enact the Affordable Care Act. She is also CEO and co-founder of Working IDEAL, where she advises organizations on inclusive workplaces, pay equity, and gender and racial justice at work.



## Forward Together - Lisa Garcia-Sampson

A progressive, faith-based, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to “give life the shape of justice” by supporting the social justice work of individual UUs and UU congregations in North Carolina.co-founder of Working IDEAL, where she advises organizations on inclusive workplaces, pay equity, and gender and racial justice at work.



## UURISE - Katia Hansen

The organization empowers immigrants and refugees in the U.S. by offering direct legal services, particularly to those who have few resources to obtain legal assistance. UURISE actively contributes to the national discourse on immigrant rights and immigration reform and works with state, county, and local officials to provide education and real-life examples related to policies that impact the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Katia is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Standing on the Side of Love Creative Advisory Team, the Social Justice Coordinator for the FarmWorker CARE Coalition, and represents UURISE on the Advisory Board of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium.



## UU for Social Justice - Josh Leash

UUSC advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies. Our work is grounded in the belief that all people have inherent power and dignity.

Josh Leash supports UUSC's programs and communications teams through analysis, writing, and digital engagement. As Policy Analyst, he monitors developments in federal and state governments affecting UUSC's human rights objectives, identifies and supports opportunities for digital advocacy and mobilization, and works closely with UUSC's partners to advance shared initiatives.



## UU Ministry for Earth - Doris Marlin

Caring for the interdependent web of life is a core spiritual practice of Unitarian Universalism. UUMFE is firmly rooted in the long history of our faith's prophetic action on environmental and human rights issues. The mission is "To be a wellspring of spiritual and educational grounding and practical support for bold, accountable action for environmental justice, climate justice, and the flourishing of all life."

Doris is on the Board of Directors of UUMFE and has been Unitarian Universalist since 1985. She is a member of All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, DC. She is also a UUSJ Advocacy Corps member, Green Sanctuary Advisory Board member, and Lay Leader for Strengthen Local Climate Commitments (SLCC), a national campaign within Create Climate Justice.net. Retired from federal service, she has an academic background in water resources management and is credentialed in project and risk management.



## UU the Vote - Nicole Pressley

Engage Unitarian Universalist individuals, congregations, and institutions in bringing their values to the public square in the 2020 elections, through deep partnerships with local and national front line organizations. Previously Nicole was organizer and communications strategist working with the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta



## Side with Love - Everette Thompson

Everette brings over 15 years of experience in community organizing, organizational development and movement building. He is a Southerner by birth and choice and has dedicated his career to strengthening organizational infrastructure in the South. He currently serves as a consultant specializing in intersectional movement strategy, faith organizing and grassroots leadership development. Everette has a wide array of experiences serving different types and forms of organizations.



## CUUSAN - Laura Wagner

CUUSAN is an association of Unitarian Universalist state witness, advocacy, and action organizations from Florida to Washington and Maine to California that are working to give life the shape of justice.

Laura has been a Unitarian Universalist for over 20 years. She has held many lay leader positions but her primary focus has always been social justice.



## Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community (UUJEC) - Adam Wasserman

The mission of UUJEC is to engage, educate & activate Unitarian Universalist individuals and congregations, social justice groups & community partners to fulfill our vision of positive systemic change. Using the dynamic process of study, strategy, direct action, and reflection.

Adam Wasserman has been a UU for 12 years with three different congregations: UU Congregation of Fairfax in Northern Virginia, UU Fellowship of Montgomery in Alabama, and most recently the UU Congregation of Santa Fe in New Mexico. While living in the Washington DC area he chaired a working group on economic justice as part of UUSJ.



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- First Unitarian Church of Baltimore
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- Cedar Lane UU Church
- Davies Memorial UU Church
- Mount Vernon Unitarian Church
- Paint Branch UU Church
- River Road UU Congregation
- Towson UU Church
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- UU Church of Arlington
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- Washington Ethical Society



A very special thank you to the anonymous  
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mobilization work for 2020.



## Your Support Matters

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice (UUSJ) needs your support to ensure we can continue our efforts in the areas of witness, education, and advocacy, during this pivotal time in our nation's history.

In 2020, our work has been more timely than ever as we fight to defend our democracy through advocating for fair elections and the preservation of constitutional democratic norms; fight for economic and environmental justice; and stand as allies with people of color and our immigrant siblings to push for effective protections against police brutality, various forms of marginalization, and to prevent additional deportations. This includes our conviction that Black Lives Matter and No Human Being is Illegal.

2021 and the 117th Congress will be no less important although very different. The needs of the people must take precedence during the first 100 days of the new administration and Congress.

UUSJ provides a unique vehicle in our nation's Capital for engaging in national dialogues, civic actions, and advocacy efforts on issues facing our country in real-time, consistent with UU values in support of our mission to advocate, educate and empower to achieve just equitable national policies and actions.

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