

# FAITH ACTION NETWORK

*A Partnership for the Common Good*

August 2017

Dear friends in the Pacific NW Conference of the United Church of Christ,

We at Faith Action Network want to say [THANK YOU](#) for the presence and support of your congregations in our work. Since your Pilgrim Firs meeting in the spring, we realize that while we are in close contact with some of you, others might not hear regular updates from FAN. We hope to change that and open up even greater lines of communication.

From the founding of FAN six years ago, you have been active shapers of this work for justice as well as significant financial supporters. Keystone UCC Pastor Rich Gamble co-chaired our [Governing Board](#) and inspired the vision for over five years. Most recently, Rev. Jim CastroLang has joined our Board to bring a UCC and Eastern Washington perspective to this statewide work. Your Conference Minister Mike Denton is an important voice on our [Interfaith Leaders' Council](#), offering creative and faithful impetus for our public action together. For each of the past three years, we have hosted Justice Leadership Program interns who have contributed to the work of FAN.

Eighteen UCC churches have made a pledge to work hand in hand with FAN as a member of our [Network of Advocating Faith Communities](#); we work with many others who have not formalized this relationship yet. This network is now 128 faith communities' strong and includes more than 6,500 individuals, putting Christians, Jews, Muslims, Unitarians, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Quakers in collaboration with each other for justice. UCC leaders abound in our work as [liaisons](#), [legislative district coordinators](#), and [workgroup](#) facilitators, like Steve Clagett of your Justice & Witness Ministries. Many of you participate in our events through the year, like [Interfaith Advocacy Day](#) and [Spring Summits](#).

Coming up are our [Fall Cluster Gatherings](#), where you are welcome to join other faith communities near you in building interfaith relationships and strategizing for advocacy. Also planned are candidate forums, meetings with elected officials, and opportunities to stand in solidarity while confronting Islamophobia/hate/racism/white supremacy. We don't do this alone; we do it in community and coalition.

We especially welcome you to our [Annual Dinner](#) on Sunday November 19 in Renton, where we will celebrate our efforts together and gather strength for the work ahead.

We also want to let you know about some of the legislative victories we can celebrate from the 2017 session of the Washington State Legislature. In a deeply divided political climate, we have been able to celebrate 10 successful bills, most notably the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act and Higher Education in Prisons bill. Both of these took many years of work with our partner coalitions to finally succeed. See more about these 10 bills at our [End of Sessions Successes](#). We are grateful that an [operating budget](#)

was finally passed with some additions for human services, but regret that more comprehensive tax code reforms were not implemented this session. We yet await a Capital Budget agreement.

If you have been present in our work this year, thank you; if you have been wondering about FAN, we encourage you to sign up for our emails and action alerts at [fanwa.org](http://fanwa.org) and follow us on our [Facebook page](#). Most of all, we wanted to say we are grateful for each of you, your commitment to faithful justice work, within and outside of FAN. Your personal and collective presence in FAN's partnership for the common good is vital to us. Contact us anytime at [fan@fanwa.org](mailto:fan@fanwa.org) if you want to talk more, learn about what it means to join the network, invite a speaker to your church, or get some technical support for advocacy.

Blessings and gratitude,

*Elise DeGooyer Paul Benz*

Elise DeGooyer and Rev. Paul Benz, Co-Directors

