

Unitarian Universalist Society  
2425 Sierra Boulevard  
Sacramento, California 95825  
[www.uuss.org](http://www.uuss.org) 916-483-9283

January 12, 2024

*[Letters to]*

Hon. Doris Matsui and Hon. Ami Bera, M.D.  
United States House of Representatives

Hon. Alex Padilla and Hon. Laphonza Butler  
United States Senate

Washington, D.C.

**RE: Please sign onto the bill for a ceasefire now**

Dear Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_:

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento (UUSS) is anguished by the current violence in Palestine and Israel. We are horrified by the attacks on civilians by Palestinian fighters from Gaza and the taking of captives. We hold in our hearts everyone impacted. We are witnessing acts of the Israeli military against Palestinians in Gaza that [a group of 800 scholars and other experts warn is a potential genocide](#). Many Unitarian Universalists have roots in the Holy Land and the region around it, including those of Palestinian Christian, Palestinian Muslim, Jewish, and blended heritage. We grieve with all who are feeling pain from this situation as an embodied experience of generational trauma.

Our respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people is paramount to our call for an end to hostilities and the support of solutions that will bring about true safety for both Palestinians and Israelis. The values of justice and equity uphold the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people, many of whom have resisted their oppression non-violently for decades, with thousands dispossessed, imprisoned, and killed as a result.

We recognize that multiple truths co-exist. Prominent [human rights figures](#) and groups have concluded that an apartheid system exists in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. At the same time, we must name that antisemitism is a

serious global phenomenon which we absolutely oppose. And we believe it is not antisemitic to criticize the oppressive acts of the Israeli government and military. We oppose definitions of antisemitism that are used to stifle activism for Palestinian rights. And we amplify calls to oppose antisemitism and Islamophobia.

The Unitarian Universalist community has [pledged to dismantle the legacies of the Doctrine of Discovery](#), which paved the way for global colonialism, including in the lands of Israel and Palestine. Our faith has also [embraced a call to accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions within ourselves and our institutions](#).

These commitments must expand to widen the circle of beloved community and be more welcoming to Palestinians and those who work for Palestinian rights.

Because Unitarian Universalists have been on a journey of understanding and dismantling supremacy culture and colonialism, we must name that Israel's actions of apartheid and settler colonial displacement are escalating a fanatical racist attitude in Israel further enabled by the most ultra-right government in its history. We lift up the [Apartheid-Free Communities initiative](#), supported by Quaker, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and other organizations, dedicated to ending support for apartheid, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

Further violence will not bring about safety for anyone. **We urge our senators and representatives, the President, and Secretary of State to push for an immediate ceasefire on all sides, delivery of humanitarian aid, an end to Israel's bombardment and blockade of Gaza, and the rewriting of our country's foreign policy to enable ending the occupation and dismantling the mechanisms of apartheid.** The vision of collective liberation, siding with love and safety for all, demands no less from us.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees  
Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento  
2425 Sierra Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
[www.uuss.org](http://www.uuss.org)

This letter was drafted and submitted by the UUSS Social Justice Coordinating Council and approved by a vote of the Board of Trustees, after which it was mailed to members of the U.S. House and Senate.