Mission. In February 2019, the UUPLAN Board of Trustees adopted our new Mission Statement:

To Pursue Justice by Voting, Advocating and Making Just Public Policies.

The last four words of the mission acknowledges that we, individually and as a Unitarian Universalist faith, are responsible for making our Commonwealth, our nation and our world more just and peaceful. We cannot rely on others to do that work.

Social Justice in Pennsylvania. Democracy in Pennsylvania and social justice legislation related to UU principles and values are fundamentally thwarted by Pennsylvania’s:

1. gerrymandered legislative districts,
2. lack of limitations to the gifts that can be given to elected officials,
3. antiquated state election laws and
4. undemocratic rules governing the procedures of the two houses of the state legislature.

Progress on justice issues in Pennsylvania will continue to be very challenging until these linchpin issues are remedied. Unfortunately, citizen-initiated referenda are not permitted by the Pennsylvania Constitution.

It is further recognized that systemic racism and oppression of marginalized people in our Commonwealth, nation and world continue to challenge us to confront the various cultures of privilege that have been and continue to be part of our lives.

The governance, administration and work of UUPLAN has been and continues to be mindful of these realities.
It is my pleasure to provide this report of activities since the last UUPLAN Annual Meeting that was held October 6-7, 2017 at the UU Congregation of the North Hills in Pittsburgh.

**Change in Directorship.** In December 2017 UUPLAN Director Anita Mentzer, member of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, retired after three years of outstanding service. Her contributions to the administrative structure of UUPLAN, the strong relationships she nurtured within the faith and with social justice partners continue to live on. She continues to be a supporter and a resource to UUPLAN.

In the fall of 2017, the Board of Trustees conducted a public search for a new director. Applications were received and vetted. Interviews were held. I was honored to be selected in late November 2017. I began work in December. Anita, Administrator Kristi Lado, President of the Board Rev. Joan Sabatino and the Board of Trustees smoothly guided the transition to my directorship. I am grateful for that support. Anita left enormous “shoes” to fill.

**UUPLAN, UUPALM and UUPLAN Education Fund.** In 2010 UUPLAN incorporated as a 501 c4 non-profit organization. It can legally lobby and endorse candidates. Contributions are not tax deductible.

A companion organization, Unitarian Universalist Pennsylvania Advocacy Ministry (UUPALM) was also incorporated in 2010 as a 501 c3 non-profit organization, to which contributions are tax-deductible.

In January 2019 UUPALM changed its name to UUPLAN Education Fund to reduce confusion.

**Governance.** Both UUPLAN and UUPLAN Education fund are governed by Boards of Trustees comprised of the same eight Pennsylvania Unitarian Universalists:

- Rev. Joan Sabatino, President. Joan is minister of the First Unitarian Church of Indiana.
- Peg Dobrinska, Treasurer. Peg is a member of the UU Fellowship of Centre County
- Dennis Brunn, Unitarian Society of Germantown
- Margaret Carrow, Unitarian Church of Harrisburg
- Bill Clinton, UU Church of Delaware County
- Stephen Fuegi, UU Congregation of the North Hills
- Liz Perkins, UU Congregation of the North Hills
- Carol Stowell, UU Congregation of York
Administrative Staff. Richard Williams (UU Congregation of Wyoming Valley) serves as Director (20 hours/week). Kristi Lado (First UU Church of Berks County) is the Administrator (12 hours/week). Both staff persons work from their own communities.

Official Mailing Address. The Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17113 generously allows UUPLAN to use their address as our mailing address. Periodically, Anita Mentzer kindly checks for mail and forwards it.

Accountants. Miller Dixon Drake, LLP (MMD) of Harrisburg is our accountant. They produce monthly reports, handle filings with the state and federal government and issue checks. While we compensate MMD, they contribute approximately 70% of their fee as “in-kind” support of UUPLAN, for which we are grateful.

Organization: In 2010, UUPLAN was established as a volunteer organization to advocate for Unitarian Universalist values in the Pennsylvania legislature after two founding board members learned about state advocacy networks at a UUA General Assembly. We have had generous support from the UU Service Committee, the UU Funding Program and many generous congregations and individuals.

Financial Support: There are 38 UU congregations in Pennsylvania. Since the last Annual Meeting in the fall of 2017 both organizations of UUPLAN received financial support from:
- 236 individuals representing 30 different Pennsylvania congregations.
- 20 Pennsylvania UU congregations.
- The UU Funding Program and the UU Service Committee

Our e-mail list has grown to 1,596 subscribers. We use social media and have 700 Facebook followers and 130 Twitter followers.

UUPLAN Justice Teams: Throughout 2018, our seven UUPLAN lay-led justice teams engaged in distinct advocacy campaigns. UUPLAN members participated in a variety of actions, demonstrations and visits with Pennsylvania and US Congressional representatives and their staffs. Those seven Justice Teams are:
- Immigration Justice
- Gun Violence Prevention
- Economic Justice
- Good Government
- Reproductive Justice
- Environmental Justice
- Criminal Justice Reform (formerly Anti-Mass Incarceration Justice)

The Justice Teams meet monthly via zoom video conferencing. Twice a year, the team leaders and many team members (and others) meet in-person at UUPLAN gatherings.

In late 2018, the Immigration Justice team decide to go on hiatus for 2019. The justice team leaders felt they and those active in immigration issues could better use their time and energy focusing on the linchpin systemic issues thwarting democracy in Pennsylvania.
Recently what had been the Anti-Mass Incarceration Justice Team changed its name to Criminal Justice Reform Justice Team acknowledging the wide range of issues the team addresses.

The work of the justice teams under the leadership of committed justice team leaders is the heart of UUPLAN. That talent, vision, wisdom and energy helps make our state and nation more just. The Board of Trustees and Staff of UUPLAN are grateful and inspired by those committed souls.

**2018 Overview and Focus of UUPLAN and Our New Mission Statement.**

Justice and democracy in Pennsylvania are mired by gerrymandering; unlimited legal gifts to elected officials; and antiquated election laws. All justice issues in Pennsylvania are stymied by these linchpin issues.

In 2018 the UUPLAN Board of Trustees explored the harsh reality of being effective promoting justice with these burdens. Our previous 33-word mission statement included many compelling words such as: “promote, communicate, educate, inspire…” all wonderful concepts, but no one could remember the mission statement. We realized that to effectively pursue justice we must vote, continue to advocate and we must get “seats at the policy-making tables”. We can’t just ask others to make just policies, we must do it ourselves….thus our **new 11-word UUPLAN Mission Statement**: “To pursue justice by voting, advocating and making just public policies.”

We actively advocate to add to our UU culture the notion that, at some time in one’s life, it should be normal and expected to serve in an appointed or elected public policy making position. It’s a long-term cultural change. It is what the Tea Party, the evangelical Christian community and some smart Republicans have been doing for the past decade. UU’s need to make just public policies not just ask others to do so.

**2018 Advocacy:** UUPLAN supported the League of Women Voters lawsuit that caused the eighteen Pennsylvania US congressional districts to be re-drawn prior to the November 2018 general election. Five of the eighteen petitioners in the lawsuit were Pennsylvania UU’s (including UUPLAN’s Mark Lichty of the UU Fellowship of the Poconos and Tom Ulrich of the UU Church of the Lehigh Valley). The new districts caused Pennsylvania’s US Congressional delegation to change from 13 Republicans and 5 Democrats in the 2017-18 legislative session, to 9 Republicans and 9 Democrats in the current 2019-20 legislative session. This is a big deal.

UUPLAN (under the leadership of Anita Mentzer) organized the “**Daring Democracy**” Book Tour that took place in twenty-one UU Pennsylvania churches in January, February and March 2018. Adam Eichen (who authored the book along with Frances Moore Lappe) toured Pennsylvania with Rabbi Michael Pollack (of March on Harrisburg – a Pennsylvania redistricting reform and good government organization).
UU congregations provided home hospitality and publicity for community events held at their churches. The book was one of the UUA’s two 2018 Common Read selections.

UUPLAN was prominently represented at the Fair District PA anti-gerrymandering rally that was held at the Pennsylvania Capitol in Harrisburg on April 16, 2018. UUPLAN provided transportation assistance for several Pennsylvania UUs attending the rally.

UUPLAN partially funded the transportation costs of Pennsylvania UUs attending the Poor Peoples Campaign’s Call to Mass Action Rally in Washington, DC on June 23, 2018.

UUPLAN co-hosted the Shut Down the Berks Detention Center (an Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detention Center) Rally held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on August 20, 2018.

UUPLAN produced and hosted Leadership Day on October 13, 2018 at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg. Forty-four persons attended the full day event. Rabbi Michael Pollack and Rev. Neal Jones presented inspirational keynote speeches in preparation for the November 2018 mid-term elections. UU Steve Snell, 2018 candidate for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, spoke of his campaign running for the Pennsylvania state legislature. Understanding the mechanisms by which laws are enacted in Pennsylvania, gerrymandering, dark money in politics and antiquated election laws were topics. Experiencing the role of white supremacy in conversation and storytelling was an unexpected benefit.

In February 2019 UUPLAN joined with the March On Harrisburg, League of Women Voters PA, Represent US PA and Common Cause PA to form the Democracy Partnership of PA. The combined efforts of five organizations is to focus on the linchpin issues that deny Pennsylvanians democracy in our state legislature. Town Hall meetings are taking place in the spring of 2019 throughout Pennsylvania.

**Our 2018 Major Pennsylvania Legislative Accomplishments**

See the Justice Team Reports later in this report for additional details of the 2018 work of the justice teams.

One tangible measure of accomplishment is the improvement in existing public policies or enacting of new legislation that make Pennsylvania, the US and the world more just and peaceful.

In 2018 with lobbying by UUPLAN justice teams and many other individuals and partners, the PA legislature enacted:

a.) Safe Harbor Legislation providing human trafficking reform to stop charging juveniles with crimes, such as prostitution, and treating them as victims.
b.) An amendment to existing criminal law to require those served with Protection From Abuse (PFA) orders or convicted of domestic abuse to surrender firearms to law enforcement rather than to family members.

c.) Clean Slate Legislation limiting access to criminal records after ten conviction-free-years.

In addition, with lobbying by UUPLAN justice teams and many other partners, a 2018 PA House Bill restricting a woman’s right to an abortion in certain situations, that had been passed by the Pennsylvania Senate and by a Pennsylvania House Committee, was never brought to a vote in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. It was expected that Governor Wolf would have vetoed the bill; but after the Pennsylvania House did not consider the bill, the governor did not have to veto the bill just prior to his re-election in November 2018.

Disappointments are significant as Pennsylvania is very gerrymandered and burdened with antiquated and restrictive election laws. In Pennsylvania it is legal for elected officials to received unlimited gifts. Work on those three linchpin issues is a priority and it continues.

**Board of Trustees Approach for the Future.** The UUPLAN Board of Trustees actively discusses long term best practices and structure for UUPLAN to be truly effective. It realizes effective social justice work is greatly enhanced if strong personal relationships exist among Pennsylvania UU’s, their congregations, social justice partners and policy makers and their staffs. Thus efforts are focused to strengthen UUPLAN’s legislative community relationships and UUPLAN’s congregational relationships.

**Legislative Community Relationships.** The Legislative Community is comprised of elected officials, their staffs, other social justice advocates, other legislative Organizers and our UUPLAN Justice Teams. It is currently envisioned that a mechanism for building the relationships among these people is a “UUPLAN Harrisburg Organizer” who lives in or near Harrisburg.

**Congregational Relationships.** The Board of Trustees and Staff realize we must create strong personal relationships among individual UUPLAN Board of Trustee members, and the individuals and staffs of the thirty-eight UU congregations in Pennsylvania. Each of the eight UUPLAN trustees is a committed “Board Representative” to one or more of Pennsylvania’s UU congregations that are not their own congregation.
Current Board Representatives are:

Dennis Brunn: First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia
UU Church of the Restoration

Margaret Carrow: Schuylkill Unitarian Universalists (an emerging congregation)
Unitarian Universalists of Cumberland Valley (Wellsprings)

Bill Clinton: Unitarian Congregation of West Chester
Main Line Unitarian Church

Peg Dobrinska: UU Congregation of Susquehanna Valley
United Churches of Lycoming County

Stephen Fuegi: Ginger Hill UU Congregation
Allegheny UU Church

Liz Perkins: UU Church of the South Hills
East Suburban UU Church

Joan Sabatino: UU Fellowship of the Ligonier Valley

Carol Stowell: UUs of Gettysburg
UU Church of Lancaster

Board Representatives visit those congregations at least twice a year. Board Representatives develop relationships with staff, youth, UUPLAN liaisons and congregation members.

They provide encouragement to become justice advocates and to understand the “vote, advocate, and make just public policies” that is UUPLAN’s mission. It is hoped that the mission will become a part of our UU culture as it is in the evangelical Christian and conservative communities.

**Making Connections:** I provide sermons and workshops at UU congregations. In 2018 I visited 13 of our 38 Pennsylvania congregations.

If your congregation might appreciate a visit from me in the near or far-future, please contact me. I’d be honored to speak at a Sunday service and/or provide a concise workshop.

Two Board of Trustees members (Carol Stowell and Margaret Carrow), Kristi Lado and I attended the June 2018 UUA General Assembly held in Kansas City, Missouri.
I attend monthly in-person Pennsylvania Interfaith Justice Coalition meetings in Harrisburg.

UUPLAN members and staff regularly attend workshops and participate in meetings with social justice partners and congregations, in addition to the monthly video conference meetings of the UUPLAN Justice Teams. Many justice team members attend hearings, justice actions and legislative and justice events.

During this past year UUPLAN has been a key partner with numerous faith and justice organizations and assisted with press conferences, legislative hearings, rallies and demonstrations.

For many of our initiatives, we collaborate with the multi-faith community including the PA Council of Churches, Pennsylvania Interfaith Power and Light, the Interfaith Justice Coalition Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild (POWER) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN) in southwestern Pennsylvania and the Poor Peoples Campaign. Through these and other involvements, we are able to intersect with the frontline communities for whom justice is denied.

UUPLAN continues to be the public face of Unitarian Universalism in the arena of social justice policy in Pennsylvania.

We are guided by our commitment to UU principles, with special emphasis on the following three: the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity and compassion in human relations; and the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process.

Your support and participation in UUPLAN and in our democracy is appreciated. Please contact me if you have thoughts or questions.

It is an honor to serve as the Director of UUPLAN.

In the faith,

Richard Williams, Director
### 2019 Board of Trustees, Staff and Accountants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Term Ends</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Joan Sabatino</td>
<td>President of the Board</td>
<td>First UU Church of Indiana PA</td>
<td>April 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis Brunn</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>Unitarian Society of Germantown</td>
<td>April 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Dobrinska</td>
<td>Treasurer of the Board</td>
<td>UU Fellowship Centre County</td>
<td>April 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Perkins</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>UU Church of North Hills</td>
<td>April 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Fuegi</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Clinton</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>UU Church of Delaware County</td>
<td>April 2022 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Carrow</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>Unitarian Church of Harrisburg</td>
<td>April 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Stowell</td>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>UU Congregation of York</td>
<td>April 2022 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristi Lado</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>First UU Berks County</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Williams</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>UU Cong. of Wyoming Valley</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miller Dixon Drake, CPA</td>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- *If elected at the 2019 Annual Meeting.*

### UUPLAN Justice Team Leaders 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Leaders</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Monthly Zoom Meeting Day and Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martha Copithorne/ Margaret Carrow</td>
<td>Criminal Justice Reform</td>
<td>Last Monday – 8:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mardys Leeper / Virginia Kirk</td>
<td>Economic Justice</td>
<td>3rd Thursday – 7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Mark / Bob Redfern</td>
<td>Environmental Justice</td>
<td>2nd Thursday – 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Stowell/ Ebe Emmons</td>
<td>Immigration Justice</td>
<td>On Hiatus 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Ulrich / Neil Goldstein</td>
<td>Good Government</td>
<td>4th Wednesday – 8:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Perkins / Judy Wilson</td>
<td>Reproductive Justice</td>
<td>3rd Wednesday – 7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Buglio</td>
<td>Gun Violence Prevention</td>
<td>3rd Tuesday – 7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Zoom Account:** [https://zoom.us/j/7132347624](https://zoom.us/j/7132347624)

Or Telephone or iPhone one-tap:
Dial: **+1 408 638 0968** or **+1 646 558 8656**
Meeting ID: **713 234 7624**
UUPLAN JUSTICE TEAM 2018 REPORTS

Criminal Justice Reform Team
(formerly Anti-Mass Incarceration Justice Team)

Team Leader: Martha Copithorne, First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia
and
Margaret Carrow, Unitarian Church of Harrisburg

We changed our name to reflect our broader mission. Our team is involved in criminal justice reform on the local, state and federal levels.

We frequently have guest speakers at our monthly meetings from partner organizations. Since our last annual report Paul Mack from the Coalition Against Death by Incarceration (CADBI), Nick Pressley of the ACLU PA Campaign for Smart Justice, Kavita Goyal updating us on CADBI goals, John Rowland from CADBI on the impact of the new prison mail regulations, and Evans Moore from Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM).

Legislative Successes for the 2017-2018 session:

- **Legislation passed:** SB 554 Safe Harbor in Human Trafficking. This bill will send minors who are victims of sex trafficking to treatment rather than prosecuting them.

- **Legislation passed:** SB 529 and HB 1419 Clean Slate Legislation, will provide for automatic sealing of 1) minor offenses and non-violent misdemeanors after an individual is crime free for ten years and 2) simple arrests without convictions as a matter of course.

- **Legislation blocked:** HB 741 – would have reinstated mandatory minimums for crimes involving drug sales and guns.

Four members of our team spoke at public hearings in Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and Pittsburg held by the state Sentencing Commission. We all spoke against the use of risk assessment tools in sentencing, arguing the tools are not accurate, are rife with racial disparities and do not support making individualized predictions.

Our team members lead local actions providing regular programming inside county jails (Chester and Centre Counties). We have been involved with partner organizations to provide voter information on local races, particularly District Attorney races. Team members have organized a forum in Harrisburg on ending cash bail and two community
forums in Erie: one on decriminalization of marijuana which led to a policy change in the city and another on avoiding the school to prison pipeline.

Travis Ferrell created two Comprehensive Resource Guides to Anti Mass Incarceration and to White Privilege. Links are on our justice team page on the UUPLAN website.

Our broader mission is also reflected in our active support of anti-racism training in our congregations and the efforts of the Poor People Campaign. Mass incarceration is fueled and sustained by racism and poverty.

Legislative goals for 2019-2020 session:
1. End Death by Incarceration/Life Without Parole
2. Reform the parole and probation systems: support Senate Bill 14
3. Oppose mandatory minimum sentences: oppose Senate Bill 8
4. Divest from for profit prison corporations
5. Bail reform
6. End the Death Penalty

**Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) Justice Team**
Team Leader Tom Buglio
Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

The UUPLAN Gun Violence Prevention team has taken a cue from Tom Ulrich's Good Government Justice Team, after talking last year at the UUPLAN conference in the fall. Tom invites many local and national leaders on his issue to be on his call, providing perspectives from the experts in the field. In that light, the GVP team has hosted someone from Giffords Group, Delco United to end Gun Violence, CeaseFire PA, Moms Demand Action, and Brady United on recent phone calls.

We celebrate the enacting of good GVP legislation on Domestic Violence, requiring those receiving a Protection From Abuse (PFA) order to turn over all guns to law enforcement authorities within 24 hours of being serve the PFA.

In 2019, we are focusing on the most likely bills to pass in Harrisburg and the US Congress.

Harrisburg: Best chance is ERPO-Extreme Risk Protection Order, permitting family, friend or police to petition the court to deny a person of gun rights if the person poses a danger to society or themselves. Senator Killion -R (my Senator) is the prime sponsor of this Senate Bill 90. He was the prime sponsor for the Domestic Violence bill that passed last session.

Washington DC: House Resolution 8 on Universal Background Checks has passed in the US House of Representatives, and we are lobbying for Senate Bill 42, its companion bill in the US Senate. We currently have a Call to Action to Senator Toomey to cosponsor this bill.
Economic Justice Team (EJT)

Team Leaders:
Mardys Leeper, Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County
and
Virginia Kirk, Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley

The EJT worked on issues related to health care and minimum wage. Although there was some discussion on payday lending and on a fair budget for Pennsylvania, no actions were taken on those two issues. We did also discuss root causes of the disparity in wealth, and did some brief exploration into employee ownership of businesses. We did not find any actions to take surrounding the issue. In the future in might be helpful to look at solutions to root causes of income and wealth disparity.

Work on health care
One key issue involved PA HB 2138 which would require work requirements for Medicaid. We urged “UUPLANers” to contact PA House members, and then PA Senate members for the companion bill. Unfortunately, both bills passed, but the Senate was fortunately unable to override Governor Wolf’s veto,. Thus no work requirements now in PA.

On the federal level, we called to urge a vote against the Farm Bill, which would impose work requirements on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

We continued calling Congress in DC to urge our representatives not to cut Medicaid by $1.5 trillion dollars and Medicare by $537 billion.

Mardys, Virginia and several people from the western part of the state went to Harrisburg for one day of the Poor People’s Campaign. We spoke with an aide from Sen. Folmer’s office concerning cuts to funding for adults with disabilities. We participated in the Arc Alliance demonstration urging increased wages for caregivers of adults with disabilities.

In December 2018 we helped advertise open enrollment for the ACA.

In March 2019 we co-sponsored, with two Indivisible groups, a health care conference at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County. Rev. Peter Friedrichs gave the invocation. The presentation involved art to impress us on the spiritual and physical damage caused by lack of health care, facts on the history and functioning of the ACA now, Medicare for All, and different types of Universal Health Care. Participants were asked to sign Pennsylvania Health Access Network (PHAN) petitions requesting state lawmakers to reduce the price of prescription drugs in PA and maintain essential health protections such as pre-existing conditions in PA.
Work on Raise the Wage
In the spring of 2018 Delaware County members attended a Raise the Wage rally at the Delaware County Court House. In May, Mardys and Virginia attended a Clear Coalition training on raising the wage. Later in the month Ken Ryznyk drove to Harrisburg for another Clear Coalition training but it was cancelled.

During the summer Tara Stephenson attended a Raise the Wage rally in Allentown. Rachel Mark represented UUPLAN at the yearly kickoff of the Raise the Wage board meeting in Harrisburg.

We attended Raise the Wage PA’s rally on MLK Day of Action in Germantown PA. Among the speakers was Senator Art Haywood.

On MLK Day of 2019 we participated in Germantown UU’s post card letter writing for Raise the Wage.

In February 2019, UUCDC sent Delaware County PA Senators and Representatives post cards urging them to vote for One Fair Wage. Since then we are working with Raise the Wage PA to convince 7 PA Senators to change their minds and vote for Senator Tartaglione’s bill for One Fair Wage in PA.

We feel frustration trying to find participants in all parts of the state. We would like to see each UU PA congregation have one member on our Economic Justice monthly call, initiate action on the issues in their own church, and return telling us what they have done.

When we need to reach out statewide, we don’t get very far on our own. We also feel that there is much intersectionality of the various UUPLAN issues, and perhaps UUPLAN would be a more effective organization if the teams worked together.

Reproductive Justice Team
Team Leaders: Judy Wilson, Main Line Unitarian Church and Liz Perkins, Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills

2018 featured continuing assaults on women’s autonomy and freedom of moral agency. Since the beginning of 2019 there have been 304 abortion restriction bills introduced into state legislatures. (Guttmacher).

The Republican-dominated legislature continues to introduce bills that pertain to only a small minority of situations (like late term abortions due to fetal abnormality or life of mother) and using inflammatory language like infanticide. Meanwhile they continue
obstructing or letting die many bills that would directly improve the lives of working women and families (such as Workplace Accommodations for Pregnant and Nursing Workers (introduced 4 years ago), Paid Family Medical Leave, and above all, Gerrymandering reform.

Our team continued its efforts on both the state level and the federal level, submitting official statements to the Department of Health and Human Services objecting to Pres. Trump’s effort to endorse moral or religious objections to providing medical care as well as objecting to Education Secretary Betsy DeVos’ proposal to weaken Title 9 regulations that protect victims of sexual assault and harassment.

We also wrote letters to the UUA urging more robust support of all these issues. One of the biggest and most egregious proposals is the ‘national Gag Rule’, stopping Title X money to any services that provide abortions or even talk about them. Title X was started in the ’70s to help the most vulnerable with family planning funds. They want to redirect that to non-medical crisis pregnancy centers and programs teaching abstinence only education. The AMA et al. is suing the administration over this.

On a hopeful note, we acknowledge that the new legislative session may be more favorable to progressive causes now that more women and more progressive men have been elected to positions in Harrisburg. We are also excited to help promote paid medical and family leave (www.paidleavesforpa.org), plus a new bill proposed by Reps. Sims and Daley requiring comprehensive, evidence-based sex education in PA schools, as well as continuing to support Fair Districts PA, March on Harrisburg, and the Poor People’s Campaign.

Immigration Justice Team

Team Leaders: Carol Stowell, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York and Ebe Emmons, Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills

In late 2018 the Immigration Justice Team decided to go on hiatus for 2019. Frustrated by the seemingly intractable linchpin issues and current federal government leadership that both stymie legislation to solve immigration issues, the team decided to focus their efforts elsewhere. A decision regarding the future of the team will be made in late 2019.

Carol Stowell explained her decision… “so I have decided that I will no longer spend my time reading the latest Trump Drama or trying to impact my local legislators on immigration issues since I have discovered the Republicans will follow the lead of the big guy in charge. On a personal level, however, I continue to serve on the board of the PA Immigration Resource Council and support two immigrant families who call me Mom and
Grandmother. Politically I am focusing on state and local politics and reading online newsletters such as The Context and Pennsylvania Capital-Star to learn about what is happening at the State level.

I am working with a March on Harrisburg that is dedicated to getting money out of politics. We have been lobbying twice a month in Harrisburg and have other activities planned. It is a right-left coalition since both liberals and conservatives together want to end corruption.

Working with my dear friend/advocate we have started a successful York Chapter of March on Harrisburg and have had many successful meetings with both Republicans and Democrats to focus on gerrymandering, a gift ban and voter reform.

**Good Government Justice Team**

Team Leaders:

Tom Ulrich, The Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley

and

Neil Goldstein, Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County

In 2018, the UUPLAN Good Government Team has continued to build strong working relationships with other state-wide organizations that focus on redistricting reform, election/voting rights reform, reforms to minimize money in politics, securing the vote reforms, and ethics in government reform. Some of those close allies include Fair Districts PA, League of Women Voters PA, Common Cause PA, March on Harrisburg, Represent Us PA, Clean Money Squad PA and Pa United to Amend.

A key goal going forward in 2019, is to connect more closely with local and regional groups that are forming good government advocacy groups in PA State House and PA State Senate Districts.