

## **Guidelines for Local Groups and Chapters of UUJME**

Adopted September 13, 2009; Amended April 12, 2010, April 2024, and September 10, 2024

Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) works to promote peace and justice in Palestine/Israel, including freedom from occupation. UUJME affirms the right to equality, dignity, freedom and security of all peoples involved, while recognizing that Palestinians suffer disproportionately as a result of a great imbalance in power.

Education and discussion within Unitarian Universalist congregations and in the larger community are vital contributions toward the goals of peace and justice. To that end, individuals and congregations are encouraged to form Local Groups and Chapters under the following Guidelines, thereby strengthening our collective ability to work more effectively and with mutual support.

Chapter/ Group status is gained by completing and submitting the application form found on the UUJME website followed by acceptance by the UUJME Board. A financial contribution is appreciated at this time.

### **Guidelines**

**A. Basic practices** – chapters/local groups can be congregation-centered, locality centered, regional or state-wide. **The following basic practices are recommended:**

- a. Have a relationship with a Unitarian Universalist congregation if possible;
- a. Have a set of by-laws or Statement of Purpose/Mission which is in accord with the UUJME national Mission Statement and makes some mention of the UU Principles and Values;
- a. Hold at least one general business/planning meeting each year; and
- a. Sponsor at least one activity each year (such as a presentation by a speaker, a video presentation, a public witness, a peace vigil, letter writing opportunity, a Sunday morning worship service, book talk, etc.

### **B. Recommendations:**

- a. Nurture local leadership, hold regular core meetings, and plan ahead.
- a. Identify and connect with power centers in your congregation, including Board and ministers.
- a. Have regular UUJME table after services
- a. Publish/advertise current information in congregational newsletters, share resources and advocacy opportunities.
- a. Collaborate with justice / human rights/ peace groups in the congregation and in the community; advocate for action based on UU principles and values.
- a. Encourage travel to Palestine/Israel and report back
- a. Take advantage of national UUJME resources such as Organizer guidance, webinars, Green Olive Solidarity group, educational materials, etc.
- a. Call out news and opinion media for inaccurate or biased reportage, sharing information and resources, especially from Palestinian voices.
  - a. Be steadfast – there will be pushback.

### **C. Commitments from Local Group/Chapter**

- a. A minimum of three people committed to membership in the local chapter, who are also members of UU congregations, and

- a. One person who is listed as the Contact person who will be responsible for communications to and from the UUJME, and will be added to the national UUJME database, email list, and Google group.
- a. One person (or designee) who participates in monthly national UUJME Chapter meetings.

#### **D. Expected Communications/Interactions with National UUJME**

- a. Report group's activities annually to UUJME no later than September 30 for the previous September to August program year;
- a. Share ideas for projects, events and speakers with the national group and with other chapters;
- a. Make an effort to participate in and initiate relevant activities at regional, national, and General Assembly Meetings, and
- a. Encourage chapter members to volunteer for committees and working groups of national UUJME
  - a. Notify the UUJME website administrator about meetings, presentations, and activities so that these can be posted on the UUJME web calendar.
  - a. Raise funds for chapter/group activities as needed.
  - a. Send out alerts or take action when and where appropriate, but should do so in their own name, not the name of the national UUJME, and not in the name of their congregation. Such actions should be in keeping with the main purposes and goals of UUJME.

#### **E. National UUJME responsibilities**

- a. Maintain contact with the Chapters / Groups, encouraging and facilitating the sharing of ideas and information by the establishment and maintenance of a Chapter List-serve; and
- a. Send Action Alerts and information where appropriate.
- a. Provide assistance with organizing locally and regionally.
- a. Provide resources for education and advocacy.
- a. Provide modest funds for local needs as appropriate and as approved by national.

### **UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS FOR JUSTICE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

#### **Vision**

A just peace in Palestine-Israel that reflects our UU values of respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every human being and justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

#### **Mission**

To work within the Unitarian Universalist community to educate and mobilize individuals, congregations and denominational leaders to recognize and counter inequality and injustice in Palestine-Israel and to support our allies in the global justice and anti-oppression movements.