



*Inspire. Create. Transform.*

## Frequently-Asked Questions

### **Do I need to pledge?**

*Active participation (members & friends) in the life of the congregation brings benefits and obligations. While we welcome donation checks in the basket, our annual budget of what we hope to accomplish is based on your pledge amounts. Your pledge can be paid weekly, monthly, yearly or whatever works for you. You can use a personal check, credit card or automatic withdrawal. Your donations are tax deductible, and you will receive a statement itemizing your donations at the end of the calendar year. If individual circumstances change during the year and you cannot fulfill your pledge, you may request a waiver from the Treasurer.*

### **Revenue Questions**

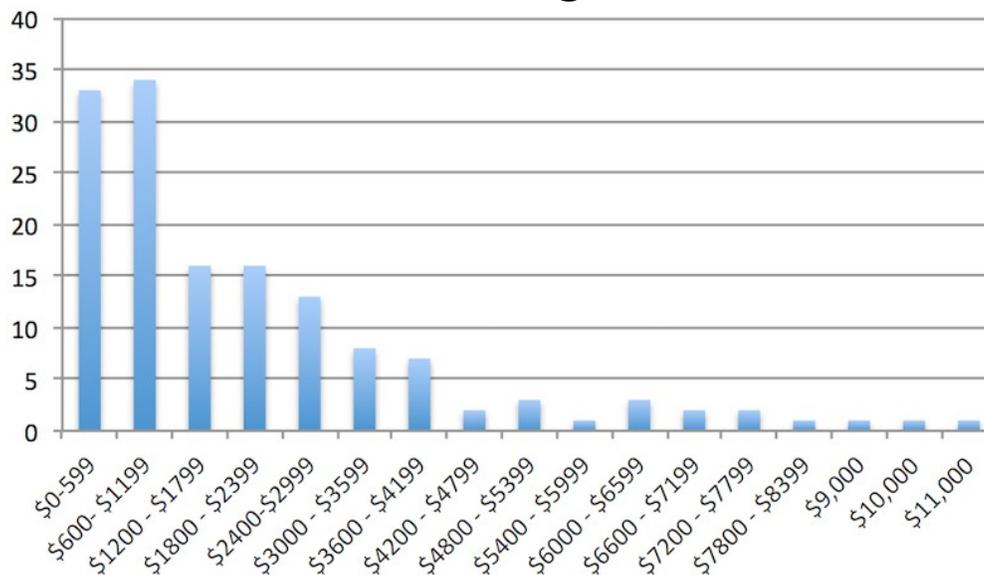
#### **I see new faces each Sunday. More members must mean more money?**

*Yes, we are fortunate to be growing. But a church is a dynamic organization. Not all "new faces" become members, and every year we lose some members, primarily because people are moving in and out of the college community. Over the past five years our total pledge units have increased from 142 (2012–13) to 147 (2016–17). (If a couple are both members, then they count as one pledge unit. We currently have 216 members.)*

#### **How much do members pledge?**

*The UUA recommends from 2-5% of adjusted gross income (that is annual income from all sources and subtracting any unusual expenses such as large medical bills, care of a parent, etc.). But each of us is different and has varying financial responsibilities and resources. For the current fiscal year, our average pledge is \$2,000 while our median pledge is \$1,200 (meaning half of our pledges are above, and half are below). The average pledge has increased steadily since 2010–11 when it was \$1,571, but the median pledge has remained the same. Individual pledges ranged from a high of \$11,000 to a low of \$25.*

### Distribution of Pledges 2016–2017



**Don't members give more money than they pledged?**

*Actual money received towards pledges typically comes up short. Some of this shortfall is covered by new members added during the year. Over the past four years the percentage of pledge monies received, including from new members, has ranged from a low of 96% to a high of 98%.*

**Don't we have money left over at the end of the fiscal year?**

*Both revenues and expenditures can come in more or less than the budgeted amounts. These fluctuations can lead to a surplus or a deficit at the end of our fiscal year (June 30<sup>th</sup>). For the past five years we have had surpluses in 2012-13, 2014-15 and 2015-16 and deficits in 2011-12 and 2013-14.*

**How does the 1/2-plate collection work?**

*Each week we give 50% of the collected offering to a designated charity. Before we initiated the 1/2 plate donation, our plate offering to the church ran about \$3,800 for the fiscal year. With the 1/2 plate now in place, we raised \$9,533 for the congregation plus \$13,893 for charities during the most recent fiscal year. (Some write checks directly to the charity.)*

**Don't we also receive money from grocery cards, from Amazon purchases, and donated items sold on Ebay?**

*Yes, but it takes proactive action on your part for UUC to benefit from these additional revenues sources. For grocery cards you must register with Kroger or purchase individual gift cards for Food Lion. For Amazon you must register. And for Ebay, you can bring donated items to the church. During the past fiscal year we generated \$3,439 from grocery cards, \$1,311 from Amazon purchases, and \$310 from Ebay sales.*

**Do we receive money from the national UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association)?**

*We receive no money from any outside source. As a matter of fact, the congregation pays dues each year to the national UUA based on the amount of expenditures in our previous fiscal year's budget. Our "fair share" dues included in the proposed budget are \$17,200.*

**Expenditure Questions****What is the cost for a student in our Lifespan Faith Development program?**

*The RE program has grown about 30% in the past five years with 122 children and youth currently enrolled. In addition to Sunday mornings, we have programs like MSYG and OWL. When one considers staff time, supplies, program materials, etc., the average yearly cost per student is \$250 or approximately \$5 per week. We have opted not to charge a fee to families with children as it is up to the whole congregation to support our children.*

**Who are our full and part-time employees?**

*On a salary basis we have a full-time Minister, a part-time Lifespan Faith Development Director, a part-time Administrator, a part-time Choir Director, a part-time Pianist, and a part-time LFD Assistant. Salaries account for 61% of our proposed budget. We also budget for the services of a Facilities Manager and a Sexton.*

**Do we have a contingency fund to cover unplanned and unbudgeted expenditures?**

*The proposed budget includes a \$2,000 line item for minor expenditures. We also have set aside a facilities contingency of \$12,500 and an operating contingency of \$19,500 to cover major expenditures. These contingency funds have been built up from monies not spent in previous fiscal years.*