

Stewardship Committee Report  
11 July 2019

The 2019 Stewardship Campaign was largely successful. Although pledges did not meet the initial budget goal of \$376,338 promoted by The Board we did reach a record total of \$323,676. Assuming pledges account for 91% of the budget would put our pledge goal at \$342,468. On the positive side, we received 165 pledge units representing 235 members and friends (including 17 first-time pledgers – another record). Pledges increased over \$20,000 from 2018-19, and ranged from \$40 to \$11,500.

We again used the one-on-one visiting steward model. Visiting steward recruitment was low this year with only 16 stewards, four of whom were Stewardship Committee members. As with last year, many, if not most, stewards found that actually making contact and meeting with people is increasingly difficult in this age of caller ID, cell phones, and busy schedules. However, many stewards reported positive interactions with their contacts. New in 2019 was the push for early-bird pledgers. We used a large promotion to have those members and friends who intended to pledge and were not interested in a one-on-one contact to pledge early and avoid the calls and email associated with the visiting steward model. As part of this, a stewardship committee member attended (nearly) every UUC function held in March. At that meeting the committee member presented a very brief overview of the current campaign goals, distributed pledge drive materials, and answered questions. In addition, there were several newsletter articles related to the pledge drive and UUC finances in the months running up to the actual campaign kick-off. The early-bird special pitch appeared to be successful as we had 75 pledge units (116 people) opting in early. This reduced the number of contacts stewards had to make during the fund drive as well as provided an early indicator on how the campaign was progressing. We complemented the visiting steward model with two group meetings – both held after Sunday services. Participation in these meetings was nearly non-existent: one meeting was cancelled because no-one signed up, and the other had only one couple in attendance. While these were not well attended, I believe they are a valuable alternative, and we should offer at least one – and perhaps promote them a bit more. We reduced the number of group meetings this year because of the large push for early pledgers, and that may have impacted the group meeting interest.

The committee will begin regular meetings in August or September, and the first order of business will be to discuss and process the campaign in general and the fund drive in particular for ways to reach more congregants more efficiently and effectively. Efforts to move more toward an annual stewardship presence are moving slowly, with much discussion on creating a UUC video that would highlight a variety of congregational aspects and activities. We have yet to determine just what that would look like and how to implement it but will be one of the topics we address for 2020.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andy Roberts