

Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater

February 2022

Dear Friends,

Widening the Circle of our Beloved Community is not merely a slogan for this year's pledge drive. Growing our membership is essential to the survival of UUC. The process starts with your pledge followed by the hiring of a developmental minister. Many of our stalwart congregants who built UUC are aging, and their numbers are dwindling. New congregants are joining us and beginning to play an active role on the Board and various committees, but they have not offset the overall loss in membership. At last count we reported 145 pledging members, not counting emeritus members and friends of UUC.

Fortunately, despite thirty less pledges last year the Stewardship team managed to raise \$240,180. The average pledge in 2021 was \$1,973, the highest in 7 years!

This year's goal of \$230,000 is achievable if all of us look at what we are pledging and consider increasing it. Not everyone can, but if enough members reach deep into their pockets, next year can be a banner year for UUC.

Sincerely yours,

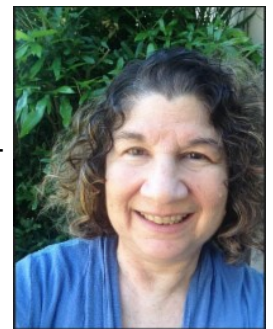
Bill Foley and Mary Currey, Co-Chairs

Sandy Hoover and Bill Norsworthy, Committee Members

Margie Manning, President, Board of Trustees

The theme of this year's Stewardship campaign, Widening the Circle, really resonates with me.

Widening the Circle is the name of a ground-breaking report detailing the future for our Unitarian Universalist Association. It also describes the future for Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater – one in which we fully live into our mission to advance Unitarian Universalist values, to make a positive impact on the world, and to strengthen our Beloved Community, including all those who have yet to find our life-affirming faith. Our financial gifts pave a direct link to that bright future.



- In worship, we can inspire through the spoken word and music, both for those who can gather in person and for those who attend our multiplatform services online.
- In our lifelong learning classes, we can explore and grow our spirits, whether we are 8 or 80.
- We can provide pastoral care and resources for our members in need, be it a hospital visit, a phone call or greeting card, or a helping hand.
- We can participate in efforts to dismantle racism and increase equity, working on our own and working with others in FAST and in the UUA.
- We can keep our beautiful campus and facilities in good repair to serve as a vital container for all our work – a spiritual home base from which we bring more hope, love, justice, courage and joy into the world.

Our gifts now allow us to expand our future impact. I will be increasing my pledge this year, and I hope you will be able to do so as well.

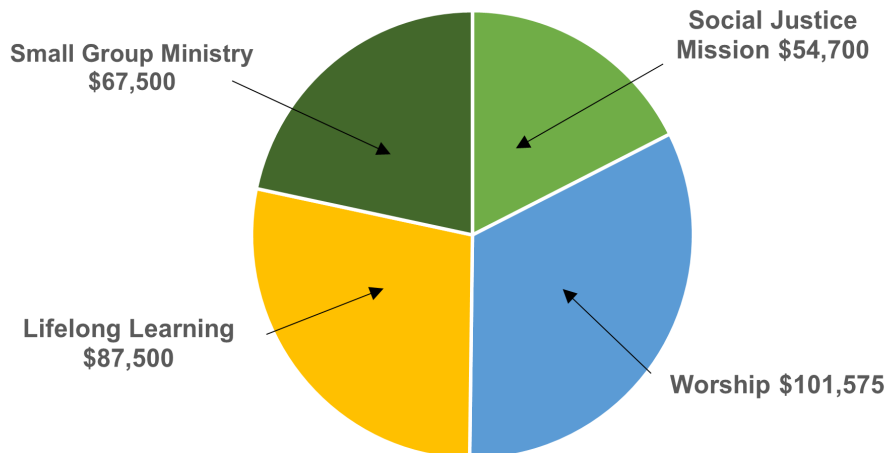
Rev. Roberta Finkelstein, Transition Minister

The image of an ever-widening circle brings many things to mind. First and most important, it is a way to think about making sure there is room here at UUC for all of the people in this community who might be potential members. Children, youth, and young adults. People who may not have felt welcome in a former church home. People who have never had a spiritual home but who have discovered, to their delight, that UUism offers them a previously unimagined possibility for growth and transformation. Widening the circle is also a phrase used by UU folks around the nation to describe the learning and enlightenment needed for us to become a truly anti-racist, anti-oppressive faith community.



As you look toward your immediate future, a future with a developmental minister and a growing and thriving congregation, can't you just feel the circle widening? Can you imagine the possibilities that a fully funded budget could bring forward? It is your time and your turn. Widen the circle of Unitarian Universalism in Clearwater by making a generous and sustaining pledge to the Stewardship campaign.

Major Program Expenses UUC FY 21 - 22



Proposed 2022-23 Budget

Includes:

- A full-time developmental minister
- Provision for a chorus with live music
- Support for lifelong learning for adults and children
- Support for pastoral care, covenant groups and fellowship

The amounts shown reflect all expenses related to the category including (but not limited to) salaries, facility costs, equipment and supplies.

Mary Currey, Recent Member of the Board of Trustees and Past Treasurer

My financial support to UUC is annually renewed in March of every year so that a liberal religious organization thrives in Clearwater. Our wider community needs a place where thoughtful, curious, social justice folks can engage in a liberal faith community. UUC is that place! Please join me.

