



Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East

Siding with love with the people of Palestine-Israel

For many years I have been concerned that the social justice concerns of UUs have been largely limited to domestic issues. These issues are of great importance but so are issues outside our borders such as war and peace and the US drive for hegemony. Over half of the discretionary budget that we pay for with our taxes goes for war leaving relatively little for social goods here at home.

Recently, however, and particularly since the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023, the UUA and many UU organizations have spoken out against the near genocidal war that Israel has waged against the people of Gaza. Below is a list of these actions that different UU groups have taken.

Recent Actions by Unitarian Universalists in support of Palestinian human rights.

In May of 2021, the UUSC declared that all military aid to Israel must stop until the rights of Palestinians are respected and International Law is obeyed.

<https://www.uusc.org/uusc-calls-on-the-u-s-government-to-withhold-military-aid-to-israel/>

In October of 2023, a group of Unitarian Universalist religious professionals and lay leaders (as yet the group is unnamed) published an “Open Letter on the War and Occupation in Palestine”. More than 100 UUs and three UU organizations have signed, including Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), UUs for Justice in the Middle East, and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. The letter called for a ceasefire, an end to US military aid to Israel, an end to the occupation and necessary conversations about the impacts of Zionism. The letter and link to sign is hosted on the DRUUMM website.

<https://www.druumm.org/news/open-letter-to-unitarian-universalist-colleagues-on-the-war-and-occupation-in-palestine/>

Link to full letter and signature form: <https://fs6.formsite.com/4P3Jb2/yvntqivfck/index>

On October 17, 2023, the UUA issued a statement calling for a ceasefire and obedience to international law.

<https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/catastrophe-gaza-and-israel#:~:text=To%20address%20the%20urgent%20humanitarian,and%20restraint%20by%20all%20sides>

On October 18, 2023 Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) issued a statement calling for a ceasefire and warning about potential genocide.

[https://www.uujme.org/uujme statement on the escalating disaster in palestine and israe](https://www.uujme.org/uujme_statement_on_the_escalating_disaster_in_palestine_and_israel)
[I call for immediate ceasefire](#)

Beginning on October 19, 2023, the Church of the Larger Fellowship YouTube show, the VUU, has hosted three episodes related to the situation in Palestine/Israel.

- October 19, “Bearing Witness – Discussion on the Middle East”
<https://www.youtube.com/live/saqJAW5SXRY?si=4nVPD-CcppTQ57BR>
- November 2, “UUs for Justice in the Middle East”
<https://www.youtube.com/live/wBBhg3QzGJA?si=IP0WPlzRj3pFpObx>
- December 14, “DRUUMM and CLF Palestinian Vigil Leaders”
<https://www.youtube.com/live/i1MQYtbjGPQ?si=i1348WWmWzDIncqv>

In November and December 2023 Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM) has held five webinars on Sunday afternoons where people could learn and reflect on what is happening in Gaza. Three of the webinars were recorded and are posted on DRUUMM’s YouTube channel: Staying Human, Surviving the Night, and Refugee in My Own Home.

<https://www.youtube.com/@druumm/videos>

On November 1, 2023, Black Lives of UU (BLUU) called for a ceasefire, an end to our tax dollars funding genocide, and a world in which Palestinians are free of state sanctioned violence.

<https://blacklivesuu.org/radicallove/>

On November 4, 2023 the UUA supported a webinar produced by Side with Love, “Why We Cannot Turn Away”. The webinar was led by three Arab/Southwest Asian and Muslim UU ministers and three Jewish UU ministers, and defined important terms such as occupation, settler colonialism, Zionism, apartheid, and genocide. The webinar recording along with a template for congregational conversations and a resource guide are available on the UUA website.

<https://sidewithlove.org/ourstories/2023/11/22/available-now-why-we-cannot-turn-away-resources-for-uus-engaging-palestine-amp-israel>

On November 13, 2023 UUA President Reverend Sofia Betancourt joined 29 other leaders of faith groups in signing a letter from Churches for Middle East Peace to President Biden calling for a ceasefire, de-escalation and restraint by all involved.

[https://cmep.salsalabs.org/ps_nov1323_update#:~:text=Churches%20for%20Middle%20East%20Peace%20\(CMEP\)%20calls%20for%20an%20immediate,harm%20to%20those%20still%20remaining.](https://cmep.salsalabs.org/ps_nov1323_update#:~:text=Churches%20for%20Middle%20East%20Peace%20(CMEP)%20calls%20for%20an%20immediate,harm%20to%20those%20still%20remaining.)

On November 15, 2023 Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM) called for a ceasefire, an end to US military aid to Israel, an end to the occupation and hard conversations about Zionism.

<https://www.druumm.org/news/open-letter-to-unitarian-universalist-colleagues-on-the-war-and-occupation-in-palestine/>

On November 30, 2023 the UUSC called for a ceasefire, the release of political prisoners and hostages, support for and the safe provision of humanitarian aid, and the end to U.S. military support for the Israeli army.

<https://www.uusc.org/uusc-response-to-human-rights-at-risk-in-palestine-and-israel/>

On December 13, 2023, the third Theological Panel Discussion on Covenant from the Article II Commission was held, and it was all about how UUs should respond to the trauma faced by the people of Gaza. This webinar was recorded and will be available on the UUA website.

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/resources/panels>

Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) has seen a recent increase in the formation of new chapters and in people signing up for our newsletter.

<https://www.uujme.org/>