



CANADIAN
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UUA President Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt Arrested During Protest

January 29, 2026

Many people are feeling shaken by deaths of U.S. citizens, acts of harm, repression, and the silencing of voices calling attention to injustice, including the arrest of faith leaders for their public witness. Among these is the arrest of Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) in the United States.

As a Canadian Unitarian*Universalist faith community, we affirm the importance of freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, and the right to speak publicly about injustice without fear of criminalization. These commitments are foundational to democratic societies and to the inherent dignity and worth of every person.

Rev. Dr. Betancourt, alongside several other religious leaders, was at the U.S Capitol Complex in Washington DC participating in a peaceful protest against the violations of human rights recently and especially in Minnesota over the last few weeks. She was arrested for trespassing and released four hours later.

Unitarian Universalists in Canada are grounded in our Principles and in the shared moral commitments that guide us toward justice, compassion, and our deep interdependence. Our faith teaches that caring for those who are vulnerable, telling the truth about harm, and acting with courage are essential to the common good, especially in times marked by fear, polarization and violence.

The Canadian Unitarian Council, while an independent organization, is in relationship with the UUA through our shared values and commitment to justice and equity. We are in solidarity with our UU siblings and colleagues in the US. Our role is to bear witness to



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shared human values and to support individuals and communities striving to live those values with integrity. and not to endorse political positions or specific actions.

In this moment, we recommit ourselves to protecting human dignity, defending democratic freedoms, and nurturing the spiritual resilience needed to sustain hope and to help build a more just and compassionate world. We encourage communities to hold in care all those affected by violence, fear, and injustice, and to support one another through prayer, reflection, and mutual accompaniment.

Read the [UUA's statement](#) and follow the developing story on the [UUA Facebook page](#).

The CUC National Voice Team

UU Ministers of Canada (Co-Presidents) Rev. Samaya Oakley & Rev. Ben Robins
CUC Board of Trustees (Co-Presidents) Margaret Kohr & Rev. Debra Faulk
CUC Executive Director Vyda Ng

The Canadian Unitarian Council / Conseil unitarien du Canada (CUC) is the national association of Unitarian Universalist congregations across Canada.

The Unitarian Universalist Ministers of Canada (UUMoC) represents over 70 active ministers who serve congregations or work in the larger community.

We are a diverse faith religion bound by a shared commitment to equity and justice. We covenant to a set of principles that calls us to seek peace, liberty, and compassion, to search for truth and meaning, to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the democratic process, and to dismantle systemic barriers to full inclusion.

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