



2024-2025

Peace & Justice Center Annual Report



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Introduction

Since 1979, the Peace & Justice Center (PJC) has been a Vermont leader in mobilizing action, tackling the interconnected issues of human rights and economic, social, and environmental justice.

This has been a hard year for many of us. The non-profit sector has been attacked like never before by this federal administration, forcing us to do more with less resources. Authoritarianism, fascism, and bigotry are ascendant in many places across the world, and those of us who believe in peace, justice, and grassroots democracy are forced to fight harder and smarter. However, the Peace & Justice Center did not hold back, and we were able to expand on a lot of the great programs we started over the past two years, and we also were able to engage hundreds of new people in the struggle.

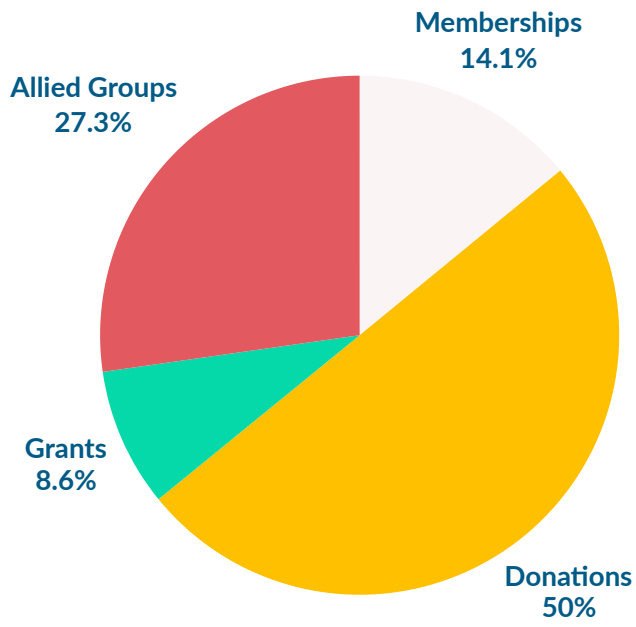
This year, we built on the incredible foundation we laid last year on our four focus areas: Peace-Building Education, Public Assembly, Collective Ritual, and Community Support.

We have engaged more than 100+ volunteers, clocking in more than 400+ volunteer hours. We held dozens of public events, all focused on bringing the community together around shared goals, increasing civic engagement, and fighting against fascism during this time of upheaval. We dedicated ourselves and our community to rebuilding grassroots democracy and ensuring all our rights are protected and expanded. We are so proud of all the work we have accomplished! We have original songs to share, letters to write, futures to build, and a better Vermont to live in thanks to all our work and the work of our tireless volunteers. We can't wait to continue this work with all of you over the course of the next year, and anticipate the struggles to come in solidarity with our neighbors.

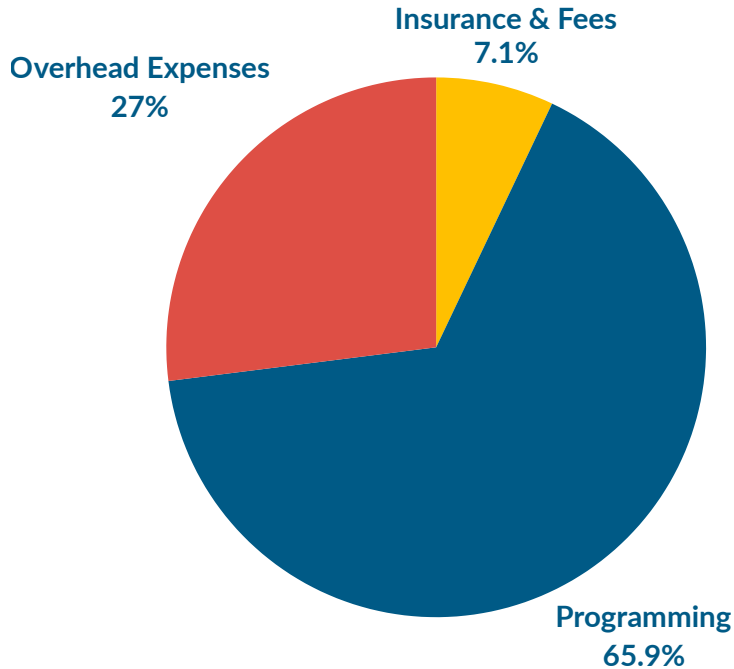


Budget Overview

Total Income: \$124,855.52



Total Expenses: \$105,673.00



- Number of First Time Donors: 226
- Number of Recurring Donors: 111
- Number of Recaptured Donors: 57

Public Assembly



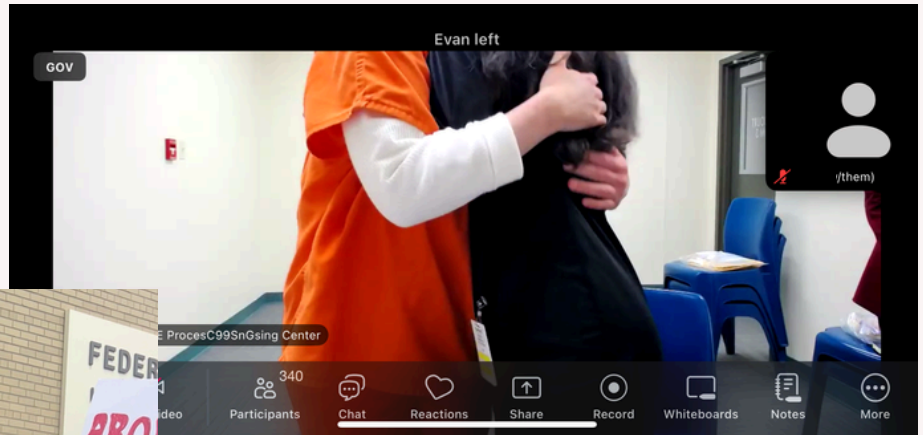
Demonstrations and actions fighting for greater civil rights, an expansion of peace and human rights, and freedom for all people

Empowering Grassroots Democracy

The Peace & Justice Center acted as an incubator for grassroots democratic action all throughout the last year! We hosted poster-making events for demonstrations, including the giant No Kings marches and Hands Off protests, as well as various smaller demonstrations throughout the year. Our Library of Things, which includes free use of our tables, megaphones, speaker and microphone sets, rolling carts, and more, was utilized by more than a dozen grassroots events, empowering them to activate folks at a gathering for little or no cost. Organizations like FreeHer VT, MAD Advocates, People's Pride, and more, all utilized our equipment checked out from our Library of Things. Our printer and community space was also utilized by various organizations, including Vermonters for Justice in Palestine, to help spread the word about their organization efforts. The space served as a gathering place for meetings and a location to view a court hearing for the family, friends, and allies of a community member who was detained by Immigration, Customs, and Enforcement (ICE). We were able to offer court support both in and outside court rooms and research support for organizing around ICE activity in Vermont.



We are proud to exist as a gathering space for expression, creativity, and upholding the inalienable right to the freedom of speech. We will continue to act as an incubator and promoter of autonomy and grassroots democracy.



Images: Mohsen Mahdawi walks out of the federal courthouse after being released from ICE detention, and Rümeyşa Öztürk hears the news of her release over a court date held virtually. Rümeyşa, Mohsen, and Kseniia Petrova's high-profile cases shined a light on ICE detentions in Vermont state prisons and their use of Leahy Airport to transport those they've taken. These were three of around 800 people detained by ICE in Vermont this year.

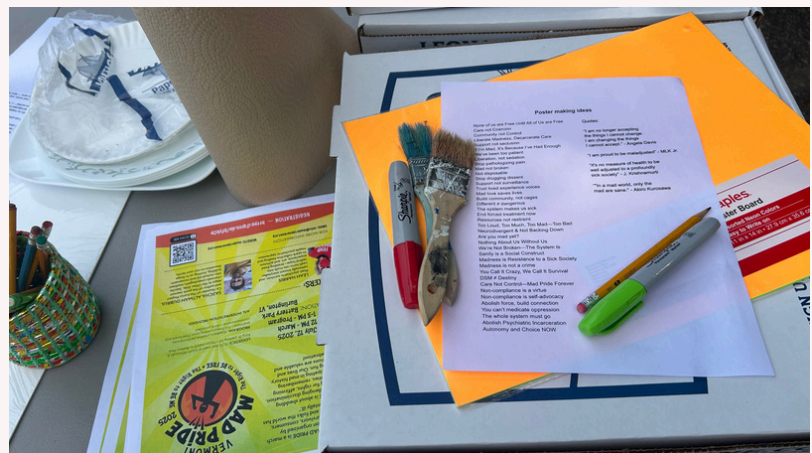


Public Assembly: By the Numbers

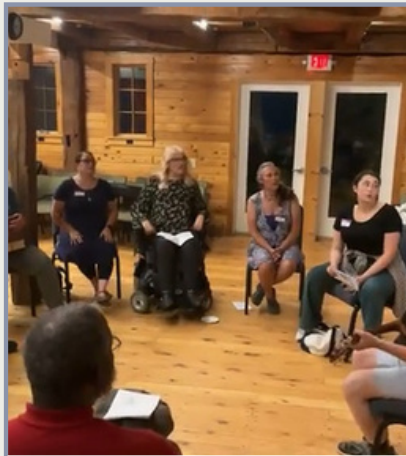
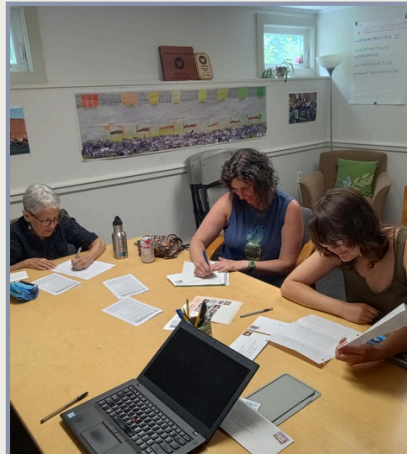
8 Sign-Making Parties

15 Grassroots Events Utilizing PJC Equipment from our Library of Things

10,000+ people engaged in
grassroots democracy at events
put on with Peace & Justice
Center support & equipment



Collective Ritual



Rebuilding the Commons

The Peace & Justice Center was proud to continue the work we started last year and expand our collective ritual campaigns. This year, we were able to write far more letters, hold far more folk song events in more locations, and make more zines, posters, and buttons than ever before. We believe that the work of building a peaceful and just world can be enlivening and fun, and we strive to empower people to feel like small acts can make a big difference. One prominent feature we added this year was writing our own folk songs in community together! You can find a copy of all the original folk songs we wrote at the back of this report in the appendix. Collective Ritual included cultivating space for collective grief, as well. Along with art and song, medicinal herbs were incorporated into events, inviting us to tend to our inner systems and our connection to the Earth.

Our Collective Rituals this year included:



Folk Song Singing



**Zine, Button, and Autonomous
Media Making**



Prison Letter Writing

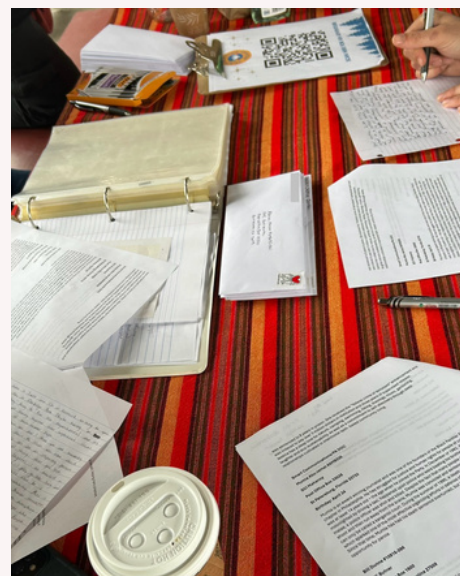
Prison Letter Writing: By the Numbers

30+ Incarcerated People
Received Letters, Helping Build
Community and Reducing
Recidivism

50+ People Wrote Letters to an
Incarcerated Neighbor

200+ Total Letters & Cards Sent

“It is so relieving that I can,
at any time, pick up a
paper & pencil & write to
you. Just to know that you
are there for me when I
write.”



Folk Song Singing: By the Numbers

3 Original Songs Written by the Community (lyrics in the appendix)

3 Different Locations for Folk Song Events

100+ People Unlocked Their Creativity, Sang and Wrote Songs Together

“Thank you to the Peace & Justice Center for leading us in song, and helping us craft our own amazing lyrics. It lifts my heavy heart ” - Jericho, VT Resident



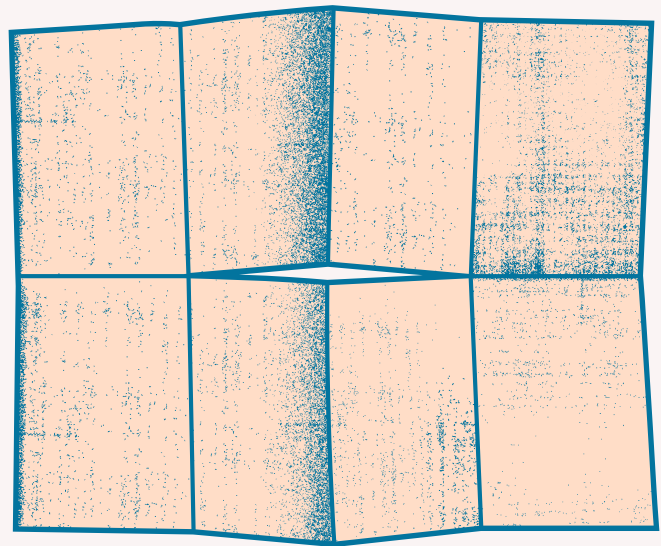
Autonomous Media Making: By the Numbers

50+ Original Zines Written

100+ Participants across four different locations, including Spectrum Youth and Essex High School

500+ Custom buttons made

“Wow! That was our highest attended youth drop-in event! Thank you for offering that to our youth” - Alayna Williams, Spectrum VT



Mourn, and Organize

Flipping labor activist and songwriter Joe Hill's quote to something akin to that of fellow labor activist Mother Jones', PJC programming this year created space to do just that. In a society that often secludes grief and yet creates so much for us, on a collective level, to grieve, we invite space for grief ritual, particularly that which also offers ways to connect that energy to action for just change. In practice, one way this looked for the PJC this year was observing the first anniversary of Ayşenur Ezgi Eygi's martyring in Palestine and expanding the scope to include other Americans killed in the West Bank in recent years, the history of the village Beita where she was killed, and Palestinian martyrs of Beita and elsewhere in the West Bank.

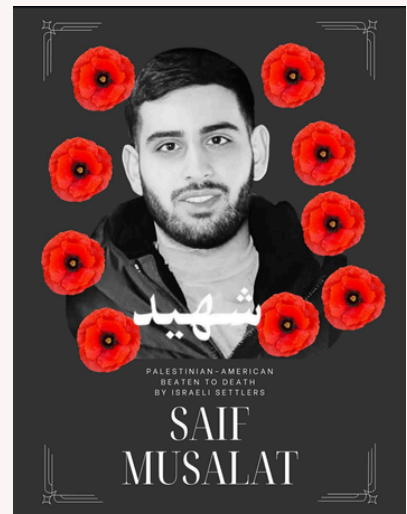
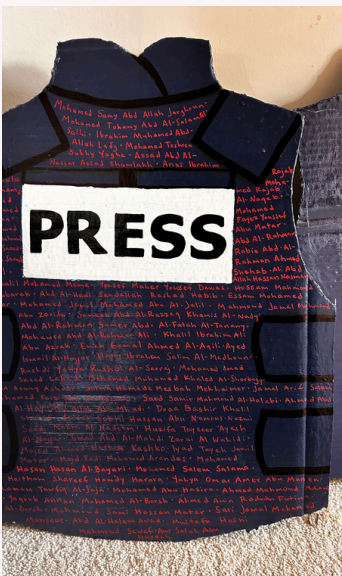


image as shared by @ocjpalestine

“Mourn the Dead and Fight like Hell for the Living”



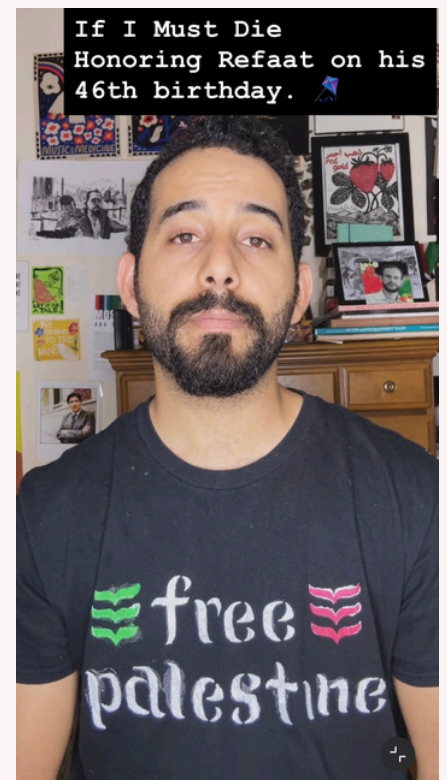
For Samhain, Gaelic predecessor to Halloween, the PJC made an alternative to Halloween decorations: memorial art installations to the tens of thousands of Palestinians killed in Gaza.



The displays featured press vests & medical jackets with names of journalists and healthcare workers martyred, along with an informational sign, which were put up in multiple houses around Burlington.

Print Fundraiser for Palestinian Farmers in Gaza

Teaming with family and friends of martyred farmer Yousef Abu Rabee, the PJC enlisted eight artists to create prints in honor of Yousef and the farmers of northern Gaza. We collaborated with Hard Pressed Print Shop of West Danville, who hosted multiple print nights for the artists. The prints debuted at the third annual Queer Arts Festival in Barre, VT and, so far, have raised more than \$1,000 for farmers of Beit Lahia, in the Gaza Strip. These farmers continue to grow and distribute vegetables and other food, rebuild community infrastructure, and are again attempting to access their farms, with a determination inspired by their dear beloved Yousef Abu Rabee.



Above: Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha with the “Red Gold” print in the background as he recited his dear friend Refaat Alareer’s poem “If I Must Die.” Abu Toha’s martyred father was a strawberry (“red gold”) farmer in Beit Lahia.

Peace-Building Education



Studying and Teaching Peace

At the core of the Peace & Justice Center, and something that we have held as our central means for achieving our mission of a peace and just world, is peace-building education. As Murray Bookchin said, “Every revolutionary project is, above all, an educational one.” We were proud to offer many free lectures and participatory educational opportunities to the community this year!

The PJC had the honor to host multiple authors, including Sarah Towle (“Crossing the Line: Finding America in the Border Lines”) and Shadi Salem (“Beneath the Gaza Sky”).

Another, major way that we taught peace this year was our Rad History series, which is an ongoing series of free lectures about activist movements of the past and the ways that they can inform our work today. Movements we covered included the Situationist International, the Haitian Revolution, early cycling advocacy, and more!

We also hosted an ongoing series of game nights where participants played the game Solarpunk Futures. In this game, players are asked to envision a utopian future and how we can get there from our current reality. We adapted this game to be about a utopian Burlington specifically, and even took the players on a Burlington Future walk.



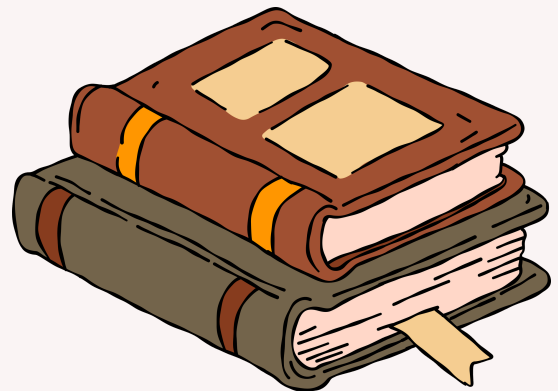
Peace-Building Education: By the Numbers

12 Rad History Lectures

20+ Cooperative Storytelling
Game Nights

200+ Attendees envisioned a
better future and learned how to
build it from past movements

“This was a lovely and
inspiring way to better
know and love Burlington
and think proactively
together about its future” -
Claire Bates, Burlington VT



Community Support & Fiscal Sponsorship



Helping Vermont Directly

The Peace & Justice Center has long had a deep love for Vermont and ensuring that Vermont remains a safe, kind, and loving place for everyone. In this spirit, we maintain a community action team that looks for ways the Peace & Justice Center can help in our local community. This year, we founded the BTV Clean Up Crew to help clean up litter and stranded syringes in Burlington, and we led a coalition of different folks to assist in this project.

In addition to our direct community support work, we also provide fiscal sponsorship to other grassroots organizations working to help Vermont in ways we can't always reach ourselves. We fiscally sponsored groups like the People's Farmstand, the Rutland NAACP, and more, all of whom are dedicated to bringing our communities closer together and building a better world.



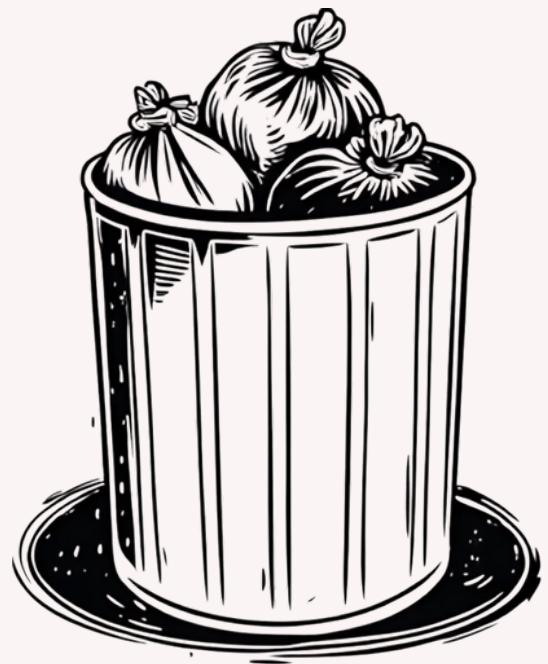
BTV Clean Up Crew: By the Numbers

20 Weeks and Counting

100+ Participants

353 Volunteer Hours

“This is a really joyful way to make a direct impact. It’s my favorite part of the week.” - Dee Graham, Burlington VT



Allied Groups: By the Numbers

22 Allied Groups

1000+ Community Members

Reached

All Across Vermont, from the
Northeast Kingdom to Southern
Vermont

Allied Group Funds Growth

Throughout the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year,
we raised a total of \$342,081.43 for our
Allied Groups

10/01/24 Allied Group Balances

Blueprint Basketball	0.00
Brooklyn Strong	188.57
Burlington Dharma Collective	3123.17
Burlington Free Meals	0.00
Extinction Rebellion VT	18.65
Hope Beneath the Tree	0.00
InterAmerica CASA Expenses	1905.00
Loving Day Vermont	18362.10
Milton Inclusion & Diversity In	528.19

10/01/24 Allied Group Balances

Rutland NAACP	4382.50
Reel Defense Mitigation Film Collective	8687.25
Save Our Skies VT	453.03
Social Equity Caucus	909.62
SURJ Middlebury	150.25
Those Who Were Harmed	5775.03
The People's Farmstand	14118.03
Vermont Freedom & Unity Chorus	4878.93
Vermont Family Mediators	4001.60
Voices of St Joseph's Orphanage	3145.24
Vermonters for Justice in Palestine	1780.44
Waterbury Area Anti-Racism Coalition	7626.93
Winooski Parents & Students Project	604.84

Special Events



Tabled at ESWD 2nd Annual Multicultural Festival

The Peace & Justice Center was proud to have been invited to table at Essex High School for the second annual ESWD Multicultural festival! We met so many other amazing vendors and organizations, and we are looking forward to participating in the same event next year!

Abolish the Empire

We collaborated with FreeHer VT on the Abolish the Empire event in the spring of 2025. The day was inspired by large turnouts at protests full of people craving ways to deepen their resistance to an increasingly authoritarian regime. The PJC was involved in organizing logistics and, at the event, led prison letter-writing and co-facilitated a power mapping exercise on how empire shows up in Vermont. Other activities included screen printing, relationship-building physical games, talks on organizing strategies and projects, and a workshop with Bread & Puppet Theater. It was a beautiful blend of assembly, education, and ritual!

“And Water Brings Tomorrow” Film Screening

Filmmaker Ashley Smith joined us in another joint FreeHer VT-PJC event, a screening of his new film on prisons and abolition, “And Water Brings Tomorrow.” The documentary focuses on prisons that have been shut down, what they’ve been turned into, the organizations behind their closure, and the role of climate change in shaping these. Ticket sales have gone to the canteen funds of people incarcerated at South Burlington’s Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (Vermont’s women’s prison).



Conclusion



Conclusion and Acknowledgements

The PJC is proud to present the results of our hard work in this annual report. We could not have had such success without our integral staff members, past and present. We also recognize the contributions of our members and the PJC community, who are absolutely vital to our organization. You make all of this work possible, and we here at the PJC are eternally grateful.

The Peace & Justice Center was able to build on so much of our success from last year. We are so grateful for all of your dedicated support that allowed us to transition to free public programming and build up our community once again. Despite all the hardship all non-profits are facing at this time, we are confident that with your support, we can continue doing what we do best. We know that with all of us working together, we can tackle the future and build a better Vermont and world for all people.

In Solidarity,
Peace & Justice Center Staff



**Peace &
Justice Center**

**The Peace & Justice Center Annual Report 2024-2025
was compiled by:
Kason Hudman and rory cronin**

Gotta Stand Up (For What's Right)

Peace & JusticeCenter Community, 2025

To the tune of "Rockin Robin" by Leon René

Intro

G Am D7 G Am
Tweedle-deedle-dee Tweedle-deedle-dee Tweedle-deedle-dee Tweedle-
D7 G
deedle-dee Tweet Tweet Tweet Tweet

Verse 1

G7 G
They stare at their phones, all day long
G7 G
Making all the choices that we know are wrong
G7 G
All the working peeeople in every land
G7 G
Protest and organize and take a stand

Chorus

C
Gotta stand up (fight, fight, fight!)

G
Make a difference (for what's right)

D C G
Gotta stand up and fight for what's right tonight

Verse 2

Every organizer, every family
Gotta work together so we'll all be free
Nurses, teachers, artists, students too
If you can sing this song than that means you!

Chorus

Bridge

C
Talk to your neighbors try to understand
G
Learn to work together and make a plan
C
When everybody's holding hands and we all care
D
We out bop the power hungry billionaires!

Repeat Versel

Chorus

Repeat Bridge

Let the Revolution Light a Fire in Me

Peace & Justice Center Community, 2025

To the tune of "The Midnight Special"

Verse 1

Oh you wake up in the morning, hear alarm bells ring
You read the daily headlines, you see the same old thing
Bombs in Gaza and Kyiv, keep on raining down
And at home we have a tyrant, that wants to wear a crown

Chorus

Let the revolution, light a fire in me
Let the people rising, set the whole world free
Let the revolution, light a fire in me
Let the people rising, set the everloving whole world free

Verse 2

Oh we're barely making ends meet, the choice is food or rent
And the rich are getting richer, off the 99 percent
We gotta take back our power, we're sick and tired of the same
We ain't got time to sit and cower, call a strike and end their game

Chorus

Verse 3

No more war or starvation, we're free to learn and play earth's
Support the regeneration, let the children lead the way
Hearing everyone's voices, across the land and sea
Neighbors singing all together, in messy harmony

Chorus (x2)



This song is not copywritten. Everything belongs to you.