



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY: EAST

April, 2019

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Dear Members and Friends,

SUBJECT: Important News on Annual Appeal

I write to you today on behalf of the Policy Board to discuss the UUS:E 2019-20 budget and our recent Annual Appeal. First, we want to thank you for your generosity. Due to your big-heartedness, we saw just over 50% of our pledging units increase their annual pledge this year. We also had 16 new pledges. These increases are due to the wonderful volunteers on our Stewardship Committee and the many of you who volunteered your time as stewards. We are lucky to be part of such a loving and caring congregation.

However, our Annual Appeal did not reach the goal set for our budget. Due primarily to increases in our human resource costs, we came up approximately \$29,000 short of our goal. These costs relate, for the most part, to salary increases for our Sexton and Music Director, as well as for funding our new Membership Coordinator, which we voted on and approved last year. These are very important priorities to the Board. There are also, as in every year, increases in health insurance and pension costs and potential COLA upgrades that the Board has considered which are recurring important priorities.

As a reminder:

- The Personnel Committee examined the Sexton's job duties and determined that they exceed the UUA custodian job description. The Personnel Committee compared our Sexton's actual job duties to Building Manager salaries for Connecticut and concluded that a \$1500 increase would be more fair and equitable.



- The Music Committee and Personnel Committee reviewed the Music Director's current workload and responsibilities and concluded that she is currently doing about 2 hours a week more work—at our request, to cover her work on the music concert series. So they recommended increasing her weekly hours from 30 to 32, about a \$3,000 increase in salary.
- The Membership Coordinator, which we approved last year, will cost an additional \$11,000 in salary because he will be working for the entire year.
- The Personnel Committee recommended a 1.8% cost of living increase for all staff, which results in a \$4800 increase in our budget.
- Our costs for insurance, pension contributions, social security and Medicare will increase by \$7,400 in the coming year, if these salary increases are funded. Finally, our other administrative expenses (other than HR costs) will go up by about \$1,300 next year. When you add all of that up, you get the \$29,000 that we have fallen short.

The Finance Committee has diligently scrutinized every line item of the budget, made reductions to some of our programs where they could, and gotten us to the \$29,000 shortfall amount. Now we find ourselves in a position in which we must rely on your kindness and generosity once again if we are going to meet our goals.

We realize there have been several other requests for contributions to UUS:E in the past year, including our ongoing mortgage drawdown efforts and the fundraising drive to update and improve the UUS:E Memorial Garden. As always, your positive responses to these requests have awed us. It is therefore difficult to come to you again with a “second ask” on the Annual Appeal. Yet the Board feels that we have no choice. It is simply too important to us to fund these HR initiatives. Therefore, we ask that you re-examine your recent pledge and determine if you can give a bit more. We understand that not everyone can increase pledges in response to this request, but if you can and are able, we would be very grateful. These initiatives are important. Our staff is important.

If you would like to increase your pledge, please contact Annie Gentile in the office at uuseoffice@uuse.org or (860) 646-5151. She will be happy to assist you.

Thank you for all the time and monetary support you provide to UUS:E. Together we have built a wonderful, loving and caring community. We hope that together we will continue to grow, love and change our community, and the world, for the better.

With heartfelt love,



Rob Stolzman
UUS:E President