**Denominational Affairs**

***Interacting with UU Communities and Interfaith Organizations Locally and Globally***

***Unitarian Universalist Council of Greater Cincinnati (UUCGC)***

The UUCGC is an organization of the six UU Congregations from the Greater Cincinnati area. First Church, St. John’s, Heritage, Harmony, Hopedale and The Gathering at Northern Hills work together to represent UUs to the greater Cincinnati area. The UU Council is a judacatory of MARCC (the Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Greater Cincinnati) and also participates in Amos, CUC, and other Social Justice Organizations. Meetings are held usually on the first Saturday of the months January, March, May, June, September and November. The council coordinates UUs from the area to participate in Pride with information booths and parades, GLSEN Youth Summits, and demonstrations on LGBT rights, reproductive justice, immigration reform, and justice reform among others. Our congregation currently has three official representatives, MJ Pierson, Bob Freer and Mel Levrant. We are allowed to have up to three voting representatives but all are welcome to attend meetings and events. Officers of UUCGC commit to a two year term but there is no set term for representatives. $4 per member of our budget goes to UUCGC annually. <http://www.cinciuu.org/>

***Unitarian Universalist Justice Ohio (UU JO)***

Formed four years ago to foster better communication for UUs to work on statewide social justice issues UU JO is a recognized State Advocacy Network (SAN) of the UUA. The board of UU JO is split evenly between the UUs of the MidAmerica District (Cincinnati, Dayton up to Lima (11 congregations)) and the rest of Ohio which are in the CERG (old Ohio Meadville (33 congregations)) district. In a short time UU JO had become a major voice in Ohio. We have developed relationships with several Ohio congressional representatives (two of whom are UU) and UU JO had done well mobilizing UUs for State issues. Mel Levrant is the official representative from this congregation and MJ Pierson has held various board positions. The Annual meeting of UU JO is held in Columbus usually the 2nd or 3rd Saturday in November. Other workshops and meetings happen throughout the year all and over the state. All are welcome to attend UU JO functions and UU JO is currently looking for Board members who meet monthly in telephone conferences. **This year the annual meeting is Saturday Nov 12 Just outside Columbus at Methodist Theological Seminary.** $2 per member or our budget goes to UU JO annually. <http://www.uujo.org/>

***Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati (MARCC)***

MARCC is a group of 17 faith communities (judicatories) that work together for Social Justice. The motto is “To forgo the luxury of separate ways when a common path can be found”. Through MARCC Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and UUs work on housing, criminal justice reform, education, jobs, and a host of other topics. UUs can get involved in the Delegates Council which usually meets at noon on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in the undercroft of St,. Peter In Chains downtown. There is also an annual Fall Planning Conference and Annual meeting all are welcome. The Delegates Council meetings have speakers on topics of interest to the two concerns that MARCC has chosen at the Fall Planning Conference each year. This year the Fall Planning Conference is Nov 15. The next Delegates Council meeting is October 19 and will be a program by the League of Women’s Voters on the issues on the November ballot. $2 of the dues paid to UUCGC goes to support MARCC annually. <http://www.marcconline.com/>

***AMOS***

Another interfaith group in Cincinnati AMOS is congregationally based. The Gathering at Northern Hills is not an official member but we do participate in some of their work. They were particularly involved in the PreSchool Promise Movement which became Issue 44. If you subscribe to their mailing list you will get meeting and action notices. <https://theamosproject.org/>

***MidAmerica UU Region***

Our Region is the MidAmerica Region. Our congregation gets the same number of representatives to Regional meetings as to the UUA General Assembly. (2 or 3 plus an alternate). MidAmerica has staff that assist congregations with programing, religious education, ministerial transitions and a host of other topics. There are webinars put on by MidAmerica on different topics that are put out in the MidAmerica Newsletter. There is usually an annual meeting and they are exploring off site participation in that meeting as well. MidAmerica is a very large region going all the way out to North and South Dakota and ending in our South West corner of Ohio. Rev Sharon Ditmar just left First Church Cincinnati to become a member of the MidAmerica staff and she remains in Cincinnati which makes the MidAmerica staff much more accessible to us. A part of our annual UUA dues assessment goes to MidAmerica. <https://midamericauua.org/>

***Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)***

The National (International) organizational body is the Unitarian Universalist Association. It is an association of chapters which each congregation chooses to affiliate with and provides us resources and a unified voice. Every year a General Assembly (GA) is held where congregations get together to learn about issues and vote on all manner of organizational topics. Next year, June 2017, GA will be held in New Orleans. Our congregation will most likely have 3 voting delegates and an alternate next year. (Delegates are assigned by membership numbers). GA is a fun experience and a great way to get to know your faith. <https://UUA.org/>

***Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)***

UUSC is the social justice arm of Unitarian Universalism Globally. Its goal is challenging injustice and advancing Human Rights. UUSC advances human rights through grassroots collaboration. In more than a dozen countries throughout the world, UUSC fosters social justice and works toward a world free from oppression. UUSC’s innovative approaches and measurable impact — in promoting economic justice, bolstering environmental justice, and protecting rights at risk — are grounded in the belief that all people have inherent power, dignity, and rights.

UUSC also has a college of social justice which puts together mission type trips to work in the areas that they are trying to make a difference. <http://www.uusc.org/>

***Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU UNO)***

Your voice at the United Nations, the **Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA's) United Nations Office (UU-UNO)** is engaged in international advocacy work at the UN based on Unitarian Universalist (UU) values. From involvement in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to leading the faith caucus to establish the International Criminal Court, to overcoming UN apathy about sexual orientation & gender identity issues, the [UU-UNO has a long history](http://www.uua.org/international/un/198547.shtml) of providing strong leadership in all aspects of human rights at a policy level through UN consultative status.

Programs include: Our [Every Child is Our Child](http://www.uua.org/international/action/children) program provides educational support and healthcare access to children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDs in Ghana.. Committed to advancing equal rights for all humans regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI), our [LGBTQ/SOGI Human Rights](http://www.uua.org/lgbtq/witness/international) program brings LGBTQ human rights to the forefront of the UN agenda.. By focusing on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, our [Women's Initiative](http://www.uua.org/international/action/women) program supports strong voices and stronger actions, with particular emphasis on the global ratification/implementation of an international bill of rights for women known as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)., Bolstering the UU climate change movement through advocacy and educational resources, our [Climate Justice Initiative](http://www.uua.org/environment/climate/un) program collaborates with like-minded organizations at the UN, calling for global action in the name of a sustainable future for all. Bringing the United States' Movement for Black Lives to a global stage, our [Racial Justice Initiative](http://www.uua.org/international/un/programs/racial-justice-united-nations) coordinates events and initiates dialogue to fight against anti-black racism on an international level. MJ Pierson is the official envoy from our congregation to UU UNO. There are monthly Envoy telephone meetings and classes to attend at GA. Also UU UNO puts on a spring seminar especially targeting youth who want to be involved in social justice. <http://www.uua.org/international/un>