

# 2014 Resolution of Conscience and Statement of Positions of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock

**WHEREAS**, the membership of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock [herein called UUCLR] recognizes the importance of continuing involvement in social justice issues, the right of conscience, and the use of the democratic process; and

**WHEREAS**, the Arkansas General Assembly will meet in Regular Session (Policy Session) in 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minister and the Board of Directors are charged with broad responsibilities for the conduct of ministerial and/or business affairs of UUCLR and desire to affirm the following Positions regarding certain Social Justice and Peace related issues:

## **1. Reform of Landlord-Tenant Laws**

The Landlord-Tenant Laws are stacked to more than necessarily protect the Landlord. The congregation advocates for amendments to strengthen the rights of Tenants and to assure responsibility is shared by both the parties;

## **2. Supportive Shelter/Housing for the Homeless**

Additionally, and another important housing related issue is that of developing appropriate legislation and programs to address a growing homeless population within the State and especially in its major urban centers of population;

## **3. Environment – Maumelle Watershed**

There are a number of environmental issues due to human activities that can produce adverse effects on the natural environment: specific concerns arise after Valero and Plains All American Pipelines announced they were talking about constructing a pipeline that would run through Arkansas, from Oklahoma to Memphis. This Valero Energy Pipeline construction project crossing our state will potentially, adversely impact the Lake Maumelle Watershed; and, additionally, potential overdevelopment within the Lake Maumelle Watershed area may cause irreparable harm to our major water supply;

## **4. Environment – Encourage State Pollution Control and Ecology to reassess permitting a large pig farm to be located in the Buffalo River Watershed**

The existing State permitting system that allowed a large scale pig farm to be located in the Buffalo River Watershed fell short – State Pollution Control and Ecology should reassess this permitted use; additionally, it is important to monitor all administrative and legislative proposals to assure protection of our earth;

## **5. Advocate against an Arkansas STAND YOUR GROUND Law**

An announced candidate running to become the next Attorney General for Arkansas is behind a push to bring the controversial "Stand Your Ground" law to our state. More than 20 states have "Stand Your Ground" laws including Tennessee and Mississippi, but not Arkansas. The law was discussed a lot in coverage of the George Zimmerman trial. UUCLR should advocate against an Arkansas STAND YOUR GROUND law. The citizens of this state have enough protections now, under our existing Arkansas Criminal Code;

## **6. Getting money out of politics**

Getting money out of politics should be a priority issue for our communities, state and nation. Four years after the Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission Supreme Court ruling, a ruling described by many as "the worst decision ever" -- we've seen a torrent of big money sweep through our local, state and national elections. In 2012, candidates and groups spent over seven-billion dollars trying to influence the election outcomes. The bulk of the money came from a small group of super-wealthy political contributors. As a result, our government looks less and less like a democracy -- rule by the people -- and more like a plutocracy -- rule by the wealthy; and,

**WHEREAS**, UUCLR desires to have a Resolution of Conscience and Statement of Positions [herein Positions] on the above recognized issues; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that UUCLR affirms its commitment to appropriate and positive action supporting:

- 1. Reform of Landlord-Tenant Laws**
- 2. Supportive Shelter/Housing for the Homeless**
- 3. Environment – Maumelle Watershed**
- 4. Environment – Encourage State Pollution Control and Ecology to reassess permitting a large pig farm to be located in the Buffalo River Watershed**
- 5. Advocate against an Arkansas STAND YOUR GROUND Law**
- 6. Getting money out of politics.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that UUCLR hereby authorizes the Minister, President of the Board of Directors and designees to advocate these Positions on behalf of UUCLR from the pulpit and at any public or other appropriate forum that provides an opportunity to promote and educate on the importance of said Positions.

ADOPTED THIS 1<sup>st</sup> DAY OF JUNE 2014

JUNE 2014 REGULAR MEETING OF THE UUCLR CONGREGATION