

Dear Friends & Supporters of the United Valley Interfaith Project,

I want to share with you some really exciting news about the future of UVIP – a stronger, brighter, more powerful future. This future was embraced by your Executive Council in mid-February, 2020.

And I want to invite you to UVIP's Annual Meeting to hear much more about that future, and to meet some key players in that future. The meeting is Sunday, March 22, 3:00-5:00 PM at the Church of Christ at Dartmouth College, 40 College Street. Please join us!

While many details remain to be worked out, here is the essence of this brighter, more powerful future:

- UVIP Member Groups who wish to do so will be able to become part of the Granite State Organizing Project, GSOP (for NH-based groups) or Vermont Interfaith Action, VIA (for VT-based groups) effective July 1, 2021 (16 months from now). This will give us access to more and better organizer support, training, professional development, and involvement in statewide organizing work, while continuing and strengthening our local work together on both sides of the river.
- Beginning July 1, 2020 (4 months from now) we will have professional organizer support from both GSOP and VIA to continue our current organizing work for economic justice and immigrant justice. Special care will be given to ensuring that our work that “cuts across the river” and involves both NH and VT is continued and strengthened. Asma will likely continue her involvement as part of the VIA staff, focused on immigration work, although that is still in the early discussion stage with VIA.
- The year from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 will be a “discernment year” during which each UVIP Member Group discerns whether to affiliate with GSOP or VIA effective July 1, 2020. Our March 22, 2020 Annual Meeting is the beginning of that discernment process, but it certainly will not be the end! We envision much contact between UVIP Member Groups and the GSOP and VIA staff, as well as connection between UVIP, GSOP, and VIA clergy during this “discernment year”. This will enable each UVIP Member Group to build the relationships and gather the information needed to make a sound, appropriate decision about their affiliation – or not – with GSOP or VIA effective July 1, 2021.
- During this same “discernment year” the UVIP Issue Teams and their work will continue, supported by the GSOP and VIA staff. At the same time, the Issue Teams will discern how that work will be organized and strengthened under the new structure beginning July 1, 2021.
- While no formal vote has yet been taken (and will not until early 2021) our plan is that UVIP will cease operations as UVIP on June 30, 2021, as those UVIP Member Groups who wish to join GSOP or VIA do so. Sometime later, UVIP will be legally closed down and our non-profit corporation status surrendered.

This brief summary cannot possibly give you all the details, but the Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 22 will! Keynote speakers will be GSOP Executive Director Sarah Jane Knoy, and VIA Executive Director Debbie Ingram and Deputy Director Melissa Battah. Please join us!

Sharon Parker
President, UVIP