

East Shore Unitarian Church

Earth and Social Justice Coordinating Council Charter

Name

- What is the name of your group?
 - The name of the group shall be the Earth and Social Justice Coordinating Council.

Purpose

- What is the purpose of your group?
 - The purpose of the Earth and Social Justice Coordinating Council (Council) is to coordinate and support the earth and social justice (ESJ) ministries of East Shore Unitarian Church (ESUC) and to act as the ESJ liaison with other Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations and community groups. The Council shall incorporate the UU heritage of ESJ and the Seven Principles into the service we provide at East Shore.
- How is your work related to one or more of our Seven Principles?
 - The Council believes that we exist in an interdependent web of all existence in which we strive to treat the earth and every person with inherent worth and dignity. The Council members acknowledge that efforts to respect the environment and to attain a community of peace, liberty, and justice are more effective when people inspire each other and work together.
- How does your group connect with East Shore's Mission and Vision?
 - Practice love: The Council practices love and service toward the Earth and Social Justice Ministry Teams, the congregation, the staff, the wider community, and our planet by following our UU principles and church covenant as we carry out our work;
 - Explore spirituality: The Council offers a path of learning, empathy, action, and reflection so that social justice becomes an integral part of its own and ESUC members' and friends' spiritual development;
 - Build Community: The Council strives to create a caring community among the Earth and Social Justice Teams, within the larger church, and through outreach into the community by building positive connections, working collaboratively, and using right relations;
 - The Council promotes justice by supporting the Earth and Social Justice teams in their work, by researching ways to organize and empower justice

work that are consistent with our faith, and by making connections with other faith and justice groups in our community for joint action.

- What are your specific goals for the next year? How will you measure your goals?
 - Strengthen Council structure and function
 - Develop ESJ leadership
 - Increase congregational engagement with ESJ
 - Improve communications related to ESJ within East Shore
 - Engage with groups outside of East Shore

These goals will be measured by records of completion of the actions in the attached goals work plan.

Group Structure, Leadership & Decision-Making

- Where does your group fit into East Shore's organizational structure – as a Board Committee, Ministry Team or Core Team?
 - The Earth and Social Justice Coordinating Council is a Core Team of the congregation with responsibility for the earth and social justice portfolio in partnership with the Minister.
- What are the minimum and maximum number of participants? To ensure community representation, no fewer than five members is recommended.
 - The minimum number of members shall be five. The maximum number of members shall be twelve. Current members are Ann Fletcher, Jenny Hall, Dick Jacke, Lynn Roesch, Laurie Wick, and Louise Wilkinson. We are currently recruiting two more members for the group. It is desired that members include representatives from or to the major focus team(s), worship, and lifelong learning. The Minister serves as an ex-officio member.
- What are the leadership roles and responsibilities within your group?
 - The Chair (currently Ann Fletcher) and Secretary (currently rotated among members) assume the usual responsibilities associated with those roles. One member will be designated as the contact person for the group for communications from staff or board. Ann Fletcher is currently in that role. The role of providing communications from the Council to the congregation, staff, or Board is currently filled by Lynn, Roesch. Lynn currently provides the Minister with a monthly report of ESJ team activity. This report is also available to the Board and the Congregation. Dick Jacke acts as contact

person for many of the affiliated groups outside the church. Each member provides leadership as a Council liaison to one or more ESJ Teams...

- How are leaders determined, and what are their term limits?
 - The Council will determine who will assume these and other needed leadership roles and responsibilities each year using the decision making process outlined below. Term limits for major Council leadership roles that are not rotated monthly will be one year.
- What, if any, are the term limits for your members?
 - As of July 2017, term limits for new members of the Council will be three years. The Council will determine a staggered departure of current members which will begin in July 2018 so as to provide continuity while it incorporates new members. In this way the Council will eventually turn over 2-3 members each year. A past member may return to the Council after at least one year off the Council.
- How are decisions made in your group (consensus, majority vote, officers, quorum needed)?
 - Based on our Covenant which is attached, the council will strive to make decisions by consensus. When this is not possible, a vote of at least 70% of all the members, regardless of that particular meeting attendance, will determine decisions. If 70% does not result in a whole number of people, then it will be rounded up to the next whole number of people.
- How are members recruited and oriented?
 - The Council will review its current membership and, using its decision making process above, agree upon candidates to contact for potential recruitment. Candidates may attend one or two Council meetings as part of the process of making a commitment. New members will be orientated by becoming familiar with the UUA Social Justice Empowerment Program Manual, the group covenant, the Council charter, and the charters of the ESJ ministry teams.
- What, if any, qualifications are required for membership or leadership?
 - Members of the group should be persons who have taken an active role in one or more of our social justice ministry teams. RE and Worship representatives should have an interest or previous experience in earth and social justice along with their lifelong learning or worship roles. All members should be available for meetings and follow up work as outlined in the Goals and Work Plan. Each year the Council will recommend people to the

leadership training programs available to gain pertinent skills, and this will be considered in selection of candidates for the Council.

- How does your group communicate and collaborate with the larger East Shore community?
 - The group communicates through the newsletter, the weekly blast, notices in the order of service, posters, and announcements during Sunday services. In addition, the group participates in the annual Earth and Social Justice Faire and may host an Earth and Social Justice Celebration to commend ministry teams and inform the congregation about their accomplishments.
 - The Council will employ various avenues to encourage earth and social justice activities throughout ESUC. The current approaches are to:
 - I. Lead efforts to identify and prioritize issues that galvanize the congregation around one or two ESJ foci ministry teams.
 - II. Facilitate the integration of earth and social justice into the life of the congregation, especially through religious education and worship.
 - III. Present educational and advocacy programs to inform and involve ESUC members and friends about current ESJ issues facing our local community, our region, our state, our country, and the wider world.
 - IV. Provide inspirational events that affirm and promote UU heritage and the Seven Principles and that may lead to congregants becoming engaged in ESJ action.
- What position on your team is authorized to approve communications publicized by Staff?
 - The Communications Lead, currently Lynn Roesch, is authorized to approve communications publicized by the Staff. The lead often consults with the chair or others in the group in drafting communications.
- What types of decisions is your group authorized to make?
 - The Council is authorized to make decisions in accordance with church Bylaws, Board Policies, and Staff Leadership Team (SLT) Procedures following democratically-chosen guidelines to assist the earth and social justice work at East Shore, maintain relationships with outside earth and social justice organizations, and monitor its own effectiveness. The current guidelines are to:

- I. Support and empower ESJ Ministry Teams by:
 - a. Receiving and evaluating any request for the formation of a new ESJ ministry team. Assisting an ESJ ministry team to disband when it has served out its useful purpose or lacks sustaining participation.
 - b. Helping new teams to write charters, reminding established teams to revise their charters on an annual basis, and reviewing charters annually before sending them to the Minister.
 - c. Providing leadership training for ESJ team members and potential leaders.
 - d. Assisting ESJ ministry teams with recruitment.
 - e. Encouraging and empowering team activities through relationships and communications between Council members and teams.
 - f. Fostering connections among teams.
 - g. Nurturing team communications to the congregation by supporting the creation and use of a wide variety of communication tools.
 - h. Soliciting annual team budget requests and solidifying and submitting a unified social justice budget to the administration for consideration.
 - II. Facilitate ESJ education and activities between ESUC, other UU congregations, and the broader community.
 - III. Serve as the ESJ contact point for communications from outside organizations and handle appropriately.
 - IV. Coordinate, review, and recommend alliances with related ESJ organizations outside ESUC. Several alliances such as those with Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and Faith Action Network—will require funding support. As these alliances directly support the Council's purpose and goals, any funding for such organizations will be part of the Council's line item budget.
 - V. Evaluate the Council's effectiveness and its charter yearly.
 - VI. Perform other responsibilities as agreed upon with the SLT, the ESUC Board, or others in order to fulfill the Council's purposes.
- What kinds of recommendations, if any, does your group make and to whom (Board, Minister, Staff, congregation)?
 - The Council recommends the formation or disbanding of ESJ teams to the Minister or SLT..
 - The Council recommends alliances with ESJ organizations outside of ESUC to the SLT and/or Budget Team.
 - The Council recommends budget for ESJ to the Budget Team.
 - What is the expectation for longevity of the group and the plan, if any, for disbanding the group?

- It is expected that this will be an ongoing group in our congregational life.

Finances

- Will your group present a budget proposal to the Budget Team?
 - The Council will present a budget proposal on behalf of itself and all of the social justice ministries to the Budget Team.
- If the Operating Fund is unable to grant the full amount of your budget request, will the group reduce its expenses or do its own fundraising?
 - If the Operating Fund is unable to fund the full amount of our budget request, it is possible that the Council may wish to do fundraising.
- If your group plans to do fundraising, please describe how it will go about this.
 - Such fundraising might take the form of encouraging donations for specific Council related causes at educational or informational events.
- What kind of decision process exists for how money is used?
 - In general, expenditures would be guided by the group's budget, and specific decisions about expenditures within budget categories would be made by the Council, using its usual decision making previously described.
- Which position on your team is authorized to approve team expenses?
 - The Chair, currently Ann Fletcher
- Does your group have the need for a Prudent Reserve (funds set aside to hedge against a contractual liability)? If so, how much and what for?
 - As the Council does not currently have contractual obligations, it is not anticipated that a prudent reserve would be required.