

UUCS MINISTER AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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TO FIND MORE INFORMATION ON OUR UUCS WEBSITE ...

you can reach links to these pages under the CHURCH tab or directly from the UUCS homepage

REPORTS & FINANCIALS | budget, monthly and annual reports

STEWARDSHIP & GIVING | giving guide, EFT and debit card enrollment

CHURCH DOCUMENTS | UUCS and Endowment Fund by-laws

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY | member information (available to members only)

CALENDAR | UUCS meetings and events

and the UUA | UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS at
www.uua.org

UUCS OFFICERS – 2011-12

Rick Sandler, *President*

Julie Leach, *Vice President*

Sara Slate, *Secretary*

Dick Happy, *Treasurer*

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Joanne Curtis, Jeanie Craig, Mira Frederick
Co-chairs

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Dick Happy, *Chair*

UUCS ENDOWMENT FUND

Jim Craig, *President*

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE 2012

Bill Payton, *Chair*

Jeanie Craig

Barbara DeMaio

Roberta Druif

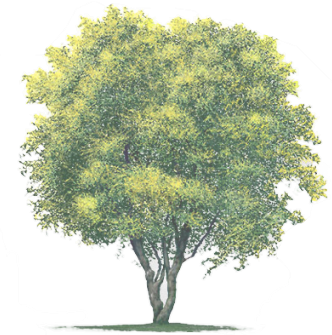
Lynda Hill

Patricia McGarry

Sue Moreland

Ex-officio:

Roger Fritts; Rick Sandler



Goldenrain Tree –*Koelreuteria paniculata*

Promises to Keep

UUCS 2012 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Important Dates

Kickoff: Sunday Feb 12, 2012

Celebration Dinner: Saturday March 10, 2012

Annual Meeting: Sunday March 25, 2012

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SARASOTA

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From Our Minister ...



Near my former church in Bethesda, Maryland, there is a BIG Mormon Temple. Its towers are visible for miles. Once a Unitarian Universalist asked me, as we drove past the Temple, "Why can't we have a presence like that near our nation's capital?"

The answer is simple. They tithe. We do not. Their church asks them to give one-tenth of their income to religion. The studies I have read say that Mormons give an average of 7 percent of their income to their church. Not 10 percent, but close.

The Mormons have inspired me. Following the example set by my LDS friends, for many years I have given at least 5 percent of my income to the Unitarian Universalist church of which I am a member. My pledge to this church will be \$65 a week.

I give because liberal religion has captured my heart. This church is my religious home. I believe in the traditions and the values of Unitarian Universalism. It has my trust, my love, and my commitment. I like the programs of this congregation. I like the way we serve people.

"I give because liberal religion has captured my heart. This church is my religious home. I believe in the traditions and the values of Unitarian Universalism. It has my trust, my love, and my commitment."

If you are giving less than 1 percent of your income to the church, I invite you to step up and give 1 percent for the year April 1 to March 31. If you are giving 1 percent now, I suggest you to step up to 2 percent. If you are giving 2 percent, I challenge you to make a step up to 3 percent, and so on, up to 5 percent: half a tithe.

Whatever financial commitment you can make, I thank you for your support of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Sarasota.

Sincerely,
REV. ROGER FRITTS

From ... Our Treasurer



We "have miles to go before we sleep." No, we are not in the dead of a Robert Frost New England winter (thank goodness), but while our congregation has accomplished much in the past several years, we do indeed have "miles to go".

We have reason for self satisfaction – in each of our last two years we have reached and even exceeded our pledge goals, and we continue to put money aside for a rainy day and to help protect and improve our aging buildings. We have a new chancel and audio visual system and a strong social justice program.

Our congregation is growing, and we have called an able and experienced minister. There are so many good things going on that one might wonder if it is time to sit back and relax. As your treasurer, Finance Chair, and fellow church member, my answer is "not really"!

The Finance Committee and Board of Trustees have presented you with a challenge: to continue to improve our nascent RE program, to provide rewarding salaries for our excellent staff, to continue upkeep on our historic but aging buildings, and to encourage innovative Sunday services for our burgeoning congregation.

"There are so many good things going on that one might wonder if it is time to sit back and relax. As your treasurer, Finance Chair, and fellow church member, my answer is "not really"!"

Do we need your attendance and energy? Absolutely. Do we need your pledge as well? Yes, indeed!

The Stewardship drive will officially begin on February 12, and on that day you will receive all the information you need to make a pledge for our upcoming fiscal year.

Please join my wife, Diane, and me in being as generous as possible in supporting our unique religious institution. In Frost's words, we have both "miles to go" and "promises to keep"!

– DICK HAPPY

“UUCS is my sanctuary. It is where I come to find my center and remember my purpose. The people of this church have become my family. You challenge me to learn new skills and explore my beliefs. I am honored to share in the work of this church. – SUZIE BRUCKLACHER



From Our President ...

I recently looked up the meaning of the word “stewardship” to see how the dictionary defines it. According to Webster’s, “stewardship is the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care”. As we enter this period in our annual pledge drive, I hope all of you will take the time to think about your relationship to this church and to consider how you will support our goals.

We are all stewards of this church. We all contribute in so many ways. Clearly, we could not operate the church without the many hours of volunteerism that you devote to the church. This year’s theme – *Promises to Keep* – reflects the vision that we have for the church. We’ve made promises to continue to offer the best quality programming we can provide. This past year, we made significant investments to create a dynamic church that can serve the spiritual and social needs of our members. We have a settled minister who brings many years of experience and talent to us. We recently hired a Director of Religious Education (DRE) who will help us to grow our RE program. We have an excellent administrative staff. We continue to improve our music program. Our chalice groups are very popular and reach a broad audience. Forum, Freethinkers, and many other programs reach a wide variety of audiences.

But all of this requires sound fiscal planning on our part to ensure we have sufficient operating capital to meet the church’s obligations (payroll, overhead expenses, etc.). And the fact is that the bulk of the money we rely on comes from you, our members. We are asking you to consider the contribution you can make financially in terms of what UUCS means to you, and what you can give back to it.

One of my favorite books, *Giving*, by former President Bill Clinton, talks about how each of us has time, talent, and treasure that we can give. Please, think about how you can be a good steward of this church and what promises you would like to see us keep in the coming year.

– RICK SANDLER

A Few Stewardship FAQs

What is a “pledge”? A pledge is a promise to donate a certain amount of money to the congregation within the congregational fiscal year, which runs from April 1 through March 31.

Why pledge and how is my pledge used? Pledges support the annual budget of our congregation, providing worship and music, lifespan religious education, our many social justice projects, pastoral care, community events, and much more. Pledge income also pays the salaries of our minister and staff and for the operation and maintenance of our facilities. When members and friends of the congregation pledge to give a certain amount, it allows us to project the funding for our operating budget for the coming year. Traditionally, pledges provide about 75% of the income for our budget.

Do I need to be a member to pledge? Anyone can make an annual pledge to the UUCS, member or not.

Do I have to pledge to be a member of the congregation? Our bylaws require that we have a record of some financial contribution during the current fiscal year in order for you to retain status as a voting member of the congregation. However, there is not a required amount. If your financial situation precludes you from making a contribution, you may obtain a waiver from our minister.

How much should I pledge? Using round numbers, the church budget is about \$400,000. Around \$300,000 of that comes from church members, and we have about 300 members. So, for the year, we are looking for an average pledge of \$1000 per member or \$2000 for a couple. Of course, some people are better off financially and can give more, and some people have very limited financial resources and cannot contribute that much. Our Giving Guide* might help you determine what you want to pledge.

What if I become a member and want to pledge after the fiscal year has begun? Based on the numbers for a full year (above), if you joined, say, in June with three quarters of the fiscal year remaining, we would hope for a pledge of about \$750 from new individual members, \$1500 from couples. That would take you through the current fiscal year, and you could make a full year pledge in February, for the next fiscal year that would begin April 1.

Some
Frequently
Asked Questions
about Giving
at UUCS



“I’ve been a member for 16 years and this is truly my family. I’m proud of our caring for each other and the caring we do in Sarasota and in the world. We live up to our UU principles in every way. When my husband Dave died suddenly, I was surrounded by warmth and love that I will treasure forever. These are some of the reasons why I want to give back to this valuable community.

– DEE WIDDER

Will I receive a bill or statement?

We encourage pledges by Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) or direct deposit from your bank account, so that a monthly transfer takes place automatically. We will also have payment by credit card available shortly (we will notify the congregation as soon as this is in place). Regardless of how you pay your pledge, you will receive a quarterly statement indicating how much you have pledged for the year and how much of that pledge has been received. And for tax purposes

we send out a statement at the end of January showing your contributions for the previous calendar year.

When do I need to pay my pledge? At your convenience between April 1 and March 31. We encourage you to sign up for and use Electronic Funds transfer (EFT) or automatic payment from your bank account*.

How can I find out specifically where the money goes? A copy of the current operating budget including line item amounts is available on the UU website* and upon request at the church office. Or, our church administrator* will be happy to discuss this with you (it’s best to set up an appointment beforehand so you will be assured of her full attention when you meet). Also, UUCS members are always welcome at the monthly finance committee meetings (see church calendar* for details).

How does the budgeting process work? Each year, beginning in December, the finance committee and church administrator begin assessing income and expenses for the following year. Based on their assessments, a preliminary budget is assembled and presented to the congregation for review and discussion after services on either the third or fourth Sunday in January. A pledge campaign begins in February, and depending on the results of this campaign which is critical for ensuring we cover our expenses for the year, the budget may be adjusted and revised. A final budget is presented in detail at the Annual Meeting held on the last Sunday in March, and members of the congregation vote to approve or disapprove this operating budget for the coming fiscal year.

Is it possible to “earmark” a pledge for a specific purpose? No. As a democratic community, our budgets are created to serve the whole of our work together. All pledges support the work of the entire congregation.

What about non-monetary gifts to the church? You can donate stock directly to the church, and there may be certain tax advantages for doing so. Please contact our church administrator for instructions on how to donate

“I found my soul mate here in a church that encourages us to care for one another despite our differences, to think for ourselves, to search for truth and meaning, and to govern ourselves democratically. My passion is to share this jewel by adding to our worship services a vibrant, lively expression that attracts new seekers. – KLAUS OBERMEIT

stock. Note that in-kind donations, such as items donated for the Serendipity Auction and Flea Market, do not count toward your pledge because they can’t be converted to cash to be used for our operating expenses.

How does a pledge relate to the weekly collection during Sunday services? The money raised in the offering serves as additional income to benefit our annual budget. However, some people pay their pledge by putting a check or cash into the weekly collection plate. You should write “pledge” on the memo line of your check, or in the case of cash, place it in an envelope that includes your name. This will insure your pledge is appropriately allocated.

Why do we pay almost \$100 per member to the UUA*? We pay dues to our national and local UU associations to support among other things: ministerial settlement; building loans and grants; fundraising consultancy; growth resources; RE curricula and training; the Washington Office for Advocacy and Witness; anti-oppression programs; the *UU WORLD* and *InterConnections*; Skinner House and Beacon Books publishing; young adult and campus ministries; and a resource-rich web site. Please take this into consideration when setting the amount of your pledge or contribution.

What is the UUCS Endowment Fund? The Endowment Fund* is a tax-exempt corporate affiliate that holds the church’s endowment. The congregation controls its bylaws*. Our church president and treasurer, our minister, and five other at-large directors elected by the congregation compose its board. Jim Craig is the Fund’s president. The Fund holds our parsonage, Rose’s House, and additional investments worth about \$500,000, which are mainly in the UUA Common Endowment Fund, a diversified fund of about \$130 million, professionally managed for the UUA and its congregations. Our Fund’s annual earnings go to the church to support the annual budget.

“We believe in the UU principles and try to live our lives by these principles. Being part of a chalice group has helped us think about and talk about subjects that we might not have considered and we enjoy being with like-minded people. We have friendships with people of all ages.
–TOM AND KATHY COOK.

*See the back cover for names, contact information, and website links that can provide you with more information on these topics.