

Pledge FAQ's

Q: Why should I give to UCE?

A: In the words of Rev. John Wolfe, former minister of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, "There is only one reason for joining a UU church. That is to support it." Rev. Wolfe goes on to illustrate some of the many reasons this church is worthy of our support and hopefully you are discovering your own reasons. As we are enriched in this church by worship, kinship, social justice, and learning, we remember that we are giving to ourselves. We are the source of financial support, which keeps doors open, lights on, programs running and ministers and staff functioning toward the mission of the church.

Q: What should I give to UCE?

A: While this is a question only you can answer, some people find it helpful to think about the overall budget of the church and what each person's portion of that is. This equals about \$1,500/year per person. However, some people give more and others give less. Some folks find it helpful to think about a percentage of their income – between 2-5% of your family's adjusted gross income may be an aspiration. Most importantly, we ask that you consider giving the amount that brings you the most joy. We are all in different life circumstances and are able to give differently. There is no minimum membership pledge but we do ask you to complete a pledge form each year indicating the amount or your desire to affirm your membership without a financial contribution.

Q: How do I make my payments?

A: There are several ways to make your payments. You can set up automatic checking account or credit card payments through our

website – www.ucevanston.org/uce-giving - donating to the operating fund. You can write a check, being sure to write "pledge" in the memo line and mail it to the church office, or drop it in the offering basket on Sunday mornings. You can put cash in the basket as well but you must put it in an envelope marked with your name and indicating that it is for your operating fund pledge in order for it to be properly credited.

Q: When do I make my payments?

A: The church budget operates on a fiscal year of July 1 – June 30. You can make your payments annually, semi-annually, quarterly, monthly or weekly. Again, if you put money in the offering basket, please indicate that it should be applied to your pledge. Otherwise, it is split between the general operating fund and the shared offering. In the spring we conduct our annual pledge drive and you will be hearing from a member of the church about your pledge. This is a conversation at your home or at church designed primarily to build connection, answer questions, or hear concerns. You will be given a letter and an envelope asking for your pledge form but you don't have to talk numbers at that time if you don't want to.

If you have any questions about contributions to UCE, contact one of the ministers, the Membership Director or Executive Operations Director through the church.

Unitarian Church of Evanston
1330 Ridge Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
847-864-1330
www.ucevanston.org
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Opportunities for giving

at the Unitarian Church of



Evanston

Operating Fund Pledge – This is the annual pledge members make to help the church operate. The Annual budget is based on pledges received. This is how programs are created and facilitated, staff is paid, how we light, heat and maintain the building among other things. Your support of the Operating Fund should be your first responsibility as a member. Any other donations you make would be in addition to, rather than in lieu of, your annual pledge.

Our annual budget operates between July 1 and June 30. Our annual pledge drive takes place in the winter so we can determine our pledge base for the coming year and set our budget accordingly. It is important for us to get pledge forms in promptly in the spring. You can make pledge payments by check placed in the offering basket on Sunday with the word “pledge” written in the memo, or use the envelope in the back of the hymnal. You can mail in your pledge payments monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually. You can also set up automatic payments or make single payments from our website at www.ucevanston.org.

UUA Fair Share Contribution – For each member, UCE must make an annual fair share payment to our national organization of approximately \$80 per year. We ask that, if members are able, they contribute this amount in addition to their annual pledge so that we can fully support the UUA. Some of the benefits we derive from our UUA membership include religious curriculum

development, advocacy work we do in the area of social justice, ministerial services and support, leadership development, youth and young adult programs.

The Shared Offering (loose plate) – This is the basket that passes during the worship service. Half of the unassigned cash collected goes to the organization we are sharing it with that month. The other half is added to the Operating Fund. Members can also put dedicated fund offerings or pledges into the basket marked clearly on their check and/or on the contribution envelope found in the back of the hymnal.

Endowment Giving Programs – The Unitarian Church of Evanston Endowment Fund was established in 1986 to provide a variety of opportunities for special giving to UCE. It serves those who would like to make an enduring gift of any size to the church in the name of individuals, couples, or families. The purpose of the Fund is to build a strong and lasting financial foundation that will nourish UCE, its religious life and programs, and maintain the church as a vital place in our community.

Dedicated Funds – Over the years, many UCE members and friends have made donations for special purposes. What was once a jumble of various funds has been consolidated into certain “dedicated funds.” We welcome donations as well as written recommendations for expenditures from these funds. Suggestions should be

submitted to the Senior Minister and the President of the Board of Trustees.

The Elaine Mensinger New Opportunities Fund supports out-of-the-box thinking that will help our congregation grow and prosper in achieving our mission.

The Marjorie Fisher Green Opportunities Fund supports Green Sanctuary initiatives, such as organic lunches, wind energy credits, and similar programs.

The Community Action Fund is used primarily in our efforts to alleviate homelessness and hunger and build relationships around service in our congregation and the wider community.

The Susan Walker Social Action Fund is dedicated to social justice, cultural diversity and a respect for all life.

The Building and Grounds Fund supports improvement, maintenance, and periodic expansion of our church building, equipments, and grounds.

The Memorial fund receives contributions in memory or honor of UCE members and friends.

The Pastoral Care Fund provides direct assistance to members and non-members in financial crisis. This fund is administered by the UCE ministers.

The Rosemary Zwick Creative Arts Fund supports creative works and endeavors, and projects to beautify the church building and grounds.