



*Fall 2016 Maine Ballot Initiatives*  
**Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN)**  
**ENDORSEMENTS and CHALICE LIGHTINGS**

MUUSAN is a statewide advocacy and public policy network anchored in our Unitarian Universalist faith and animated by its principles. MUUSAN realizes that, vital as they are, worship services, good works, and study groups are not enough. In a denomination that is characterized by social activism, we are called to bring our values to bear in the public arena: in the State Legislature, the news media, the development of policy, and the pursuit of justice.

*"Our State Advocacy Networks are powerful agents for justice. They stand strongly for the values of our faith and comprise an essential component of our national effort.*

*The grassroots actions of our networks can make a dramatic impact. As UUs work on the issues of the day in their communities, meeting their legislators and neighbors from across the state, their experience of our faith changes and deepens. Sometimes the world changes, too."*

*~ UUA President, Rev. Peter Morales*

To this end, **MUUSAN has endorsed four ballot initiatives:**

- Question 5 *Establishing ranked-choice voting*
- Question 4 *Increasing minimum wage to \$12 by 2020*
- Question 3 *Requiring background checks for gun sales and transfers*
- Question 2 *Establishing a 3 percent tax household income over \$200,000*

Questions 3, 4 and 5 have received active endorsements, while Question 2 has permission for the campaign to use the MUUSAN name only.

With this in mind, MUUSAN has created five **chalice lightings** aligning our Unitarian Universalist values with the ballot campaigns, hoping to inspire members to their own social action: Voting. We suggest using these throughout the month of October in any of the following ways:

- ❖ Use one chalice lighting each Sunday at the beginning of worship. Begin with the chalice lighting for MUUSAN, focus on one ballot initiative each week, and close with a chalice lighting for civil discourse.
- ❖ As a meditation or ritual. Begin with MUUSAN chalice lighting. Light a smaller candle for each ballot initiative. Close by lighting a tall taper for the chalice lighting for civil discourse.
- ❖ Use the chalice lighting that best fits the initiatives of strong interest within your congregation.

## Chalice Lightings

### A. MUUSAN—Introduction of MUUSAN

Nationally, Unitarian Universalists have been organizing State Advocacy Networks to magnify Unitarian Universalist voices for social justice in state legislatures and in the public square. Founded in 2012, Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN), Maine’s legislative ministry, links the state’s 25 Unitarian Universalist congregations to support statewide laws and policies in harmony with our Seven Unitarian Universalist Principles and to magnify our voices for strength.

#### **Chalice Lighting**

We light this chalice, a symbol of our unity  
with Unitarian Universalists across Maine.

*When we are attuned to both the cries and the beauty,  
to a spiritual source that impels our striving,  
we can live a life devoted to liberation and reverence.*

*~ Rebecca Anne Parker*

### B. Ranked Choice Voting (Question #5)

#### Introduction to Democracy in Action:

We covenant to affirm and promote “The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

Our faith is grounded in democratic ideals. With the benefits of democracy comes the obligation to maintain a just and inclusive process.

MUUSAN is an endorsing partner with the Committee for Ranked Choice Voting, a nonpartisan organization committed to *changing the way we elect our leaders to restore majority rule and put power back in the hands of the voters.*

#### **Chalice Lighting**

With this candle flame,  
we affirm Ranked Choice Voting.  
More voice. More Choices.  
Positive campaigning  
keeps our democracy  
alive, vital, engaged and relevant.

*~ Carie Johnsen*

## C. Minimum Wage (Question #4)

### Introduction to a Fair Wage

We covenant to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

*“Rewarding an honest day’s labor with a just living wage is the right thing to do, and advocating for fair compensation is our religious duty. It is only when our most vulnerable sisters and brothers achieve a basic level of economic and physical security that they can embark upon a ‘free and responsible search for truth and meaning.’ Making that spiritual journey possible for all people is the heart and soul of Unitarian Universalism.”*

—Rev. William G. Sinkford, Past-President of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA)

Unitarian Universalists have supported a fair minimum wage since 1961. The Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee are members of the national interfaith Let Justice Roll Living Wage Campaign. Today, we, the members of Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network, join Mainers for Fair Wages.

### **Chalice Lighting**

*“When the church is true to its nature,  
it stands as a moral guardian  
of the community and of society.”*

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

May this light be a beacon.

Shining the way out of poverty

Brightening the lives of women, children and families.

Fair compensation for a day’s labor.

A beacon for all in the work toward

a more just and equitable nation.

~ Carie Johnsen

## D. Responsible Gun Ownership (#3)

### Introduction to required background checks

We covenant to affirm and promote justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

*“In the bonds of our human family, we are created to be equal. We are guided by a divine will to treat each person with dignity and to live together as an inclusive community. Affirming our commitment to the common good, we acknowledge our enduring responsibility to care for one another.”*

—Unitarian Universalist Association

MUUSAN believes required background checks on sale or transfer of firearms, keeps guns out of the hands of those who should not have them and creates safer communities that care for each other.

**Chalice Lighting** ~ excerpt UCC "From Prayer to Action: Act to End Gun Violence"

*The prophet asks, "How long, O Lord, how long?"*

*Enough pain. Enough despair.*

*Enough injustice. Enough inaction.*

May this light be a symbol of our commitment to act.

## **E. Toward Civil Discourse**

### Introduction to Civil Discourse

The Maine Council of Churches believes *the obligation to show respect for others is rooted in the theological truth that we are all created in the image of God and take seriously the scriptural mandate to be "quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (James 1:19). As a member denomination we are grateful for their call to promote civil discourse. Together mutual respect and civility will prevail even when – especially when – disagreements are significant.* ~ excerpts from July 15, 2016 MCC letter encouraging congregational engagement.

### **Chalice Lighting**

May this small flame inspire big visions:

a flourishing democracy

in service to the common good;

freedom of expression

rooted in mutual respect;

a willingness to listen

for the thread of life

connecting each to all.

~ Carie Johnsen, inspired by the  
Maine Council of Churches Covenant for Civil Discourse