



December 22, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of UUJEC,

Thank you all for your interest, participation in our events, and contributions to UUJEC over many years. Our Board and volunteers remain energized and grateful because of your involvement in our work for economic justice.

For 2022, UUJEC's priorities are raising the safety net for all and saving the planet while there is still time. Profligate extraction of natural resources and human labor for "development" and wealth production, siphoned to the powerful, have robbed multitudes of quality of life and so changed natural systems that survival of millions of species and humanity itself are in jeopardy without *immediate* reversal. Economic justice and environmental justice are conjoined.

Of course, continue to write letters for healthcare, housing, living wages for all *and* climate justice. Here are suggestions to promote wellbeing for all we can do ourselves.

- Cut consumption. Save energy & resources so there is enough for all.
- Convert to public and private electric vehicles. Walk, bike and take the bus.
- Insulate your home and convert to renewable energy sources.
- Help lower-income neighbors and family members do the same.
- Plant trees & native plants to sequester carbon and green urban deserts.
- "Eat real food, mostly plants, not too much."
- Shop and invest in local businesses. Reduce, reuse, recycle. Eschew plastic.
- Create mutual aid plans and actions for emergencies and solidarity.
- Choose an action, daily, that helps your heart, the earth and your community.
- Keep a record. Celebrate accomplishments with friends.

Find ways to work together, energized by gratitude, restored by moments of mindfulness. Let's join the movement to protect the earth and its people. Let's create paths to ration our own use of fossil fuels with the goal of keeping global warming below 1.5°C beginning now, not 2030, '40, '50. Learn from indigenous practices.

This era is filled with complex problems, massed atop each other, so that it seems our nation (Congress) and our world (COP26) cannot solve even one complex problem. You know the list: COVID and its variants, climate change and its disasters, economic inequality causing homelessness, malnutrition, suicide, refugee dispersion, the living history of racism and colonialism, commercial gridlock in our ports, political gridlock in our legislatures, even SCOTUS possibly removing a woman's right to choose and strikes as labor rightfully asserts its right to organize for its fair share of productivity profits.

It's as if our nation and world are hog-tied. The hog is financial and consumption greed. The tie is the unwillingness to work, *cooperatively*, for the common good.

Two books can help. Thich Nhat Hanh, *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet*; and Stan Cox, *The Path to a Livable Future*. They are very different, the first on spiritual practice; the second includes practical steps, a *to-do list for the 2020s*. Both prescript the need for a movement of committed souls. Stan Cox, "A just and livable future can be ours, but only if we organize, resist, imagine, and forge the path together;" and Thich Nhat Hahn, "It is only with collective awakening that we will have enough strength to make the changes we need to protect ourselves and the planet."

This year's solicitation is to stir our hearts to find ways to work together. Our UU faith, our principles, our *respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*, our willingness to make personal sacrifices for the good of all. It is a plea for touching into our thanksgiving for all the gifts of life and love we have been given. Our deep gratitude is the motivator we need to hold hands to save the earth and each other.

We write this appeal letter in an era with a thicket of serious problems, each currently seemingly impossible to solve on its own and many needing financial support. Currently, UUJEC has adequate financial reserves, but we still have to cover our twice monthly webinars, update our website, pay part time staff, fund our newsletter, GA programs, sign onto letters on justice issues that matter. Dedicated board members and volunteers take on the tasks and task forces that keep us running.

More than anything, we appreciate your energy and your time. Become a member with any size financial contribution, join a task force or serve on our Board and we will know of your support for our efforts.

We, UUJEC's Board of Trustees and staff, wish you heartwarming holidays and a new year of giving and thanksgiving for life itself.

*Jane Bannor, Chicago IL*

*Dick Burkhardt, Seattle WA*

*Rev. Judith Deutsch, Corrales NM*

*Sally Jane Gellert, Woodcliff Lake NJ*

*Rev. Lucy Hitchcock, Salem OR*

*Terry Lowman, Ames IA; Miami FL*

*Kit Marlowe, Cape May NJ*

*Carl McCargo, Springfield MA*

*Rev. Robert Murphy, St Petersburg FL*

*Cindy Piester, Ventura CA*

*Rachel Bennett Steury, Hamakua HI*

*Dean Wanderer, Springfield VA*

