



Cultivating Community

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to pledge?

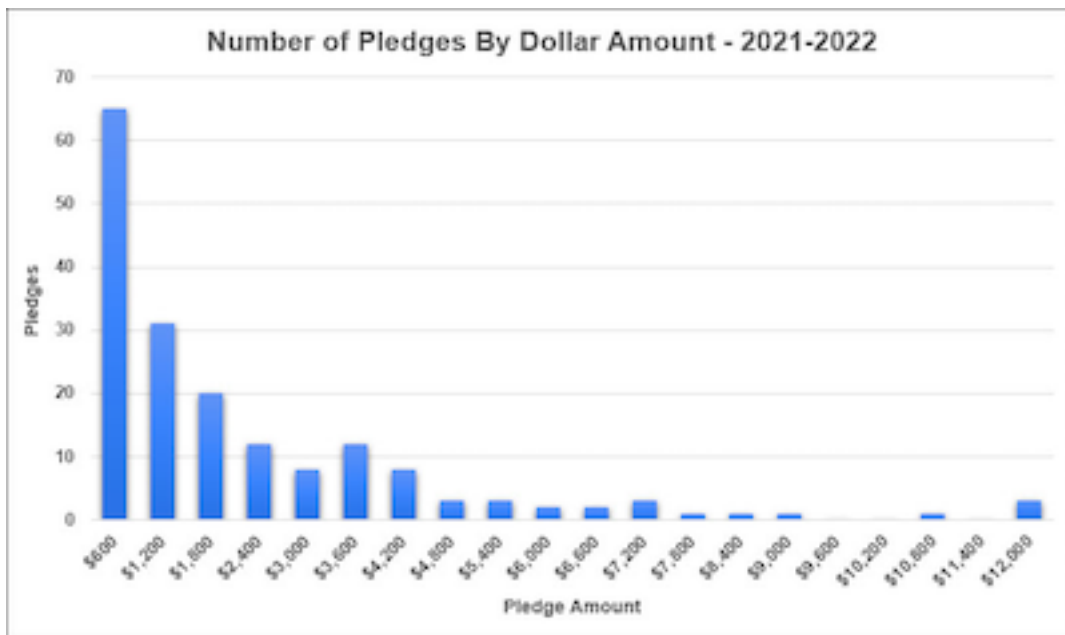
Active participation (members & friends) in the life of the congregation brings benefits and obligations. While we welcome donations in the Sunday collection, our annual budget is based on pledge commitments made during our Spring pledge drive.

How do I pay my pledge?

Your pledge can be paid weekly, monthly, yearly or whatever works for you. You can use personal checks, pay online, or set up an automatic withdrawal from a bank account. At the end of each calendar year, the Administrator will send you a statement itemizing your donations. If you itemize your taxes, your donations are tax deductible. If individual circumstances change during the year and you cannot fulfill your pledge, you may request a waiver from the Minister or the Treasurer.

Revenue Question

How much do members pledge? Unitarian Universalist congregations do not expect congregants to “tithe”; the UUC Bylaws simply state members “make a financial contribution to the UUC”. The [Fair Share Contribution Guide](#), adapted by the UUA, provides recommendations and a table with suggested amounts. In the 2021–2022 Stewardship Campaign, there were 176 “pledge units”.— couples count as one pledge unit unless they specifically register as pledging separately. The total pledged was \$347,800. Our average and median pledges were \$1,976 and \$1,150 respectively. Below is a breakdown of pledge income for FY 22 (July 2021 to June 2022):



What is the proposed budget and what is in it?

The UUC Finance Committee and Board have prepared the [proposed budget for FY 2023](#) (password protected). In it, the total for pledges needed is about \$357,500 (last line). Last year our pledge total was \$347,800 (first line)—which exceeded our Pledge-Drive goal by \$3,500! This is the first year in recent memory that we have made our pledge goal—let alone exceeded it!

In preparing the proposed budget for next year, UUC's Board has prioritized three areas:

(1) Hiring a ministerial intern, (2) Hiring a full-time Director of Lifespan Faith Development (DLFD), and (3) Maintaining an escrow fund to make sure that we can maintain our building.

1. *Hiring a Ministerial Intern*: UUC will benefit from having an intern who brings new ideas and a fresh perspective to congregational life, filtered through the lens of their seminary learning. As they learn and practice skills of ministry, they will provide UUC another source of preaching, pastoral care, faith development classes, and all the other myriad roles a minister fills. At the same time, UUC will be contributing to the future of our faith.

The cost to UUC will be a little more than \$6,000 due to a \$4,000 grant from the UUA that will contribute to the \$10,060 salary (plus payroll taxes). Having a ministerial intern will reduce the need to hire guest speakers when Rev. Pam is not in the pulpit.

2. *Hiring a Full-Time Director of Lifespan Faith Development*: In November 2021, Karen Hager resigned from her part-time (80%) position as UUC DLFD after eleven years. The Liberal Religious Educators Association recommends a full-time DLFD for an RE program of our size. The LFD Committee recommended, and the Board agreed, that our congregation deserves a full-time religious educator, especially if we expect the DLFD to coordinate faith development for ALL ages. A full-time DLFD will help us maintain our excellent children's programming and expand the offerings for adults and families, including multi-generational worship. The upgrade to a full-time DLFD is only costing an additional \$4,000 in salary because Karen's rate of pay was pretty high and we can hire a new person for less. This amount will be offset by the lack of a need to pay an LFD Assistant (\$3,854 in the FY 22 budget).
3. *Maintaining an Escrow Fund for our Building*: UUC is blessed with a beautiful space. To be good stewards, we need to anticipate future maintenance costs, like replacing aging heating and cooling systems and upgrading for better energy efficiency.

Does the congregation require a balanced proposed budget?

There is no statutory requirement to have a balanced budget. At the May Board meeting, the Board will compare the Pledge Drive total with the Proposed Budget. If the Pledge Drive total is less than the Proposed Budget, the Board will have to cut from the proposed budget to arrive at a budget to present to the congregation during our Annual Congregational Meeting. If that process results in a deficit budget, we are effectively saying that we will be drawing from reserves to cover that deficit if it indeed materializes.

Can I get a tax deduction for my donations to UUC?

UUC qualifies as a charity, so a donation to UUC can qualify as a charitable donation. To claim a deduction directly requires that you must itemize deductions rather than take the standard deduction. Non-itemizers can write off \$300 of cash contributions "above the line". If you do not itemize deductions but have an IRA or a Roth IRA and were at least 70½ in 2021, [here is information about a potential tax break.](#)

Do pledgers fulfill their pledge obligations?

Yes, almost all pledgers do. However, money received towards pledges typically comes up short. Some of this shortfall is covered by new pledgers added during the year.

Raising money for UUC through your Amazon or Kroger purchases

If you register with Amazon and/or Kroger, a percentage of your purchase price will go to UUC. See [Support > Fundraising](#) from the home page for details.

Don't we receive money from the national Unitarian Universalist Association?

We receive no money from the UUA. As a matter of fact, the congregation pays dues each year to the UUA based on the amount of expenditures in our previous fiscal-year's budget. Our "fair share" dues included in the proposed budget are \$18,000.

Don't we receive money from any external source?

Typically, we do not receive money from outside sources and we do not anticipate any this coming fiscal year.

Expenditure Questions

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

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 ?

We have a full-time Minister, a part-time (80%) Lifespan Faith Development Director, a part-time Administrator, a part-time Choir Director, a part-time Pianist, and a part-time LFD Assistant. In the 2022-2023 proposed budget, we are increasing the DLFD salary to full-time, and eliminating the LFD Assistant.