

Operating Fund Pledge – This is the annual pledge members make to help the congregation 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 spring 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 order to have enough financial information to create our budget.

The Shared Offering (loose plate, text to give) – These unassigned funds come from either the physical collection basket provided during the worship service or from text to give from online participants. Half of the unassigned funds collected go to the organization we are sharing with that month and the other half is added to our Operating Fund. The organizations we share with are determined by the Shared Offering Program run by the Social Justice Council.

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 congregation 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 congregation 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 Anti-Oppression Seed Fund is dedicated to our anti-racism and anti-oppression work.

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

The Katie Mitchell Fund supports our library in room 6 and lending library carts.

The Marjorie Fisher Green Opportunities Fund supports our Green Team initiatives.

The Memorial Fund receives contributions in memory or honor of individuals and is used for memorial expenses.

The Music Fund supports our entire music program, including our choir and guest musicians.

The Pastoral Care Fund provides direct assistance to members and friends in financial crisis. It is administered by the Senior Minister.

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

The Royalties Fund for Use of African-American Spirituals is part of our reparations efforts.

The Susan Walker Social Action Fund is dedicated to social justice.

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 \$1,800/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 may set up automatic checking

account or credit card payments through our website – see the Ways to Give page at www.ucevanston.org. You may write a check, being sure to write "pledge" in the memo line and mail it to the administrative office, or drop it in the offering basket on Sunday mornings. You may 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 congregational budget operates on a fiscal year of July 1 – June 30. You may 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 Operating Fund and the Shared Offering. In the spring, we conduct our annual pledge drive and you will be contacted about making a pledge for the upcoming year. You will be sent an email with a link to the pledge form. To request a pledge form be mailed to you, please call or email the office at the contact information below. Members of the pledge campaign are available to talk with you about how to determine your pledge amount.

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

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Opportunities for giving

at the

Unitarian Church of Evanston

