



September 27, 2021

Dear UUAA Congregant,

We live in unusual times. Last year we began our annual stewardship letter with this sentence. It seems to be appropriate again this year.

At the time of that letter, we were still finding our way with virtual services. We had completed significant portions of our visioning work, but not yet begun organizing implementation. And the possibility of a vaccine was still on the horizon.

Since that letter, our UUAA community has survived, if not thrived. Despite a period of lockdown and profound health-related uncertainty, congregational groups continued to push ahead the good work of our community. Chalice circles and other groups met virtually, offering critical support to one another. Our Pastoral Care Team organized Q-Buddies, provided meals, and supported virtual memorial services. Congregants built Habitat for Humanity homes, supported Alpha House, worked at Farmer Bill's, and sold scrip and Fair Trade goods. Our UUCivs are working to end prison gerrymandering and bringing voting materials into jails for eligible voters. And Restorative Justice received a \$4,500 grant to support previously incarcerated people training in restorative practices.

When we resumed in-person Sunday services a few weeks ago, it was deeply moving to experience the strength and vitality of our community members' connections to one another. And, even as we are emerging from one set of challenges, UUAA turns bravely toward an entirely new set of issues and opportunities:

- The shutdown reminded us how vital community is for our emotional and spiritual health, so we need to create multimodal services that are equally engaging for both in-person and virtual attendees.
- We must build the infrastructure required for multimodal services – personnel, equipment, and processes – while also nurturing the volunteer expertise and capacity required to support livestreaming.
- We need to support the connections we have developed with people around the world and create an ongoing sense of virtual community.
- It's time to begin implementing UUAA's Vision 20/50 focusing on Climate Justice, Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression, and Radical Welcome. We created this vision using an innovative approach that engaged the entire community. Now we will continue that level of engagement as we dig deeper into this work – work that the world needs right now.
- Our community's children were affected by the collective trauma and disconnection of this time. They needed community, but many families felt too maxed out by virtual school to engage in our online offerings. Now there is a deep need to rebuild our in-person Spiritual Growth and Development (SGD) program while ensuring that the health and safety needs of our youngest members continue to be prioritized.

- We will be moving through active discernment in the year ahead regarding our longer-term hopes and dreams for our SGD and music programs, including more permanent decisions regarding staff leadership for these programs.
- UUAA will soon be ready to hire a Congregational Administrator. Six years ago administration required two full-time and one part-time staff along with volunteer support. We have sufficiently restructured these needs such that one talented and qualified full-time staff person, with volunteer support, should be able to meet the community's basic administration needs. This streamlining will allow UUAA to direct limited resources toward other programmatic support and service. It will also allow our very generous Interim Administrator, Ed Lynn, to step down after doing this critical role as a volunteer for the past 6 years!

As we plan for 2022, we obviously don't know how the year ahead will unfold. As we address the above issues and opportunities, we will need to remain flexible. As we stated at the beginning of this letter, we live in unusual times.

In budgeting, we are assuming a continued limitation of rental income, and the possible loss of auction income (although an online version of our annual auction is being considered). As such, pledge income will constitute over 90% of UUAA's revenue.

Our 2021 budget was based on \$976,000 pledge income and \$115,000 we still had from the government PPP loan forgiven in 2020. Given that the PPP funds will not be available in 2022, pledges will become even more central to our income. Our pledge goal for FY 2022 is \$1,150,000.

As you consider your share of this goal, we thank you for your profound and ongoing generosity. We are proud of this community and deeply grateful to be in it alongside you. As we say each Sunday:

The spirit of this church is love.
 And service is its law.
 This is our covenant with each other:
 To dwell together in peace,
 To search for truth in love,
 And to help one another.

In faith,



Beth Hospadaruk
 Chair, Stewardship Team



Laura Johnstone
 Board President



Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti
 Senior Minister