



Newsletter Date: 9/11/17

We believe our faith calls us to change the world

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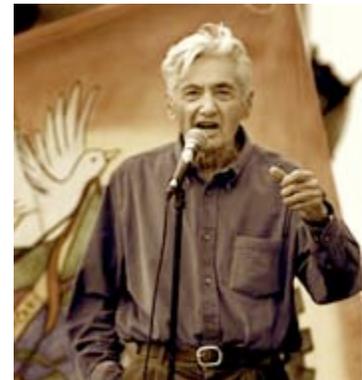
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Are you ready for a New Church Year?

Laura Wagner, Executive Director

There is a lot of information in this first newsletter for our new year. You are encouraged to read through it, get an idea of what's happening and then focus on what you CAN do – not what you can't.

"To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction."



"And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory."

Howard Zinn

**New! Podcast
Justice Connections**

**Interview with Senator
[William Brownsberger:](#)
[Reflections on Criminal
Justice reform](#)**

UU Mass Action is adding weekly podcasts! Podcasts are a way for us to share our stories. Each week you'll get to hear from fellow UUs, legislators, community partners, and justice leaders from many areas of our shared work. We will plan to keep these conversations to 15 min – we hope you take a few moments each week to enjoy Justice Connections!



UU Mass Action would love to visit your congregation this year!

Let's work together on strengthening UU organizing in Massachusetts. Laura Wagner, Executive Director, or Evan Seitz, Climate Justice Organizer, will be happy to lead a worship service and meet with you after the service to discuss how we can better work together.

We also welcome Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant to the UU Mass Action team! Gwendolyn is a member of UU Meeting of South Berkshire and the CEO and founding director of the [Multicultural BRIDGE](#) in South Berkshire. Gwendolyn is hoping to connect with UU congregations that are working to deepen their commitment to dismantling white supremacy. Learn more about training resources [here](#).

Laura's Sermon title: Justice Stories. At the center of any powerful movement you'll find amazing individuals who are creating justice. What can we learn from each other and how will we create justice during these difficult times.

Meet all our board members:
We welcome
Alejandra Duarte, First Parish in Framingham
Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant, UU Meeting So. Berkshire
Meet our Board and Staff [Here](#)

TAKE ACTION!

Protect Workers' Rights and Families!

Join the effort to collect signatures for the [Raise Up MA](#) Ballot Initiative!



Register for the campaign overview and signature gathering webinar [HERE](#)

Calling all UUs! Will you volunteer to gather signatures at coffee hour?

Raise Up's bold progressive agenda just brought us one step closer to an economy that works for all of us. On Wednesday, Sept 6, Attorney General Maura Healey certified our petitions for a \$15/hour Minimum Wage and Paid Family and Medical Leave. Raise Up MA is now poised to launch a massive signature drive to put them on the 2018 ballot. But we cannot do this without you! The legislative campaign for Raising the Minimum Wage to \$15 and Paid Family Medical Leave continues; however, to be sure our goals are met, we are called to gather signatures to place these questions on the Nov 2018 ballot.

The first weekend of collecting signatures will be Sept 16 & 17. Here's how you can take action:

1. Sign up as a volunteer lead and collect signatures – this can happen during coffee hour and/or organize a team to collect signatures in a public space. Contact: lwagner@uumassaction.org
2. Laura Wagner will train you on how to properly collect signatures – this training is crucially important! If the signatures are not recorded correctly, they will not count! We don't want anyone's effort to be wasted! Webinar Date: Thurs Sept 14th at 7:00 PM [Register HERE](#)
3. UU Mass Action pledged 1,000 signatures (I know we can easily top this number!) After collecting the signatures, let Laura Wagner know your count and send the petitions to the address you'll be provided.

If you'd like to attend a full training session offered by the Raise Up MA Coalition, there are two upcoming opportunities you can join:

Lexington: **Monday, September 11, 7-8:30 PM**, Cary Memorial Library - Large Meeting Room.

Brookline: **Sunday, September 17, 2-4 PM**, Coolidge Corner-Meeting Room, 31 Pleasant Street

Upcoming Hearings

Tues Sept. 19th presents an exciting opportunity to join forces with fellow activists. Here's what's happening and how you can participate.

[Joint Committee on Telecommunication, Utilities and Energy H.2700/S.1876, Increase RPS and Ensure Compliance with GWSA & S1849 Transitioning to 100% Renewable, Room A2 at 1:00 PM](#)



Hearing room A2 is a small room. If you plan to arrive early and want to testify, that's encouraged. However, since most people won't even fit into the room, it's not the best strategy to just hang out there. With this in mind, here's the plan:

Rally at 11:45 – 12:15: outside, in front of the State House (we'll let you know if the location changes).

Lobby, 12:15 – 12:45: Stop by your legislators's office to lobby for these bills, plus additional [MA Power Forward Priorities](#).

1:00 – 2:00: Attend the hearing, if you can get into the room

[Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Hearing: S.1004/H.2365 Raise the Minimum Wage to \\$15, Gardner Auditorium 12:00 PM](#) ["The Cliff Effect"](#)

10:30 -11:00 AM: Rally and press conference, Room 222 in the State House

11:00 – 11:50 AM: Lobbying, stop by your legislators’s office and advocate for Paid Family & Medical Leave and Raising the Minimum Wage to \$15 per hour.

12:00 – 5:00 PM: Join the hearing in the Gardner Auditorium!

Climate activists are encouraged to join this hearing after you finish lobbying for climate priorities. We need more investment in clean, renewable energy in MA, which will create more living wage jobs. These two issues are closely intertwined. Let's support each other!

Tue Oct 3: [Joint Committee on Telecommunication, Utilities and Energy](#)

(time & location TBD)

[S.1846/H.2706 Solar Power & the Green Economy](#), Sen. Eldridge /Rep. Mark

[S.1831/H.3396 Solar Power in Environmental Justice and Urban Comm](#), Sen. Chang Diaz/Rep. Holmes

Tue Oct 17: [Joint Committee on Telecommunication, Utilities and Energy](#)

(time & location TBD)

[S.1847/H.3400 Clarifying Authority & Responsibilities of DPU](#), Sen. Eldridge/ Rep. Kulik

[S.1855/H.2698 Protect Ratepayers from Pipeline Expansion Costs](#), Sen. Jehlen/Rep. Gordon

[S.1845/H.2683 Protect Consumers from Paying for Gas Leaks](#), Sen. Eldridge/Rep. Barber

To access the legislation tracking sheet for all UU Mass Action legislative priorities, click [HERE](#)

Note: There are tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet for each issues area

TAKE ACTION FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

There have been many developments to organizing efforts to protect our vulnerable immigrant communities all while the threats continue to mount. We have dodged a planned federal raid, grotesquely named, “Operation Mega.” Read the story [here](#) But, the threat remains. Thousands of our neighbors remain vulnerable to on-going ICE actions. Last month NH set up a road block on Rte. 93 which is already being challenged for violating peoples’ 4th amendment rights. While “drug raids” were emphasized, this road block, in fact, took two children into custody and separated countless families by detaining people just trying to drive home from work.



Now is a time to reflect on what is happening, hear from those who are directly affected and listen to immigrant leaders. It is not a time for being reactive, but rather, to evaluate what actions are being taking now and distinguish between what is working and what is not.

To help with this, UU Mass Action, in partnership with America Friends Service Committee, is bringing Ravi Ragbir to Boston on Oct 4th. This event is being planned with input and support from coalition partners and will be a time to learn from Ravi Ragbir, and our local leaders, about how to strengthen our resistance. Please join us at this event:

Sanctuary Hood: Creating Sanctuary Everywhere

Featuring: Ravi Ragbir. Learn more about Ravi's story here: [Democracy Now!](#) [PRI Interview](#)

When: Saturday Oct 7, 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Where: 138 Tremont St, Boston (Cathedral of St. Paul)

[Web announcement](#) [Facebook Page](#) [Flyer](#)

- Beyond Accompaniment - meeting the needs of the immigrant communities
- Beyond Know Your Rights - keeping our communities safe
- Sanctuary Hood - creating sustainable, proactive sanctuary communities

Community activist, father, husband - Ravi Ragbir came to the US from Trinidad in 1991. He became a lawful permanent resident in 1994 but an immigration judge issued a final deportation order in 2017. He is scheduled for removal in January 2018.

Through his own struggle, Ravi became an activist working to support others in immigrant communities who also face being torn from their families and exiled from the US. Ravi founded the New Sanctuary Movement in NYC and is a dedicated leader and organizer fighting for human rights.

Updates on Individuals:

Mamadou (*Update provided by our partners at Mass Communities Action Network*)

I heard yesterday from Mamadou's lawyer. Some of you may remember that back in March we heard from a law firm attempting to get young Mamadou asylum. ICE had said if they could place him before the end of the day, ICE would release him. We found him a wonderful woman, Tania, willing to house him. Then ICE ran tests and determined he was over 18. Unsurprisingly, on follow up, he isn't. He spent 6 months in detention. Tania was able to see him there and shared with me that he is a faithful young man and a thoughtful listener. She said he brought hope to the room.

That hope was not for nothing. He has finally been released following successful merits hearing earlier this week that granted him asylum! **Mamadou has found a host family in New Hampshire and hopes to start high school in a few days.** It is so wonderful to hear this type of good news in these moments. *We hope to keep you updated on his story.*

David

Many of you generously responded to calls for handwritten letters to help this man. David came to this country at age 16 and is now 35 years old. He had an active asylum case but, despite paying an attorney and covering the filing fee, the attorney never took the action he promised and the filing deadline was missed. This resulted in an order of removal being issued.

David's family has been emotionally and financially devastated. David was held at the Bristol County Detention center. He hired another attorney and approximately 70 letters were sent in support of David which pleaded to have his case re-opened (the original attorney was disbarred). Sadly, the new attorney, who is highly respected, also misled David and did nothing that he promised. David was relocated to a detention center in Louisiana and then deported.



UU Mass Action is working with [UUSC](#) and the [Love Resists](#) campaign to help maximize resources and strengthen our resistance

LOVE
RESISTS

TAKE ACTION FOR ENDING MASS INCARCERATION & RACIAL JUSTICE

A Call to Action from our Friends at the Louis D Brown Peace Institute

"As you know, we have been advocating for H.742 "An Act Amending Victim Compensation Statute" Too many families are re-traumatized when they are eventually denied Victim Compensation because of a clause in the state statute that requires a family's claim be reduced or denied in the event their loved one "contributed to" their own death. When families are denied Victim Compensation, they're punished for their loved one's murder.

We believe it is a human right to lay your loved one to rest with respect and dignity. And we have the opportunity to make sure that right is extended to families of murder victims in their time of greatest need."

The hearing will be: **September 12 at 1pm** at the State House before the Judiciary Committee. This is likely too short of notice for you to attend if you're just learning about this now, but that ok – you can still take action! Here's how:

Call your legislators: find the info here: <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

Call script:

"Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a constituent. I'm calling to ask you to support **H.742 "An Act Amending Victim Compensation Statute"** so that the circumstances of a loved one's homicide cannot be used to determine eligibility for funeral and burial reimbursement. It's a priority to me that survivors of homicide victims are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve, especially in their time of greatest need. Please let your colleagues on the Judiciary Committee know that H.742 is important to your constituents. Thank you."

Send in written testimony in support of this bill. Find the Joint Committee on Judiciary members' contact info here: <https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J19>

UPDATES & ACTIONS FROM OUR CERTIFIED WORKING GROUPS

BLACK LIVES MATTER (CWG:BLM)

Please mark your calendars and join us in Arlington Center for the Next Quarterly Meeting of the BLM Certified Working Group.

When: Sun Sept 24, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

You can find the Proposed Agenda & Discussion Covenant [HERE](#)

ECONOMIC EQUITY IN POLITICS (CWG:EEP)

The next conference call for the Economic Equity in Politics (EEP) is: Tue 9/12, starting at 7 PM. You can find the Proposed Agenda & Calling Information [HERE](#)

From Voter Choice MA

In June, Voter Choice Massachusetts conducted a professional statewide poll and found that 20% of Massachusetts voters need more information about ranked choice voting, so now is the time for a statewide education and fundraising campaign, both of which are necessary to lay the groundwork for a strong victory on a 2020 ballot question.

We are speaking all over the state. We are giving 10-20 talks per month and would like to do even more. Please request a speaker to provide our slideshow presentation at your next community meeting. Visit: http://www.voterchoicema.org/request_a_speaker

We are collecting endorsements from elected officials, political organizations, community, religious, and business organizations. Please connect us to organizations and prominent people you think would like to be added to our list of ranked choice voting endorsers.

We are embarking on a fundraising campaign to cover our monthly \$500 volunteer expenses and to hire professional organizers to ensure we thoroughly cover all parts of Massachusetts. Please become a member-supporter by giving \$10 per month or more. Give generously at:

<http://voterchoicema.org/donate>

We are building up our local organizing chapters: from the Berkshires to the Cape and many metro areas in between. To find a local meeting near you, visit: <http://voterchoicema.org/calendar>

Remember to follow us on Facebook -- <http://facebook.com/voterchoicema>

And Twitter <http://twitter.com/voterchoicema>

From American Promise

Please Assist in Collecting Signatures for The Massachusetts Ballot Initiative in Support of The 28th Amendment.

Here is a summary of the ballot initiative text, the full submitted text can be found [HERE](#)
The Citizens Commission Concerning a Constitutional Amendment for Government of the People Act

This Act establishes a non-partisan Citizens Commission to advance Massachusetts' policy in favor of amending the U.S. Constitution to affirm that:

- Corporations and other artificial entities do not possess the inalienable Constitutional rights of the People
- Campaign contributions and spending can be regulated and limited in order to eliminate the undue influence of money on elections and government

It is the intent of this Act:

- To protect the integrity and fairness of elections and government
- To prevent corruption
- To secure the right of all Americans to be represented and to participate in self-government as equal citizens
- To protect the freedom of speech, of the press, and other rights of all Americans
- To ensure the constitutionality of sound regulation and operation of corporations and other economic entities by the people.

We need to collect 65,000 signatures in 9 weeks between Sept. 20, 2017, and Nov. 22, 2017, to place

this initiative on the Massachusetts ballot in 2018. Many volunteers will be needed to accomplish this important task and we need your help. Please go to <http://peoplegovernnotmoney.org/> to learn more and to volunteer. Thank you for your support!

To contact us or to join the Economic Equity in Politics Certified Working Group, please go to:
<http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/EEP-CWG>

EVENTS, EDUCATION AND FORUMS

Looking for ways to live you values?

*Note: Events Below are sponsored or co-sponsored by
UU Mass Action, or are being offered by our UU
partners*

How to Be an Effective Citizen Lobbyist

With State Senator Cindy Friedman and Colleen Kirby

When: Mon Sept 18, 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Where: 630 Massachusetts Ave, Arlington - First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington (vestry)

Would you like to learn more about how to make your voice heard and influence government decisions? Join us for a conversation with State Senator Cindy Friedman and Colleen Kirby, the Criminal Justice Legislative Specialist for the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and a member of First Parish Arlington's Mass Incarceration Working Group.

This free program is sponsored by First Parish Arlington's Mass Incarceration Working Group and is open to all. Questions? Email end-mass-incarceration@firstparish.info

ACLU Freedom Agenda Lobby Day

When: Wed Sept 27, 9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Where: State House, 24 Beacon Street, Boston [RSVP HERE](#)



From the Muslim travel ban and the repeal of DACA to dragnet deportations that are tearing apart loving families and entire communities, immigrants are under attack. And it's not just at the federal level.

We must defend the Lunn victory in the legislature by vigorously opposing Baker's bill — and push even harder to ensure that Massachusetts law enforcement agents don't spend a dime or lift a finger in the service of Trump's reckless anti-immigrant agenda.

Join us on Lobby Day and tell lawmakers: We don't want Massachusetts to have anything to do with Trump's deportation machine!

Anti-Racism Workshop Series - Facilitated by The Antiracism Collaborative

When: Sept 24th, Oct 1st, Oct 15th and Oct 22nd from 12:00pm – 2:30pm

(Includes a light lunch offered at 11:30 am)

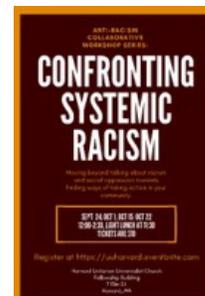
Where: 7 Elm Street, Harvard, MA The Fellowship Building of the Harvard UU Church

Cost: \$10 per person

Registration:

Step 1 – Receive your ticket from [Eventbrite](#)

Step 2 – Complete your registration form – [Registration form](#)



This course will focus on bridging a deep understanding of personal and structural racism into commitments and a solid plan to move forward! If you're looking to understand your experiential role in the dynamics of systemic racism or if you are interested in finding the next step in framing your role in social justice movements. This course is geared to move beyond talking about racism and social oppression and set on finding ways to take action, whether in your own personal sphere and in your community.

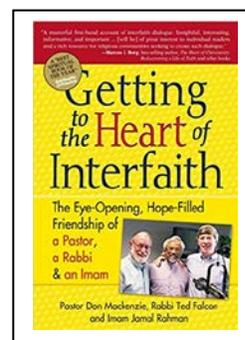
Build Relationship with Our Neighbors at the Islamic Center of Boston, Wayland

The Interfaith Book Club Presents: Getting to the Heart of Interfaith

When: Sun Oct 15, 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Where: ICB Wayland, 126 Boston Post Rd, Wayland

The story of a pastor, a rabbi and an imam and the friendship that grew out of their search for mutual understanding. RSVP here: bookclub@icbwayland.org



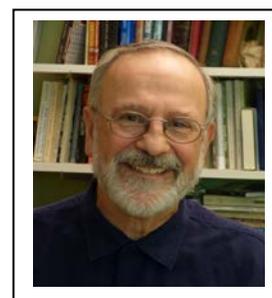
Speaking By Heart: The Art of Speaking Without a Manuscript

When: Nov 5 – 7, 2017

Where: The Rowe Center, Rowe MA

Find a full description and Register [HERE](#)

Workshop Leader: Rev Stephen Shick



Are you a pastor, an activist, or someone yearning to communicate with greater effectiveness socially or in your business? Whether you're a seasoned speaker or you're about to face your first audience, or even if you're preparing to speak at a family gathering, do you have a feeling that you could be a better speaker — if only you knew how?



Give: [Hurricane Relief Fund](#)

