

**2008-2009
Stewardship
Program Pledge Drive**



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From the

MINISTER

Dear Members and Friends,

What does this congregation really mean to you? What if we weren't here in Northwest Tucson, or even in Arizona? What if there were no such thing as Unitarian Universalism?

When I meet people at the door of our sanctuary after service who tell me with tears in their eyes how glad they are to have found a place where free-thinkers are accepted, I am reminded how important our presence is in the community. When parents tell me stories of their children's experiences of religious prejudice at school and how grateful they are to be able to bring them into a community where personal faith is respected, I feel again how necessary it is that we keep supporting and growing our ministry here in Tucson.

We may not appeal to very many people, but in my heart, I still believe that one day either we will finally learn how to appeal to the masses (if that is what we want), or the larger society will finally come to value what we value: respect, openness, freedom in faith, acceptance of others, and the creative mind in all things religious. Until that day, we must continue to support our presence here for what it is worth to us, and with gratitude for all that our members and friends have dedicated to it in volunteer hours, in path-setting and program-building, and in pledges of money.

Every year that you are a member or friend of this congregation we ask that you support it with a pledge that makes a difference to all of us. A pledge is a promise and a statement of value. That value is measured not by how much money you make but by how much you struggle to give. For some, a hundred dollars is a struggle. For some, five thousand dollars is not. For some of you, this Unitarian Universalist congregation has become a central concern in your lives and as such, is central in your giving. For some, the congregation is still something you are interested in, but not necessarily passionate about (yet!). Giving is an evolving practice, growing as the heart grows more attached and more involved in the religious community and its ministry.

If all of you pledged from the heart, and gave a pledge that made a difference to both you personally and the congregation, I believe we might just be able to start moving away from a "bare-bones" budget to a "visions for growth" budget. This is especially important because we are going to have to prove that we can support a mortgage for a new building, and we must show the bank that we have the financial strength within our operating budget to do so.

If we truly are pledging to the best of our ability, then we can pat ourselves on the back for supporting this congregation to the size and program and ministry that we are, and not feel badly that we don't have the assets to fund our dreams for growth. But I wonder if there is not room for growth in some or many of our pledges and in some or many of our commitments to this religious community.

Thank-you for taking the time to read this, to consider carefully how much you can afford to pledge, and then deciding what kind of pledge will really make a difference, to you and to us. You are this congregation, remember, and what you give supports not only a building and staff and programs but also your ministry to others in sharing this faith.

With love and shared commitment,
Rev. Susan Manker-Seale

SHARING

Greetings to all,

Rev. Susan reminds us from time to time that each of us has a ministry. Have you identified your ministry yet?

I believe UUCNWT is a gift each of us gives to one another through our shared ministries. Our time, our talents and our treasures are what originally created and now sustain this church. Its future is literally in our hands and minds. What do you expect of UUCNWT? What gifts do you need? What gifts do you wish to give? What can we create together?

Recently, reading an article about building beloved communities such as ours, I found words that spoke to me directly, saying: membership in a beloved community, if it is to give its greatest benefit, requires three things of the individual:

1. Do something good for yourself that makes you feel good.
2. Do something good for the congregation and helps others feel good.
3. Do something good for the larger community and make a statement of what you believe.

These three ideas serve my ministry powerfully. They help define where I "fit," what is possible as I participate in diverse church activities, and how important it is to celebrate others affirming their own ministries. What of your time, talents, and treasury will you devote to your ministry and to our shared time together?

Now is the time,
Betty Meikle

From the

PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends of UUCNWT,

Each year we have a wonderful opportunity to do something that will have an immediate as well as a long term benefit for our religious community. That “something” is to actively and generously participate in pledging some amount of our personal resource to support the ministries and related activities of the congregation.

As our mission implies, we intend to provide an inspirational environment enriched by programs created and implemented, programs that reflect our Unitarian Universalist values and principles. We also realize that if we are to respond to the interests and needs of our current and future members and friends, we must continue to support the successful activities of our congregation while also improving our capacity to serve our congregants and broader community. So there are at least two aspects of this opportunity to pledge your financial support to this church.

The first aspect might be considered sustaining support. Recognizing that there are continuing costs associated with just having this congregation here for us, it might be a good time to reflect upon the benefits we receive from it. For example, there are the services and programs which inspire me to live a happy and productive life and to be of service to others. There are also social benefits resulting from the opportunity to be engaged with friendly, thoughtful and enjoyable people. You can probably easily think of many benefits you receive from your association with this congregation and also realize how important your pledge is just to maintain UUCNWT as a viable religious option in the northwest community. It has been estimated that just maintaining our current operations will require a base budget of at least \$179,000 accounting for inflation. But sustaining and maintaining is not all there is to do if we are to live our values and accomplish our mission.

The second aspect to consider might be called enhancing support. This recognizes that simply standing still will not get us very far. We must continue to grow and improve. We expect continued growth in membership to which we must be able to respond. We need to expand our lifespan religious education programs, build upon the success of our music programs, provide leadership education and training for interested members, provide fair and just salaries and benefits for our staff, and make the physical environment as welcoming and inspiring as possible. It is this enhancing aspect that causes me to expand my reflection of the benefits I receive to include those I would hope to strengthen, expand, and share with the congregation of the future. Just to do the things we know we need to do for the next church year will require an estimated total funding of \$180,000.

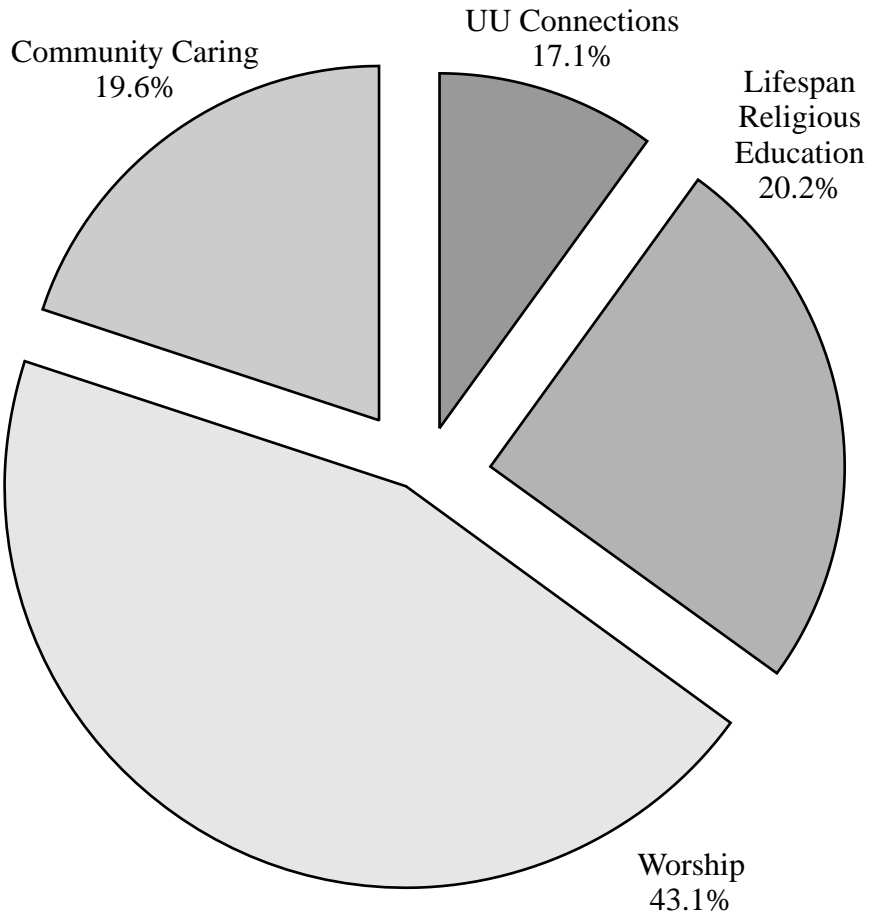
This pledge drive is about building a financial foundation for the 2008-2009 budget, but is it also about enhancing the future of UUCNWT for us and for all those who have yet to find us. The decisions you and I make about our pledge contribution will have far-reaching effects for this congregation. May our generosity be inspired by our vision for the future as well as our appreciation for all the benefits we receive as members and friends of UUCNWT.

Best wishes for a happy and successful future together.

David Greene

President

Budget by Program Area





From

STEWARDSHIP

Dear Members and Friends,

What is most important about this congregation to you? Do you wish to see that program continue and develop? What kind of emotional and spiritual gap would you feel in your life if Unitarian Universalism were not here for you to experience life in community?

Just as a secure and healthy family life depends on more than whatever resources can be gathered from day to day, your UUCNWT needs more than surprise gifts in order to plan program needs from season to season.

In February we will hold our annual pledge drive so that you all can tell us that our community holds value for you---by pledging an amount you can afford over the fiscal year July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009. When and how you donate that amount is your schedule to decide. Our board needs to know what it can count on.

It is important that every member make a pledge, no matter how small---we believe you will feel better for doing so. Another Arizona UU congregation had 100 % members pledging ABOVE the cost of UUA and PSDW dues last year! We challenge you all to step forward to the best of your means.

Equally important is your commitment to participate in the process of our congregation. Sometimes, a “cash short” member can do a task that we might have to hire out. Or one might contribute a talent that adds to our mission. That also, can constitute a pledge.

Pledge time is a good time for us to evaluate our activity at UUCNWT, to look for ways we can put our “love in action” for our whole community.

With love,
Anne Tatum
Stewardship Chair



What is the Stewardship Program Pledge Drive?

The Stewardship Program Pledge Drive is UUCNWT's annual process in which all members and friends of the church are asked to make a financial pledge for the coming year (July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009). In pledging, UUCNWT's members and friends renew their membership annually.

I attend UUCNWT fairly regularly but I'm not a member. Does the pledge drive apply to me?

Yes. Friends are one of our church's essential sources of support each year. All friends are asked to take part in the annual pledge drive process.

I'm a UUCNWT member. Do I need to renew and pledge in order to maintain my membership?

Yes. UUCNWT membership is based on annual renewal through pledges. We covenant with one another to keep this community together. When members and friends of the church pledge, the church can establish a realistic operating budget for the coming year.

Remember, pledge payments are used for the yearly operation of our church. These funds are used to pay for the programs and work of the church, including worship and music, religious education (for our children, young adults, and adults), and the salaries of our minister, the director of religious education, and the choir director.

The Unitarian Universalist Association and the Pacific Southwest District both provide us with services and consultants, and in the case of the UUA, loans at efficient rates. For each UUCNWT member, we pay \$21 per year to PSWD and \$54 to the UUA (Includes the *UU World* magazine). That total of \$75 does not stay in our congregation. We pride ourselves on being a "fair share congregation" by sending member dues.

Can I " earmark" a pledge for a specific purpose?

No. Pledges go into the church's general fund. If you wish to support a specific purpose, you are welcome to make an additional targeted donation.

How much should I pledge?

Please look over the chart on the next page and consider what feels possible and meaningful for you. The Unitarian Universalist Association suggests a minimum 2.5 percent of one's gross adjusted income. Please remember in deciding on a pledge amount that our pledges together are the fiscal foundation of the coming year's programs.

What is the range of pledges in the congregation?

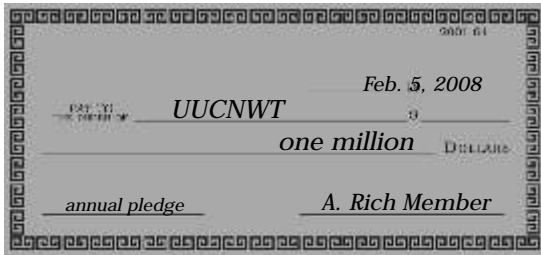
UUCNWT pledge amounts range from \$100 to \$5,500 with the average pledge being \$1200.

When should I pledge?

Please pledge during the Spring Pledge drive. New members should pledge any time during the year and should prorate the amount for the remaining fiscal year.

SUGGESTED SHARE ANNUAL GIVING GUIDE

| Income | Helping | Supporting | Sustaining |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| \$10,000 | \$100 (1.0%) | \$150 (1.5%) | \$200 (2.0%) |
| \$20,000 | \$300 (1.5%) | \$400 (2.0%) | \$500 (2.5%) |
| \$30,000 | \$600 (2.0%) | \$750 (2.5%) | \$900 (3.0%) |
| \$50,000 | \$1,250 (2.5%) | \$1,500 (3.0%) | \$1,750 (3.5%) |
| \$75,000 | \$2,250 (3.0%) | \$2,625 (3.5%) | \$3,000 (4.0%) |
| \$100,000 | \$3,500 (3.5%) | \$4,000 (4.0%) | \$4,500 (4.5%) |
| \$150,000 | \$6,750 (4.5%) | \$7,500 (5.0%) | \$8,250 (5.0%) |
| \$200,000 | \$11,000 (5.5%) | \$12,000 (6.0%) | \$13,000 (6.5%) |



When does my pledge need to be paid?

Your pledge needs to be paid by June 30, 2009. It is important that you make consistent and timely payments on your pledge on a quarterly, monthly, or other schedule you choose. Our pledges will support vitally important programs and operating expenses for 2008-2009.

How does the pledge relate to the weekly collection at Sunday services?

Some people make their pledge by offering a check or cash (in an appropriately marked envelope) at the time of the Offertory. If you prefer to fulfill your pledge in this manner, be sure to write "pledge" on the envelope so that the receipt of your pledge can be recorded and reflected in the semi-annual statements.

Will I receive a bill or a statement?

You will receive a semi-annual statement indicating how much you have pledged for the year and how much of that pledge has been received. However, if you have paid your pledge in full, no semi-annual statement will be sent.

Calendar year statements are sent out in January for tax purposes.

Can I make a non-monetary gift to the church?

Yes, we welcome non-monetary gifts for, as examples, the annual auction and the annual yard sale. However, such gifts cannot substitute for an annual monetary pledge.

What are our goals for next year's budget?

To maintain UUCNWT's current level and quality of services, programming, and staffing in 2008-2009, we must raise a total of \$180,000 in pledged commitments.