2019 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, mostly because people are moving in and out of the college community. Over the past seven years our total pledge units have increased from 142 (2012–13) to 165 (2018–19). (If a couple are both members, then they count as one pledge unit. We currently have 218 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 have varying financial responsibilities and resources. For the 2018–19 fiscal year our average pledge was $1,903 while our median pledge was $1,200 (Half of our pledges are above the median amount and half are below this amount). Individual pledges ranged from $25 to $11,400. Below is a breakdown of pledges from 2018–19.
Why is the proposed budget higher this year than last year?
All but one of the major reasons are discussed in the Letter from the President and Minister in the 2019–2020 Stewardship Brochure. The one not discussed there is the Minister’s Health Insurance contingency. Currently, Rev. Pam’s health insurance is covered through her husband’s, but if he were to leave his job for any reason, the congregation would have to pay their health insurance per her letter of agreement. Having the contingency available means the congregation is not left “flat-footed”. The part that is not spent by the end of the year can be used to pay down the mortgage, be put away for future sabbatical needs, or for whatever else the Board feels it should be used.

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 six years the percentage of pledge monies received, including from new members, has ranged from a low of 96% to a high of 98%.

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, our plate offering to the church ran about $3,800 for the fiscal year. With the 1/2 plate now in place, we raised $10,475.42 for the congregation plus $13,683.99 for charities during the most recent fiscal year (2017–18). (Some write checks to the charity to get the tax deduction.)

Don’t we also receive money from grocery cards, from Amazon purchases, and donated items sold on E-bay?
Yes, but it takes proactive action on your part for the UUC to benefit from these additional revenues sources. For grocery cards you much register with Kroger. For Amazon you must register. And for E-bay, you can bring donated items to the church. During the most recent completed fiscal year we generated $ 5,029 (grocery cards) and $ 1,236 (Amazon purchases) in additional revenue.

Don’t we receive money from the national UUA?
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 $17,675.

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?
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 57% of our proposed budget. We also budget for the services of Bookkeepers and a Facilities Manager.