

Statement of Conscience of the First Unitarian Church of San Jose on the Looming War with Iraq

(passed unanimously by the congregation 1/12/2003)

We, the members of the First Unitarian Church of San Jose, agree that the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, including those of our own country, is a desirable objective. However, the principles of Unitarian Universalism* bring us to the conclusion that the path to peace and disarmament must be a path of peace and justice, not war and violence.

We actively oppose a war on Iraq since it will inevitably result in the deaths of countless innocent people, and is therefore a violation of social and personal morality. We have not been attacked by Iraq, and a preemptive strike is a violation of international law and sets an unacceptable precedent. It will further destabilize the already trouble-ridden Mid-East region and increase the threat of terrorism. The hundreds of billions spent on this war will divert funds from crucial humanitarian programs and intensify poverty and unemployment at home and abroad.

We call upon our President and national government to seek justice, not revenge; to seek peace, not war; to seek freedom, not intensification of restrictions upon our civil liberties; to seek true acceptance and mutual respect between religious and ethnic groups, not harassment, with violence against some; to seek international security through economic and social security, not through military force. We urge our government and our countrymen and women to talk and walk with us the path of peace. And we, the members of this congregation, commit to work together to stop this war.

*** Principles of Unitarian Universalism**

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.