



## **“Building a New Way”**

UU Justice Ministry of NC Progress Report  
September 2017 – September 2018

### **Name Change, Reorganization, and 501(c)(3) Status**

In September, 2017, the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of North Carolina was renamed as the Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry of North Carolina (UUJMNC) and incorporated as a nonprofit corporation. UUJMNC’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are posted online ([www.uuforwardtogether.org](http://www.uuforwardtogether.org)).

UUJMNC’s “assumed” (or “doing business as”) name, which is legally registered with North Carolina’s Secretary of State, is *Forward Together*.

In October, 2017, the federal Internal Revenue Service granted UUJMNC status as a tax-exempt, charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations to UUJMNC by individuals are tax-deductible under federal and state tax laws for taxpayers who itemize deductions on their annual tax returns.

As a section 501(c)(3) organization, UUJMNC is not permitted to endorse or oppose particular candidates or parties in election campaigns but is allowed to engage in advocacy with respect to political issues and to devote up to 20% of its annual expenditures on legislative lobbying.

### **Mission**

UUJMNC’s mission is to “*give life the shape of justice*” by

- supporting the social justice work of individual UUs and UU congregations in North Carolina;
- working in partnership with other faith-based and secular social justice organizations; and
- promoting UU values with respect to social, economic, environmental, and political issues through witness, advocacy, lobbying, and action.

### **UUJMNC Goals 2017 – 2018**

UUJMNC’s goals for 2017 – 2018 include:

- (1) enhancing UUJMNC’s organizational structure and capacity (reorganizing as a section 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, recruiting an initial Board of Directors, appointing a part-time Executive Director, recruiting additional volunteers, purchasing software, equipment, and supplies, launching a new web site, etc.);
- (2) taking the first steps necessary to create a reliable, sustainable, and sufficient stream of funding from individuals and North Carolina’s UU congregations;
- (3) reaching out to establish good working relationships with North Carolina’s UU congregations and other social justice organizations in the state; and
- (4) supporting and empowering North Carolina’s UU congregations and their members in their work for social justice (providing information, connections, workshops, training, and resources, organizing and coordinating statewide social justice events, etc.).

## **Board of Directors & Officers**

UUJMNC's initial Board of Directors and officers appointed in January, 2018.

Current Board members are Elizabeth Terry (UU Congregation of Wilmington), Rev. Sally White (Unitarian Coastal Fellowship), Alyson Grine (Community Church of Chapel Hill), Rev. Jacqueline Brett (Eno River UU Fellowship), Bill Crowley (Piedmont UU Church), and Laurel Amabile (UU Congregation of Asheville).

Doug Rhodes serves as UUJMNC's President and Rev. John L. Saxon serves as its Executive Director.

## **Start-Up Funding from UUA**

UUJMNC received a \$12,000 grant from the UUA Funding Panel in December, 2017 and an additional \$1,000 matching grant in February, 2018 to support UUJMNC's reorganization, work, and programs.

## **Coalition of UU State Action Networks**

UUJMNC is a member in good standing with the Coalition of UU State Action Networks (CUUSAN) and UUJMNC's Executive Director, Rev. John L. Saxon, has been appointed as a member of CUUSAN's Board of Directors.

## **New Web Site and Social Media**

UUJMNC's new web site ([www.uufowardtogether.org](http://www.uufowardtogether.org)) was launched in November, 2018. UUJMNC and others share information about UUJMNC, social justice issues, the social justice work of North Carolina's UU congregations, and other news of interest to UU social justice activists in North Carolina on UUJMNC's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/uufowardtogether.org](http://www.facebook.com/uufowardtogether.org)).

## **Monthly Newsletter & Mailing List**

UUJMNC sends a monthly email newsletter to individuals, organizations, and congregations on the UUJMNC email list.

The UUJMNC email list has grown from 284 to 502 (a 76% increase) over the past year.

## **Congregational Visits**

UUJMNC's Executive Director, President, and Board members visited 10 North Carolina UU congregations from Morehead City and Wilmington to Asheville and Brevard during the winter and spring of 2018 to speak with over 200 UU ministers, lay leaders, social justice activists, and congregational members about UUJMNC, establish relationships between UUJMNC and congregations, and encourage congregations and their members to get connected with, involved with, and support UUJMNC. Visits and presentations to at least 8 more congregations are being planned for this fall and next winter.

## **Congregational Justice Partners**

UUJMNC established a Congregational Justice Partner program to encourage UU congregations to establish stronger relationships with UUJMNC. More information about the Congregational Justice Partners program is posted on the *Forward Together* web site.

Two congregations, the UU Congregation of Wilmington and the Unitarian Coastal Fellowship in Morehead City have fulfilled the requirements of the program and have been recognized as official Justice Partner Congregations. We're hoping that another six to ten

congregations will become official *Forward Together* Justice Partner Congregations within the next 12 months.

### **Action Alerts**

During the past year, UUJMNC has sent 10 urgent “Action Alert” emails to UUs in North Carolina to let them know about important social and political issues (including voting rights, gun violence, and immigration) and encouraging them to take action by contacting elected officials, getting involved with other social justice organizations, or engaging in witness, advocacy, rallies, protests, action, or other activities and events.

### **HKonJ Gathering**

UUJMNC is an official member of North Carolina’s HKonJ coalition. Approximately 200 UUs participated in the annual HKonJ Moral March on Raleigh in February and about 65 attended a post-march gathering sponsored by UUJMNC.

### **“Justice on Jones Street” Lobbying Day at the NC General Assembly**

UUJMNC’s first annual “Justice on Jones Street” citizen lobbying day at the state legislature was held on May 22, 2018. About a dozen UUs learned how to be effective citizen lobbyists, learned about some of the laws being considered by the General Assembly, and then made personal visits to the offices of state Senators and Representatives to talk with them about gun violence, voting rights, and other issues.

### **First Annual Statewide Gathering**

UUJMNC’s first statewide *Forward Together* annual gathering will be held on October 13, 2018 at the Eno River UU Fellowship in Durham. About 80 to 100 UUs from across the state are expected to attend, hear a keynote address by Prof. Gene Nichol, and participate in four social justice workshops.

### **“Nix All Six” (Just Vote “No”) Campaign**

UUJMNC has paid for 150 campaign signs that are being distributed to UUs and others urging North Carolina voters to vote “no” on all six proposed amendments to the North Carolina Constitution as well as sending out an “Action Alert” telling UUs how they can take action to educate voters about the proposed amendments and support the campaign to defeat the proposed amendments.

### **Monthly Conference Calls for Social Justice Leaders**

UUJMNC recently announced that it will be hosting a monthly video conference call for UU social justice leaders and activists. These calls will provide opportunities for UU social justice leaders and activists to network with and learn from each other, share resources, and create stronger relationships among North Carolina’s UU congregations and between congregations and UUJMNC.

### **Working with Other Secular and Faith-Based Social Justice Organizations**

Over the past year, UUJMNC has made connections with, reached out to, shared information regarding, and worked with a number of secular and faith-based social organizations, including: the HKonJ Coalition, the North Carolina Poor Peoples Campaign, the North Carolina NAACP, North Carolinians Against Gun Violence, the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, Democracy NC, Equality NC, the North Carolina Council of Churches, Carolina Jews for Justice, Muslims for Social Justice, Unitarian Universalists for Social

Justice, UU Ministry for Earth, the UUA Office of Congregational Witness and Advocacy, UUSC's "Love Resists" campaign, the UUSC College of Social Justice, CUUSAN, and other state UU justice ministries.

### **Financial Relationships**

In 2017, UUJMNC opened a checking account with the Self Help Credit Union (Durham, NC) and entered into an agreement with Democracy Engine to receive online donations to UUJMNC via EFT, debit cards, and credit cards. UUJMNC also has a Square account for contributions and payments to UUJMNC via debit or credit cards.

### **Individual Donors**

Over the past year, more than 50 individuals have contributed a total of \$20,179.56 to UUJMNC (including donations of \$15,000 from one individual).

During the coming year, UUJMNC hopes to at least triple the number of individuals who donate to UUJMNC as well as increasing the number of individual donors who make monthly contributions to UUJMNC.

### **Congregational Donors**

Over the past year, seven North Carolina UU congregations donated a total of \$2,676.80 to UUJMNC.

During the coming year, UUJMNC hopes to at least double the number of congregations that financially support UUJMNC and encourage congregations to contribute (through a fundraising event, a special collection, or budget) at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 1% of their annual budgets to support the work of UUJMNC.

### **Income, Expenses, and Fund Balance**

Between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018, UUJMNC received just over \$36,000 in revenue (including \$13,000 in funding from the UUA; \$15,000 from one anonymous individual donor; just over \$5,000 from more than 50 individual donors; and almost \$2,700 from 7 UU congregations).

Expenses for that period were just under \$7,500 (including approximately \$1,200 for equipment; \$1,000 for conferences, meetings, and travel; \$1,200 for lobbying activities; \$600 for internet and web services; \$940 for printing and postage; \$300 for bank and fundraising fees; and \$800 for workshops, events, and programs. Because UUJMNC has been operating as a volunteer organization and has no paid employees, it had no expenses for employee salaries or benefits.

As of September 30, 2018, UUJMNC's bank account had a balance of \$29,217.81.