

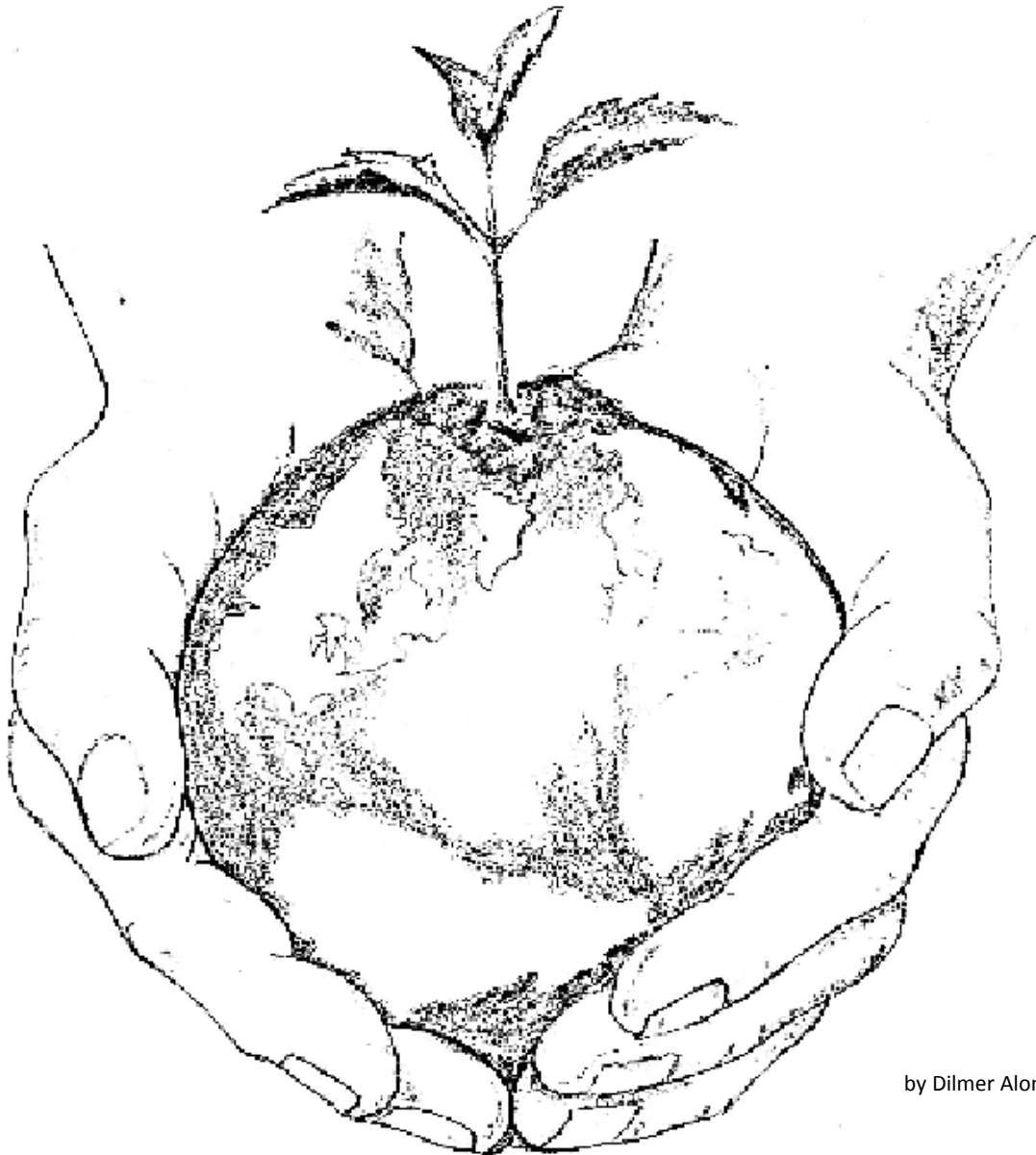
SPEAKING OF JUSTICE

faith in action

Issue No. 002

October 2018

Recuerdo Inolvidable



by Dilmer Alonso Coceres

WELCOME TO OUR OCTOBER ISSUE!

A Closer Look at this Month's Cover

Recuerdo Inolvidable: Unforgettable Memory by Dilmer Alonso Coceres

“Un pequeño detalle como muestra de agradecimiento a todas las personas que forman parte y han colaborado con el Grupo Pro-Bono en servicio a su causa para ayudarnos. Gracias por sembrar esa semilla. Gracias por darnos Esperanza.”

“A small token of gratitude to all the people who are part of and have collaborated with the pro-bono group in service to help us. Thank you for planting that seed. Thank you for giving us hope.”

Dilmer is a refugee who was detained in Sheridan Prison, then hosted at the First Unitarian Asylee Respite Center. This is shared with his permission.

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Dear First Unitarian Community,

Welcome to the October 2018 issue of *Speaking of Justice: Faith in Action*, the e-magazine brought to you by the First Unitarian Social Justice Program. The October issue delves into the crisis of mass incarceration, and we are glad you are with us on this journey for justice. A special thanks to the hundreds of you who read the September inaugural issue and subscribed to the e-mag. If you've not already done so and would like to receive *Speaking of Justice* as a once-a month email, please sign up [here](#).

First Unitarian Portland's mission affirms our faithful commitment to foster lifelong spiritual growth and to act for social justice. Daily we learn of new assaults on the dignity and well-being of our human siblings, and on the planetary interconnected web of life. It is easy to feel alone, lost in anger or despair, or even numb when true justice and peace seem so distant. With our Unitarian Universalist principles to ground us, we seek to support each other to face directly the sources of injustice, to learn more about the people who are most affected by oppression and leading the work of liberation, and to be emboldened to take risks in the pursuit of justice. Each month we delve into a different justice area aligned with First Unitarian's social justice mission.

Made up of eleven action groups and five service projects, our Social Justice Program strives to put faith into action. Each of our justice groups engage with the wider community on specific issues and provide avenues for members of the congregation to get involved. As we examine the crisis of mass incarceration, you'll learn about First Unitarian's Ending the New Jim Crow action group, direct congregational service in regional prisons, the Stop Racist Policing working group, and ways you can deepen your knowledge and get involved. October's e-mag also includes upcoming social justice events as well as voter recommendations for local, regional and statewide ballot measures. Please **BE SURE TO VOTE!** Election day is Tuesday, November 6th so be sure you mail in or take your Oregon ballot to one of these drop box locations.

Seeking to bring about justice is sacred work. Our Social Justice Covenant calls on us to "be unsettled and alert in the world, consistently seeking justice while knowing our actions will be imperfect and the work ongoing." We are grateful you are with us as we stride together toward the beloved community.

The Speaking of Justice E-magazine Team,

Nikki Beezley, Program Assistant for Social Justice
Dana Buhl, Director of Social Justice
Mindy Clark
Ethel Gullette
Alisa Joaquin
Jamie Marucha



The Crisis of Mass Incarceration

We Must Not Turn Away

By Mindy Clark & Ethel Gullette

*We are all bound up together in one great bundle of humanity,
and society cannot trample on the weakest and feeblest of its members
without receiving the curse in its own soul.*

~Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

As Unitarian Universalists, we are called to respond to the crisis of mass incarceration. Our UU faith, grounded in justice, equity and compassion, and our respect for the interdependent web of existence mean that we must not turn away. The deeply flawed criminal justice system not only targets people of color and poor people, it functions to keep racism, class structure and white supremacy in place. It is essential for us to recognize that even if not directly impacted by this crisis, our human family is under attack. It's our responsibility and our calling to be well informed about mass incarceration and to act to transform this system of oppression.

We have heard the numbers before, but still they are shocking.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the U.S. prison population has increased 500% in the last forty years, with the current number of American inmates nearing 2.3 million. That number doesn't include the nearly 40,000 men, women, and children detained in immigration centers nationwide. The U.S. has 5% of the world's population and 25% of its prisoners. 29% of the U.S. population is black or Hispanic while 59% of its prison population is black or Hispanic. In some communities -- largely black, brown and Indigenous - living itself is criminalized, and once in the system, consequences can quickly spiral downward. Several of our Social Justice Action Groups are addressing issues of mass incarceration...but first, let's get a sense of the scope.

Despite some hopes that imprisonment is meant for rehabilitation, it is overwhelmingly used as punishment.

*"[Y]ou can't change a person for the better
by treating him or her like an animal."*

~Shaka Senghor

Once incarcerated, inmates are stripped of basic human rights and simply warehoused while they serve their sentences. Society treats them as burdens on the state; as people who deserve little or nothing beyond the bare minimum in housing, food and medical care; as people marked for life as criminals.

While the number of incarcerated people has soared, so too has the cost of imprisoning them. Money once spent on educational programs such as GED, college credit or vocational training has been diverted to building new prisons. But the building boom hasn't kept up with the population growth, leading to severe overcrowding and further dehumanization.

In 2011, The Supreme Court ruled that California's overcrowded prisons, built to house 80,000 but housing twice as many, violated the constitutional prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. California was not alone in its abhorrent treatment of people in custody. Texas and other states saved money by reducing the number of meals inmates received from three to two. As the number of corrections staff decreased in relation to the number of inmates, it became common practice to put mentally ill or unruly inmates in solitary confinement, euphemistically called "administrative segregation," to get them out of the way.

Prisons run on inmate labor. Inmates in both federal and state prisons are expected to work. According to the Prison Policy Initiative, inmates working in non-industry jobs (prison food service, janitorial, etc.) earn between 14¢ and 63¢ an hour. Those working in industry jobs (services and products sold to other government agencies) earn between 33¢ and \$1.41 an hour. Prisoners fighting California's ferocious wildfires earn \$1 an hour plus \$2 a day. The average wage for non-inmate firefighters working alongside them is \$22 an hour plus overtime. This amounts to slave labor.

"It's not that it's wrong to charge people money as a way to punish them, but there have to be alternatives for people who can't pay. And that alternative cannot be: incarceration if you're poor, payment if you're rich."

*~Miriam Aukerman,
American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan*

Not only are prisoners paid far below minimum wage, in most prisons they are expected to give part of their earnings back for room and board. They must also buy all their personal needs other than clothing – deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste and phone calls. The simple act of staying in touch with family and friends is one of the most expensive items. Inmates and their families are charged twice for phone calls: inmates pay about \$1/minute while their family is also charged for a collect call. Prison phone contracting companies pay part of their revenue back to the prison. Many prisons make money from every inmate call.

Earlier this year, inmates across the country waged a strike from August 21 (commemorating the day black activist George Jackson was killed in San Quentin prison in 1971) through September 9 (the anniversary of the uprising at Attica Prison in the same year). “Prisoners understand they are being treated as animals,” national human rights organization Jailhouse Lawyers Speak said at the time. “Prisons in America are a war zone. Every day prisoners are harmed due to conditions of confinement.”

Inmates demand prison conditions and policies that acknowledge and value their humanity. They demand fair wages and an end to prison slavery, retaining the rights of citizenship, including the right to vote and funding for education and access to a better future. During the strike, inmates staged peaceful sit-ins, hunger strikes, work strikes and boycotts. Prisoners in at least 17 states participated. Migrant and refugee detainees at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA joined the hunger strike. We have yet to see what reforms, if any, will come of the effort.

Though the methods of repression used in jails differ from prisons, they are just as insidious. Offenders find themselves in and out of jail not because of the crime they commit, but because they cannot afford to pay their court fees and fines. In a 2014 nationwide survey, National Public Radio (NPR) found that defendants today pay for services that were once free and are still required by the constitution.

In Oregon, offenders are charged for probation and supervision, public defender fees, room and board in jail, or the cost of an electronic ankle bracelet for monitoring. These fees are on the rise.

The cycle of court fees and jail time has made many jails into debtor's prisons. In the same 2014 report, NPR narrated the story of a man in Georgia who spent 12 months in jail for stealing a \$2 beer. He didn't have the money to pay for the electronic ankle bracelet that would have allowed him to be out on probation. He racked up room and board fees while he was in jail, fees due when he got out. He spent a year in jail without reasonably paid work and he was released with a debt he didn't have before his confinement. If he failed to make debt payments, he would find himself in jail again. All for a \$2 beer. This is an inescapable cycle for many.

These conditions, policies and practices will not change without a groundswell effort. We hold that the moral arc of the universe bends toward justice, but all our hands are needed to guide that arc. Our Ending the New Jim Crow action group offers monthly programs to expand our awareness, guide us in advocacy for a humane and anti-racist concept of justice, and to be involved in bringing hope and healing to those directly impacted by racist and “Jim Crow” policies and practices.

The Stop Racist Policing working group focuses on decreasing the numbers of people arrested and charged in the first place. Our Immigrant Justice Action Group partners with community and interfaith groups to address the criminalization, detention and imprisonment of migrants and refugees, and is working hard to defeat Measure 105 in the upcoming elections.

There are many ways to take this crisis to mind and heart, to learn from and be guided by the incarcerated masses who lead the fight for their own liberation. The work is ongoing, and we invite you to join us.

UU Testimonies

Coffee Creek Correctional Facility

I co-facilitate one of the Threshold classes at the women's Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, as do Barbara Walden and Mele Howland. Threshold is a program that helps incarcerated women examine and change negative patterns, and offers tools and strategies to embrace a positive, spiritually-based way of living. In our broken criminal justice system, where the worth and dignity of each imprisoned person is assaulted daily, I am compelled to offer a different experience.

Working in the women's prison is a spiritual practice - to be part of transforming prison into a place for healing, restoration and mercy. The women strive to put behind them the wounds of their pre-prison lives - the abuse, neglect, trauma, addiction, bad choices, and profound disillusionment. Through knowing them, I learn about courage and determination, risk-taking and willingness to change, patience and truth. It is a privilege to walk on a path toward liberation with these women, to seek with them a justice that heals.

~Ethel Gullette

Ending the New Jim Crow Steering Committee

I moved to Portland and retired from the mental health field. I attended First Unitarian and found many opportunities for meaningful activities. When I heard the sermon by Rev. Emily Brault, Chaplain at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, I heard my calling, with a program called Threshold. It took a while to adjust to this environment and get to know the participants. There were a lot of rules, and it was a personal journey to find the humanity behind the prison blues and tattoos. I now co-facilitate Threshold with Ethel Gullette. This is a perfect opportunity to express my UU principles... all of them. Together with the participants, we create a safe and hallowed space. For a brief time each week, we share humanity, acceptance and love. The women often say they have come to look at their time in prison as a chance to turn their lives around. It is our aspiration that our time together inspires hope and vision for life change.

~Mele Howland

First Unitarian Portland Congregant

I was traveling once and someone asked me what I did for a living. "I'm a prison chaplain," I replied. She got a quizzical look on her face. "Is that supposed to be a joke?" I assured her that it is not a joke and I do indeed spend my working days in a large concrete box surrounded by razor wire fences, inmates, and correctional staff.

I've been doing this work for 17 years now, and I can't imagine doing anything else. I am not afraid of its darkness and despair, for I have survived my own darkness and it no longer frightens me. And just as others brought the light to me, and carried it for me when I could not, I now bring it to others. It's a light of Safe Keeping, of Connection, of Love, and a little Hope. Sometimes it's Grumpy, but that's to be expected when you're human. I am (impatiently) sustained by the promise of more light to come, like the old Christian hymn says "Lord haste the day when my faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll..." I long for the day when we practice prevention instead of punishment, when we value restoration more than vindication. Until then, I'll be here with my little light shining, reminding people that they are not alone and there IS more love somewhere

~Emily R. Brault

Chaplain, Coffee Creek (Medium) Correctional Facility

First Unitarian Asylee Respite Center

I'm blessed to have met Miguel, who arrived in our shelter yesterday evening. He left Guatemala when his life was in mortal danger in the 1990s, and, unlike all the other men we've welcomed from Sheridan, has lived his life in the US until his arrest by ICE some 9 months ago. After talking with his daughter on the phone this evening, his eyes welled with tears of gratitude and joy in anticipation of their reunion shortly in New York State.

"But nine months of imprisonment isn't so bad," he told me in Spanish, "compared to what others go through at Sheridan. The worst was seeing the weeping of the small children of a man spending 18-20 years there for drug offenses," he explained. "They're really growing up without a father."

Here is a man who just lost nine months of his life with his family because he is undocumented, placing the suffering of the victims of our incarceration state above his own. There is something so deeply human in this man that I cannot help but wonder if it shines so brightly not in spite of, but rather because of, the backdrop of the inhumanity and soullessness from which he has been—at least for now—liberated.

Providing a few nights of shelter, a phone, and some travel money to a refugee who has traveled thousands of miles and endured intense hardship and oppression feels like a drop of grace in a huge bucket of brokenness. But I believe in the power of a drop to build bridges, open the heart, and catalyze healing. May the healing extend to the many levels of brokenness in our lives: our hearts, our minds, our nation, and our beloved Earth.

~Doug Brown

*Steering Committee of the Immigrant Justice Action Group
Co-Coordinator for the First Unitarian Asylee Respite Center*

Columbia River Correctional Institution & Liberation Literacy

I volunteer in two programs at Columbia River Correctional Institution (CRCI), the regional prison where inmates are transferred before they are released. In 2016, Rev. Barbara Stevens, and I initiated a Unitarian Universalist-based service twice monthly. Our Spiritual Dialogs explore topics such as grief, loss, shame, guilt and forgiveness and create space to deepen connection to the sacred.

Since 2016, I've also participated in a racial justice reading group at CRCI now called Liberation Literacy. We meet weekly to build social justice literacy and to re-imagine and re-articulate the relationship between incarceration, our community, and ourselves. Inside and outside members co-lead a discussion of books about activism, racism, U.S. history, and biographies of inspirational justice leaders.

My UU faith, the belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and the desire for justice, equity and compassion, take me into prison every week. I've learned so much about the inequities that exist and the need for systemic change at all levels of the criminal justice system, from policing practices to sentencing laws that disproportionately target people of color. The relationships I have formed with participants --those from inside and outside-- and the knowledge I have gained enrich my life and give me hope.

~Sandy Hart. M. Div.



Get to Know Our Action Groups

A Highlight on Ending the New Jim Crow & Stop Racist Policing

Ending the New Jim Crow

First Unitarian's Ending the New Jim Crow (ENJC) action group commits "to contribute to local, state, and national efforts to dismantle the policies and practices, collectively known as "the new Jim Crow," that have resulted in the mass incarceration of people of color, in fractured families, and in disenfranchised communities."

In 2013, several congregants heard Michelle Alexander speak about her book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, that details the ongoing and increasing criminalization and disenfranchisement of black and brown people through police and judicial policies and practices. Reverend Sinkford convened a dialogue on the topic and expressed support for congregational social justice action to end the New Jim Crow. ENJC was formed that very evening and remains vital 5 years later. We commit to transform our justice system to one that restores and empowers lives rather than isolates and punishes, to confront racism, and to implement restorative justice practices in our schools and classrooms.

ENJC offers films, speakers/panelists, and engaging dialogues. We resolve to educate ourselves and others, to advocate for reform, and to serve and work alongside the populations most affected by mass incarceration and institutional racism. We explore ways that "new Jim Crow" policies dramatically increase the number of people who are incarcerated in our country and disproportionately target people of color, the poor, people with mental illness, and undocumented migrants and refugees.

ENJC partners with other First Unitarian action groups and community organizations with whom we share common goals. These include First Unitarian's Immigrant Justice Action Group and the Stop Racist Policing working group, the Oregon Justice Resource Center, Resolutions Northwest, Pathfinder Network, and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. Love calls us to the sacred work of seeking justice for all of our siblings.

Stop Racist Policing

Last year, members of the Ending the New Jim Crow, the Immigrant Justice Action Group, and friends of the church formed a working group called Stop Racist Policing. The Love Resists Campaign of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) initiated a national 5-session webinar series led by two UU civil rights attorneys in Cincinnati. We continue to learn about our local police structure, issues of racism and policing faced in Portland, and the many community efforts that work to confront racism in policing. Our primary goal is to reduce arrests and police violence that disproportionately affect black and brown members of our community.

As a group currently made up of white, middle class women, we remind ourselves to lend our time and talents in a way that will meet our promise to "seek and follow the wisdom and direction of those who most directly experience oppression and injustice." In this work, we commit to: question the police structures and practices that have been created without a lens of racial justice; challenge and disrupt our own socialization and complicity in the system that teaches us the police are here to protect people like us; and, leverage our privilege by being visible in the process.

We are taking time to focus our work by attending meetings led by and within communities most impacted by police brutality and seeking to add our energies to the efforts most aligned with our principles for justice. If you are interested in joining our working group, please contact Kathryn Scotten at kathryn@withscott.com.



An Evening with Shaka Senghor

Transformation & Second Chances

In partnership with The Pathfinder Network, the Ending the New Jim Crow action group sponsors an evening with [Shaka Senghor](#). Shaka was shot at age 14 and became a shooter himself at age 17, killing a man. He spent 19 years in prison, 7 of them in solitary confinement. During that time, he came to hold himself accountable for his actions and to realize that our worst deeds do not define us.

Since his release from prison, Shaka has become a leading national voice for prison reform, has established neighborhood programs to inspire young men to lead lives that affirm their talents and humanity and is the author *Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death and Redemption in an American Prison*.

Oprah Winfrey said of Shaka: “Our conversation [for Super Soul Sunday] was one of the best I’ve ever had- not just in my career, but in my lifetime.”

Please join us for this powerful evening. Sliding scale: suggested donation \$10 - \$25 (Free for community members impacted by the justice system). [RSVP](#) encouraged.

For more information and to register:

<http://www.thepathfindernetwork.org/shaka-senghor/>

October 18, doors open at 6:00 P.M.
Eliot Chapel, reception following in Fuller Hall

Independence

Now what's real, we free but still in the field.
The world watched while the cop shot and he still got a shield.
No justice, no peace that's how the most of us feel.
Cuz, if I shot while the world watched, I'd have to hope for a deal.
Just saying, on the block a cop might put you to rest.
Who do I call if they the one that put a hole in my chest?
Cell phones don't shoot bullets they simply good for a text.
So what that brother down in SAC get them holes in his flesh.
Damn, how do a murder equal to a paid leave
because you got a star and department engraved sleeves.
Maybe the color of my skin or the way that I say things,
Or U just can't comprehend or understand that the slaves free.
How would you feel with your back on the wall
Where everybody got treated like they crack in they jaws

What happened to Civil Rights, Freedom, and Justice 4 All?
Knowing those rules don't apply I turned my back on the law.
The fact of it all, I'm still waiting 4 it 2 switch up.
Made it from plantation 2 prison cells in wrist cuffs.
Mass incarceration they create laws against us
Time 2 make a statement like Colin Kap with his fist up.
It's safe 2 say that that brotha standing 4 something
But the anthem they singing nationally ain't standing 4 nothing
Land of the free I guess that just depends on your color
Stand or retreat or be content getting treated as others.

Jelani J. McClendon

Current member of Liberation Literacy with hope of being a role
model to oppressed people and building a brighter future for all.

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Yes on Measure 102, Allow Municipal Bond Revenue to Fund Privately Owned

Affordable Housing Initiative. This referral by the legislature changes the OR Constitution to allow public money for affordable housing to be mixed with private money to expand the reach of- public money. Oregon UU Voices for Justice and First U’s Committee on Hunger and Homelessness (COHHO) and Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) recommend Vote YES.

No on Measure 103, Ban Tax on Groceries Initiative. This measure would prohibit taxes or fees on sale/distribution of groceries at the state or local level. This would prohibit the enactment of so-called soda taxes, which has been under consideration in Multnomah County for the past two years. Oregon UU Voices for Justice and First U’s Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) recommends Vote NO.

NOVEMBER BALLOT RECOMMENDATIONS

No on Measure 104, Definition of Raising Revenue for Three-Fifths Vote Requirement.

This measure would enact a constitutional amendment requiring a three-fifths supermajority for legislation that raises revenue through changes in tax exemptions, credits and deductions, and fees. Submitted to halt fees on financial and real estate transactions and changes to a more progressive tax system. Rep Alyssa Keny-Guyer “This measure would hobble the ability of the state to raise money.” Oregon UU Voices for Justice and First Unitarian’s Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) Recommends Vote NO.

No on Measure 105, Repeal Sanctuary State Law Initiative. This measure would repeal Oregon’s 30-year “sanctuary” law. This law has helped prevent racial profiling. As a “sanctuary state,” Oregon law enforcement can arrest and prosecute anyone who commits a crime and provide fingerprint data to Department of Homeland Security. Undocumented residents may be held and turned over to immigration officers if a warrant has been issued for their arrest. What local and state police are not able to do is stop, detain, or interrogate someone simply because the officer suspects they are undocumented. A NO vote on Measure 105 keeps local and state law enforcement dedicated to keeping our communities safe and free from fear. **First Oregon UU Voices for Justice and First Unitarian’s Immigrant Justice Action Group (IJAG), Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) and Reverend Bill Sinkford Support a NO Vote on Measure 105.**

No on Measure 106, Ban Public Funds for Abortions. This measure enacts a constitutional amendment that would ban public funds from being spent on abortions in Oregon, except when medically necessary or required by federal law. (Currently no federal funds may be used for abortion.) Would lead to more limits on women’s rights, including access to state funded abortion for all state employees and those on the Oregon Health Plan. Oregon UU Voices for Justice, **First U's Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) and Reverend Bill Sinkford support a NO Vote.**

Regional & Local Measures

Yes on Portland Measure 26-200, Honest Elections. If approved by Portland voters, Measure 26-200 would establish limits on political campaign contributions/expenditures and require that the top five true funders of political ads be disclosed on the ads themselves. Oregon has no enforced limits on political campaign contributions/expenditures, and no requirements for disclosure on political ads. Multnomah county voters approved these same limits and disclosure requirements on the ballot with almost 90% approval in 2016. Portland elections, however, are the most expensive elections in the region, and therefore are most in need of such limits. **First Unitarian’s Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) urges a “Yes on 26-200” vote in November.**

Yes on Portland 26-201 Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Initiative 2018, This measure would establish a surcharge on major (very major) retailers with sales in Portland to fund clean energy projects, as well as establishing pathways for funding training programs for clean energy installers and those who have been left out of the Portland economic engine. First Unitarian Portland stands with the frontline communities, those most impacted by environmental injustice, to pass this initiative. “Through the Portland Clean Energy Fund, we will lift up a community-led vision that builds resilience and wealth in the face of climate change and federal inaction.” <https://www.portlandcleanenergyfund.com/> **First Unitarian’s Community For Earth (CFE), Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG), and Reverend Bill Sinkford Support a YES Vote.**

Yes on Measure 26-199, The Regional Affordable Housing Bond

This Metro regional bond will fund affordable housing for low-income families, seniors, veterans and people with disabilities. The bond will build affordable homes and renovate existing homes for over 7,500 people, or up to 12,000 people if the statewide Measure 102 also passes. The measure is backed by an unprecedented coalition of businesses, faith leaders, nonprofit groups, communities of color and elected leaders. By addressing the affordable housing problem together as a region, more communities will contribute to the bond and benefit from it - lowering the cost for the average homeowner to \$5/month. **First Unitarian’s Committee on Hunger and Homelessness (COHHO) and the Economic Justice Action Group (EJAG) support a YES Vote.**

VOTE!

Oregon Justice Resource Center

October Shared Plate Recipient

Each month, First Unitarian shares our plate offering with a community partner aligned with our UU principles. [Oregon Justice Resource Center](#) (OJRC) works to promote civil rights and improve legal representation for underserved communities; people living in poverty and people of color among them. They collaborate with other like-minded organizations to maximize their reach to marginalized populations, to train future public interest lawyers, and to educate the community on civil rights and current civil liberties concerns.

OJRC believes “mass incarceration has failed. ...Attempting to address social problems such as poverty, homelessness, and mental illness by incarcerating more people has not worked.” To achieve criminal justice reform, OJRC integrates direct legal services, public awareness campaigns, strategic partnerships, and other legal and advocacy tools. You can learn more about their areas of focus here: [Immigrant Rights Project](#), [Oregon Innocence Project](#), [Women's Justice Project](#), [Disrupting Mass Incarceration](#), [Youth Justice Project](#)

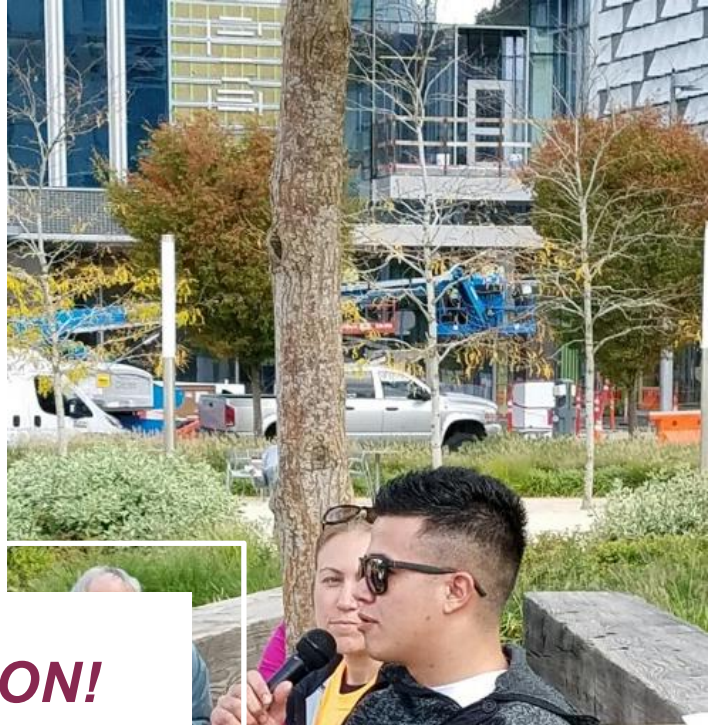
OJRC's Youth Justice Project Launch Event!

On November 3, 2018 from 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm, the [Oregon Justice Resource Center \(OJRC\)](#) partners with [Morpheus Youth Project](#) and First Unitarian's Ending the New Jim Crow action group to celebrate the launch of the [Youth Justice Project](#). Come hear from youth impacted by Oregon's criminal justice system and learn about changes we need to make to ensure Oregon's youth are treated fairly. We have a fun, informative, and engaging event planned: speakers and art, screening of the film [Perception](#), and a panel discussion.

The Youth Justice Project is dedicated solely to a holistic approach to redress systemic flaws in Oregon's treatment of youth in the adult system. Youth in Oregon are vulnerable to automatic involvement in the adult criminal justice system from as young as 15 years old. With one of the United State's highest rates of incarceration of youth in the adult system, Oregon also is one of a only a few states that continue to sentence juvenile offenders to life without parole.

The "tough on crime" response to youth crime and misbehavior is inhumane and it does not work. Youth should not be subjected to mandatory minimum sentences and should always have a meaningful opportunity for earned release. Young people are still developing and should be given opportunities for treatment, rehabilitation, and positive reinforcement. Ending excessive sentences and extreme punishments is essential to protect young people in the justice system and our wider communities.





TAKE ACTION!



october

An Evening with Shaka Senghor: Transformation & Second Chances

Thursday, October 18, 2018 from 6:30- 8 PM, Eliot Chapel; reception in Fuller Hall

Hosted by: Pathfinders & Ending the New Jim Crow, ENJC

Shaka Senghor, will speak in the Eliot Chapel, followed by a reception with his book, "Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death and Redemption in an American Prison"

available for sale and signing. Suggested donation \$10-\$25

18

UU Animal Ministry at Portland VegFest!

Saturday, October 20 and 21, at the Oregon Convention Center.

Please visit our info table while you sample the many health, environmental and justice reasons for diet change.

Lots of free food and presentations for a single low entry fee! Event hours are 10 AM to 6 PM both days.

20&21

United Nations Day event: "Engaging in Global Social Justice"

Sunday, October 28, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm in the Buchan Reception

Speaker Yashar Vasef and panel of First Unitarian congregants working on global justice issues. Light lunch will be served. Presented by the Global Social Justice Coalition

28

Mental Health Action Group Film Festival

October 17, "Out of the Shadows"

October 24, "A Beautiful Mind"

Film showings begin at 7:00 p.m., followed by facilitated discussion in rooms B302-303

Hosted by: Mental Health Action Group, MHAG

17&24

UPCOMING SOCIAL JUSTICE EVENTS

november

Youth Justice Project Launch Event

Saturday, November 3, 2018 from 4 PM -8:00 PM

Fuller Hall and Eliot Chapel

Hosted by: Oregon Justice Resource Center (OJRC), Morpheus Youth Organization, and First Unitarian's Ending the New Jim Crow action group.

4-6PM: Hear from justice-impacted youth, experience art, learn more about the issue - Fuller Hall

6-7PM: Film screening of Perception, 7-8PM: Panel discussion -- Eliot Chapel

03

Africa Connections: Quilts for Empowerment Lunch with Norah from Kenya

Sunday, November 4, 2018 from 12:30-3pm, Daisy Bingham

Norah works with Quilts for Empowerment a group that teaches quilting to impoverished women in Kenya, including obstetric fistula survivors, and young sexual assault survivors. We help women gain the skills and self-confidence to become economically independent and assist the girls to complete their education.

04

06

Election Night Observance

Tuesday, November 6, 2018 from 5-9 PM

We will come together as a community on the night of the mid-term elections from. Join us Buchan Reception to watch election returns together. Eliot Chapel will be a space for prayer and reflection.

11

Dreamers: Out of the Shadows

Sunday, November 11, 2018 from 1:00-3:00 PM in Eliot Chapel

Join the Immigrant Justice Action Group (IJAG) for the Dreamer's of Oregon: Out of the Shadows sponsored by Bienestar. The event shares a photo exhibit that features portraits of “Dreamers,” undocumented young adults who came with their families to the U.S. as children. By highlighting Dreamers’ aspirations, accomplishments and humanity, the exhibit works to change the dominant narrative around immigration. Two Dreamers will share their stories and their dreams. The photo exhibit will be on display in Fuller Hall on Sunday, November 4 and 11.

For updated First Unitarian Portland events please subscribe to [Front Steps](#), our weekly e-Newsletter.

Artwork by Francisco Hernandez



Mother's Love



Cage

You can find Francisco’s work on his [website](#).

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**Contacts are updated as of 10/11/2018
& are subject to change.*

