

## Environmental Justice Action Team

### Vision

We envision engaging in genuine, spiritual and material relationships that will lead to an honoring, healthy and equitable presence on Earth.

### Mission

We commit to continually recognizing and actively assuming and exercising our spiritual and moral obligations and our shared responsibility to the Earth and to the diverse communities that rely on the Earth's gifts. We strive to restore, protect and preserve the land, air and water and the human and natural communities that make up a delicate and intricate web of existence that is currently under siege and well underway to catastrophic changes because of human behavior. We center the needs and perspectives of impacted communities, understanding that they bear the brunt of environmental damage and degradation, and thus, drawing upon their wisdom and leadership to create needed change and bringing our individual and collective powers to support them in creating equity in a viable and honored environment. We raise awareness on the complex intersection of the environment with other social justice issues that create the inequities that threaten the fabric of our existence. We promote sustainable and responsible development and consumption that provides for the needs of today without robbing the coming generations of their future of beauty and well-being.

### Goals

- Increase the level of involvement of BUF members and friends in environmental justice issues and activities
- Recognize and raise up the environment's intersection with other justice issues such as race, immigration and economic status.
- Center frontline communities in efforts to address environmental inequity, degradation and destruction with special emphasis on:
  - Continued and increased support of Indigenous communities
  - Strengthened and increased support of farmworkers and a just food system
  - Be open to other intersections and inequities as they arise
- Establish mutual working and supportive relationships with other allies and partners, both within the UUA and in the greater community, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Stress the moral and spiritual obligation to the Earth through all mediums
- Engage more with the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies at all levels.

### Membership

1. Deborah J Cruz
2. Mike Betz
3. Isa Werny
4. Rev. Barbara Davenport
5. Noreen Fujita-Sacco

### Theological Foundation

Environmental Justice is rooted in most of our 7 Principles and is an issue area that is covered by a number of UU organizations and affiliates like UU Ministry for Earth (<https://www.uumfe.org>), Create Climate Justice (<https://www.uua.org/environment>) and UUSC (<https://www.uusc.org/initiatives/climate-forced-displacement/>) and JUUstice Washington (UU State Action Network-juustwa.org). It is also being

addressed in the national 8<sup>th</sup> Principle group which means it is (or should be) also a part of the work our Covenant of Beloved Community will be engaged in.

Environmental justice is a crucial part of our local community life here in the Pacific Northwest and a key focal point for many of our partners and allies like Lummi Nation, Community to Community, Multifaith Network for Climate Justice, RE Sources just to name a few. In particular are the myriad of issues that impact the Salish Sea and our Tribes and Nations and those that impact our farmworkers.

The sanctity of the Earth and the ability to preserve it for future generations is a driving force behind the activities of this group and its relationships and collaborations with others of like-mindedness. There is much unconscionable destruction and degradation taking place of the Earth and the Gifts She has offered to us. Greed and a spiritual and moral disconnect are leading to the extinction of species, the dehumanizing of impacted communities, the befouling of land, air and water and wholesale destruction of ecosystems and the cultures that are rooted in them.

It demands a response, and we will be part of that response.

### Timeline

Environmental justice is an issue that BUFsters have been working on for at least the last 15 years. Given our current situation, environmental justice will continue to be a long-term goal and will likely be around as long as there is leadership to keep the momentum going.

### Measurement of success

Environmental justice covers a huge swath of possibilities so the matter of success will vary depending upon what projects and actions are undertaken at a given point of time and over a period of time. Success could in part be determined by the number of people showing up for an event (film or demonstration), whether critical legislation is passed (local, State or Federal), how court cases are decided, how well our alliances and partnerships are functioning, etc. Environmental justice involves long-term projects and planning (e.g. climate change) that could also turn quicksilver overnight (e.g. response to wildfires). Success will be determined by how well and how long we keep the fires burning until real change is evident.

### Finances

- Budget: Undetermined at this time.
- Fundraising: Undetermined at this time.
- Expenditure Authorizations
  - Deborah Cruz
  - Mike Betz

### Engaging the Congregation

There are any number of communication tools available within BUF and outside of it as well. COVID currently restricts the ability of person-to-person contact at this time, but the nature of environmental justice issues and responses to it will provide a wide array of opportunities for engagement whether it be writing letters to editors or legislators, signing petitions, attending forums and speaker events, recommended film screenings and book reviews, attending demonstrations or cultural events, participating in discussion groups, building relationships, incorporation and representation in the arts, conducting services or other celebrations, individual or collective self-evaluations on lifestyle and consumption, fundraising, etc. There is no excuse for any individual within the congregation to not be engaged on some level.

Ministry Action Team Requirements

- Actively participate with the Social & Environmental Justice Committee by sending a representative to each of three annual SEJC meetings.
- Report a summary of your activities and accomplishments to SEJC prior to each meeting.
- Abide by subcommittee procedures as developed by the BUF Operations Team.

Names of Lead Applicants

Yes, the team has been and is already represented in SEJC.

1. Deborah J Cruz
2. Mike Betz
3. Isa Werny
4. Rev. Barbara Davenport
5. Noreen Fujita-Sacco

Primary Contact and their contact information: Deborah J Cruz, [dwcruz@comcast.net](mailto:dwcruz@comcast.net)

Application (or Renewal) Date: September 20, 2022

Charter Application Approval date: \_\_\_\_\_SEJC

Charter Application Review date: \_\_\_\_\_BUF Operations Team