

# How to Run a UUSC Membership Campaign

Dear UUSC Volunteer,

As a membership organization, UUSC relies on the support of individuals across the country to continue our human-rights programs. UUSC membership is an investment in social justice; it is a way to put your values into action and connect with grassroots partners to offer support where it is most needed and best utilized. Each UUSC member strengthens our collective voice when advocating for human rights and speaking truth to power. We thank you for all that you do to help increase support of UUSC in your congregation!

This guide has been created to help you build a UUSC membership campaign for your congregation. You might use these resources in conjunction with your **Guest at Your Table** or **Justice Sunday** program, or at another time that works well for your congregation.

For assistance in planning and implementing your campaign, contact us directly at 617-301-4366 or [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org). We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,



Lauralyn Smith  
Senior Associate for Member Development



Kate Wallace  
Program Assistant for Member Development

# Easy Steps to Building UUSC membership

You've decided that it's important to you and your congregation to strengthen your commitment to UUSC membership and that you want to take action toward this goal. Now how do you get started? UUSC is here to help!

## 1) Get informed

- Make sure you are up to date on UUSC's current [programs](#), [campaigns](#), and [partners](#). Review the available [materials](#), such as membership envelopes and brochures.

You'll find everything online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org) and [www.uusc.org/volunteernetwork!](http://www.uusc.org/volunteernetwork!)

## 2) Set your goals

It is important to start with a clear objective.

- Review both your congregational giving report and updated members and supporters listing so that you know where you're starting. (You can request these by e-mailing [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org).)

Decide on your desired outcomes for this campaign. You might want to recruit a certain number of new members, ensure that a certain number of existing members renew, or increase your congregation's UUSC membership by a specific percentage.

## 3) Identify and communicate with leaders and partners

Your congregation is a community with multiple leaders in various roles. Your campaign will be more successful if you communicate with and involve them.

- Your **congregational leaders** include the minister, religious-education director, office administrator, board members, social-action committee, and others who may have an interest in programs being conducted within the congregation. Talk with them, share your plans, and coordinate dates, activities, and space use – any aspect of your program – so that they are well informed and can support your effort.  
Your **partners may be members** of a UUSC team or a short-term program coordinator who will help you design and implement your campaign. Identify and recruit people who will be supportive of your campaign and might take on limited responsibilities, such as speaking to a small gathering, preparing newsletter items and pulpit announcements, or helping stuff envelopes. You can talk with UUSC members, JustWorks and JustJourneys alumni, and former volunteers – if you are not sure who these people are in your congregation, we can help connect you to them; contact us at [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org).

## 4) Design your campaign

- Get together with your partners to design your campaign, then share an overview with congregational leaders and ask for their feedback. Work with them to adapt the plan as necessary.

Determine start and end dates.

- Be sure to communicate finalized dates with everyone, including office staff.
- Decide how you will reach out to potential UUSC members.
  - Worship service
  - Mailing to congregants
  - Special events for UUSC members
  - Social-action committee (or similar body)
  - New member orientation classes
  - Adult religious education
  - Newsletter, website, bulletin
  - Hosting UUSC table after worship services
  - Youth groups
  - Covenant group

- Plan and schedule major activities.
  - Ask to have this put on planning calendars
  - Reserve space, if needed, according to your congregation policies.

## 5) Implement your campaign

- Work with your partners to implement each activity in your designed campaign. Gather regularly to gauge your progress and make any needed changes to your plan. Share updates and progress with your congregational leaders.

## 6) Celebrate!

- Keep track of successes along the way (no matter how small they seem) and celebrate them as well as the people who are helping to make them happen. At the end of your campaign, e-mail UUSC at [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org) to get official data on your congregation's new members and supporters and celebrate your overall success!
  - If your congregation receives a [Banner Society honor](#) for its level of UUSC membership, present the award during worship and display it prominently.
  - Honor your congregation's UUSC members in a special way such as by sending personal thank-you notes, listing their names in a newsletter or attractively posted in a prominent location. (Respect privacy preferences. **First**, remember to verify that public acknowledgement is okay with individual members! Never list individual donation amounts publicly; only list congregational totals.)
  - Celebrate and thank your congregational leaders and partners in ways that best suit them.

# Tips for a Successful Membership Mailing

## Don't be afraid to ask for money

- UUSC's work is incredibly important – together, we literally save lives.
- At times, turning UU values into action takes an investment of funds; financial support is critical to our ability to continue this work.
- By asking others to contribute, you are offering an opportunity to make a difference.
- People will appreciate that you are sharing information on something you are passionate about.
- People don't mind being asked for money – but they don't want to be pressured! Be respectful and mindful of reactions, and your conversations will be meaningful and positive.

## Consider timing

- Are there any other major requests for support at the same time as your mailing, such as a pledge drive for your fellowship? Try to select a time when there aren't too many demands on people's wallets.
- How does the mailing fit in with other UUSC activities such as Guest at Your Table and Justice Sunday?

## Personalize the letter

- Add your own story – there's a placeholder in the letter where you can share how you first heard of UUSC or how you became involved as a volunteer.
- Change details to fit with your congregation (e.g., “Our fellowship is already addressing this issue, through events like last spring's film series. With UUSC, we will continue to learn and act for water justice!”). Sections that you should edit for your specific campaign are marked in the sample letters with brackets.
- Add sentences for individual donors, if you have time (e.g., “I know you've done organizing around local water issues and that this issue is particularly important to you, so I think you'll be excited to hear what UUSC is doing in this area.”).
- Are any members of your congregation elderly? Increase the font size for them.

## Create congregational goals

- Contact us at [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org) or 617-301-4366 if you would like help developing ambitious yet realistic and clearly articulated goals. Helping achieve a collective goal will motivate people to join UUSC.
- Set a date to report back on the progress, so that people feel a sense of urgency and send their gifts right away; it's easy to forget about things that are put aside.
- Your report can take the form of a UUSC service or announcement, or you can simply select a special day to publicize the results, such as World Water Day or International Human Rights Day.

## Coordinate with UUSC staff

- Send us a draft of your letter, so we can provide input.
- We can send you a list with the membership status of your congregation members, so you know who needs to renew and who is not a member.
- Tell us when you will do the mailing, so we can track and report the results and provide support.
- Send us a list of the people to whom you wrote, to assist us in tracking the response.

## Add a personal touch to the mailing

- Double- and triple-check the spelling of names, on the address label and in the letter. This is the first thing most people see, and they are usually sensitive to any misspellings.
- By the same token, double-check that the address is correct.

- If you have personal stationary, use it! Greeting cards are another great option.
- Sign each letter.
- Stamp and address the envelopes by hand.

### **Make things simple**

- Enclose a UUSC business-reply membership envelope with each letter. You can order envelopes online at [www.uusc.org/order\\_publications](http://www.uusc.org/order_publications) or by calling 617-301-4366.
- You may also wish to include a flyer or update on a particular aspect of UUSC's work; contact us for suggestions.
- Keep requests minimal – just ask for a membership contribution to help meet a goal. Don't also ask them to respond to you with feedback, fill out a survey, and complete an action alert! Straightforward and simple is best.

### **Thank people for their support**

- A personal thank-you is very important. Send each contributor a handwritten thank-you note. Contact us if you would like suggestions about what to write.
- UUSC will also send each contributor a letter that can be used for tax purposes, after we've processed their donation.

### **Celebrate your success**

- Any response to your mailing is a success! It's important to remember that most people are overwhelmed with mail, and they won't always reply. Don't take it personally; remember that your personal contact made a difference even if you don't immediately see results for each person you reached out to.
- A colorful poster listing UUSC members or a pie chart communicating the percentage of UUSC members in the congregation can visually represent the results of your campaign.
- Remember, never publicly list the amount of a donation without the donor's permission.

Thank you for all your hard work and support!

Questions? Suggestions? Please contact us at [volunteerservices@uusc.org](mailto:volunteerservices@uusc.org) or 617-301-4366.

# Sample Letter for New Members

Dear [name],

I'm writing to you today as a fellow member of [church name] and as someone who cares deeply about putting our UU values into action. This conviction is why I have chosen to spend some of my spare time volunteering for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). I believe that UUSC is one of the best ways to **bring our UU values to life in the world.**

UUSC is very important to me, and I want to take a moment now to explain why – and then ask for your **help to meet our congregational goal of [number] new UUSC members by [date].**

[I first heard of UUSC just three years ago, when I joined our fellowship as a new UU.] I learned that UUSC is not a part of the UUA, but an independent human-rights organization, originally founded by UUs. Today, the organization is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as UU principles and sources. UUSC partners with grassroots organizations to advance social-justice work locally and internationally, with a focus on civil liberties, economic justice, environmental justice, and rights in humanitarian crises.

One issue in particular caught my attention – **the human right to water.** Water is such an essential and basic right, yet people in the United States and around the world face barriers that include privatization, unequal access, and depletion or degradation of resources. UUSC's Environmental Justice Program works to protect this right, which is intricately tied to the **worth and dignity of every person.**

Even now, there are people in our country who lack access to this basic need. In California, UUSC recently worked with local organizers to fight for their right to water, by campaigning to pass the Human Right to Water Act. **Children in rural areas have to bring bottled water to school, because the water quality in the schools is so terrible!** The bill was vetoed by the former governor, but UUSC's campaign was still successful; not only did the bill win bipartisan support before it was vetoed, but the governor also passed several other water bills our coalition had proposed. The campaign also set the political stage for further progress, helping UUSC – and UUs – bend the moral arc of the universe toward justice!

**UUSC is working strategically in the United States and around the world to defend the human right to water for those impacted by injustice.** There have been many important victories on this front. Through UUSC's work with grassroots partners, we've helped enshrine the human right to water in the constitutions of Ecuador and Kenya! With a new administration in California, UUSC and their partners are planning how to revitalize our campaign.

As a UUSC volunteer, I know that I am supporting this critical work. Of course, we know that there is another thing UUSC needs to do the work – financial support! **As a UUSC member, I regularly give to the organization, to ensure that it has the funds necessary to create change.**

Right now, there are [number] UUSC members in our fellowship. **We have set a goal to [double that number]. Together, we can accomplish even more.** Being a UUSC member means providing financial support, but beyond that, **membership strengthens our collective voice. It makes a powerful statement** that you support the work of an international human-rights organization powered by UUs across the country.

Our friends at the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, N.Y., understand the difference membership makes to UUSC's mission, and they will match dollar-for-dollar every unrestricted gift of \$100 or more.

If you agree with me that it's important we act on our values to foster justice together, **I hope you will join UUSC today. It's easy – you can join online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), or just mail the enclosed business-reply envelope.**

If you have questions about UUSC's work or want to learn more about how you can get involved, I hope you'll visit our UUSC table during coffee hour. You can also reach me by phone at [number].

In fellowship,

[Volunteer Name]

Member of [church name] and UUSC volunteer

[Phone number]

**PS. I hope you'll send your membership by [date two weeks from when letter mailed], or join online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), so that I can report the full results of our membership campaign by [date of UUSC service or announcement]!**

# Sample Letter for Renewing Members

Dear [name],

I'm writing to you today as a fellow member of [church name] and as someone who cares deeply about putting our UU values into action. This conviction is why I have chosen to spend some of my spare time volunteering for an organization that you're already familiar with – the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). I believe that UUSC is one of the best ways to **bring our UU values to life in the world.**

UUSC is very important to me, and I want to take a moment now to explain why, and then ask that you **renew your membership to help us meet our congregational goal of [number] UUSC members by [date].**

[I first heard of UUSC just three years ago, when I joined our fellowship as a new UU.] I learned that UUSC is not a part of the UUA, but an independent human-rights organization, originally founded by UUs. Today, the organization is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as UU principles and sources. UUSC partners with grassroots organizations to advance social-justice work locally and internationally, with a focus on civil liberties, economic justice, environmental justice, and rights in humanitarian crises.

One issue in particular caught my attention – **the human right to water.** Water is such an essential and basic right, yet people in the United States and around the world face barriers that include privatization, unequal access, and depletion or degradation of resources. UUSC's Environmental Justice Program protects this right, which is intricately tied to the **worth and dignity of every person.**

Even now, there are people in our country who lack access to this basic need. You've probably heard that in California, UUSC recently worked with local organizers to fight for their right to water, by campaigning to pass the Human Right to Water Act. **Children in rural areas have to bring bottled water to school, because the water quality in the schools is so terrible!** The bill was vetoed by the former governor, but UUSC's campaign was still successful; not only did the bill win bipartisan support before it was vetoed, but the governor also passed several other water bills our coalition had proposed. The campaign also set the political stage for further progress, helping UUSC – and UUs – bend the moral arc of the universe toward justice!

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Right now, there are [number] UUSC members in our fellowship. **We have set a goal to [double that number]. Together, we can accomplish even more.** Being a UUSC member means providing financial support, but beyond that, **membership strengthens our collective voice. It makes a powerful statement** that you support the work of an international human-rights organization powered by UUs across the country.

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If you agree with me that it's important we act on our values to foster justice together, **I hope you will renew your UUSC membership today. It's easy – you can renew online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), or just mail the enclosed business-reply envelope.**

If you have questions about UUSC's work or want to learn more about how you can get involved, I hope you'll visit our UUSC table during coffee hour. You can also reach me by phone at [number].

In fellowship,

[Volunteer Name]

Member of [church name] and UUSC volunteer

[Phone number]

**PS. I hope you'll send your membership renewal by [date two weeks from when letter mailed], or renew online at [www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org), so that I can report the full results of our membership campaign by [date of UUSC service or announcement]!**

# Tips for Running a UUSC Table

As you may have noticed, nothing can replace face-to-face communication – especially when you're building a social movement. Your membership campaign is building a movement within your congregation.

Running a UUSC table following your worship services is one of the best ways to reach out to your congregants. You can demonstrate your commitment to UUSC's important work, share information about current programs and partners, and answer any questions.

## Tips for what to have with you at your table:

- a) Enthusiastic people.  
Here's another opportunity for your partners and allies to help your campaign. Consider who you think would be great at attracting visitors to your table and inspiring people to join UUSC. Who among your partners and allies has a warm personality, can talk knowledgeably about UUSC or human rights, or is so well known in the congregation that people will be interested in visiting your table? Tabling is also a great way to involve youth!
- b) UUSC publications.\*
- c) UUSC membership envelopes.\*
- d) UUSC member buttons or stickers.\*
- e) A current list of your UUSC members and supporters, so people can ask about their membership status and expiration date.

\*These items can all be viewed and ordered free of charge online at [www.uusc.org/order\\_publications](http://www.uusc.org/order_publications). Check online to make sure you have the most current UUSC materials.

## Tips for what to talk about at your table:

- a) How someone becomes a UUSC member.
  - By making an unrestricted gift at one's membership rate or higher, online or using a UUSC membership envelope. (Unrestricted gifts are gifts not earmarked for specific funds or programs.)
  - By giving a membership-level gift through Guest at Your Table.
  - By becoming a [First Responder](#) and setting up monthly automatic donations online to help provide UUSC with an ongoing, reliable source of support throughout the year, enabling a swift response when human rights are suddenly in crisis.
  - Membership rates are as follows:
    - \$40 Individual
    - \$20 Senior (65+)
    - \$10 Student/Youth
    - \$75 Dual (2 adults)
    - All individual's gifts of \$100 or more are eligible to be matched by the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock.
  - Being a member of a congregation **does not** make one a member of UUSC.
- b) Why someone should become a UUSC member.
  - Your membership in UUSC is a reflection of your UU values and commitment to social justice, and an investment in human rights.
  - UUSC's status as a membership organization enables it to act as an impartial advocate for advancing human rights – the organization does not accept funding from governments.
  - Join the thousands of Unitarian Universalists who give UUSC the support and resources it needs to help change the world.
  - UUSC uses our member/supporter number to achieve changes at the level of law and policy, enabling us to say that we speak for a specific number of people.
  - Receive a subscription to our member newsletter, *Rights Now*. Receive 10 percent off all Beacon Press purchases.

c) [What UUSC is.](#)

- UUSC is a nongovernmental human-rights organization.
- UUSC is independent of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and receives no general funding from the UUA. UUSC is an associate member organization of the UUA.
- UUSC is a [501\(c\)\(3\)](#) organization.

d) [What UUSC does.](#)

- UUSC advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies.
- UUSC focuses on four major program areas. We work in partnership with local grassroots organizations in the United States and around the world, standing alongside local community members. In each program area, we focus on issues of race, class, and gender discrimination and their role in perpetuating injustice and human-rights abuses.
  - [Advancing economic justice](#): UUSC addresses the issues of globalization and privatization, with a focus on defending workers' rights and supporting living-wage campaigns.
  - [Defending civil liberties and access to democratic processes](#): UUSC partners with civil-liberties organizations and civil-society groups working to defend freedom and rights by strengthening individual liberty and democratic processes in the era of domestic and international terrorism.
  - [Promoting environmental justice](#): UUSC focuses on [defending the human right to water](#), especially in communities facing water-service privatization and resource depletion.
  - [Protecting rights in humanitarian crises](#): UUSC responds strategically to disasters, whether natural or man-made, with a special interest in defending the rights of marginalized and oppressed populations.
- UUSC provides unique opportunities for social-justice activists to translate their values into action by participating in on-the-ground projects that offer opportunities to explore issues of race, class, and gender discrimination.
  - [JustWorks camps](#) are short-term experiential learning projects that help volunteers examine and understand the causes and damaging effects of injustice. Participants work directly with people in the community, witnessing social-justice struggles firsthand.
  - [JustJourneys](#) are unique educational travel experiences that focus on human rights and social justice. Participants come into direct contact with UUSC program partners and other human-rights defenders.