



UNITARIAN
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Read all issues of the APF newsletter on the web!

www.uua.org/giving

GIVING AND RELIGION: Good for You, Good for Us

By Laurel Amabile, Director of the Annual Program Fund

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

-Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

As we move from the winter holiday season into the new year, it is my hope that the charitable spirit that is so alive in our faith communities carries over as well. Among the world's religious teachings, charity is considered a virtue, something good for the giver and for the world. From the Latin word *caritas*, meaning "affection," charitable behavior is deemed essential to the health, happiness and prosperity of individuals and our society at large. United States charitable giving data points to this conclusion as well.

In his thought-provoking book *Who Really Cares*, Arthur Brooks asserts, "It is these voluntary, beneficial, 'affectionate' acts that have the ability to transform the giver and the receiver in unique and important ways." He goes on to say that, "Our strength as a nation is affected by our ability to bring more people into the ranks of the generous—for their good and for ours." The data clearly indicates that, despite differing political views, those who are active in religious communities give more to charities, including religious organizations. Charitable people are more likely to report that they are happy, healthy, and financially prosperous, regardless of their income bracket.

I say, all the more reason for us to carry over the spirit of giving and generosity throughout the year. All the more incentive for us to seek to attract new members into our Unitarian Universalist congregations, for them to be part of a community in which affection and generosity are the ways of being.

May the year 2008 be one of health, well being, and prosperity for you and your congregation.

Laurel Amabile

Profiles in Fundraising: Gerry Blomgren

Ohio-Meadville Chair

The Annual Program Fund is grateful to have Gerry Blomgren serving the Ohio-Meadville District as its Annual Program Fund Committee Chair. She has been fulfilling this role since 2005, enjoying working with the other committee members and developing relationships with congregations and the Ohio-Meadville Board.

The Ohio-Meadville District comprises forty-four congregations in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New York, and serves 5,491 congregation members. Last year, the Ohio-Meadville District raised \$199,603 in Annual Program Fund contributions and hopes to raise \$212,372 this year. Congregational giving at this level will add an additional \$3,000 to next year's District Grant, a UUA grant given for District-level programs and services. Gerry does an excellent job recognizing congregations' contributions to the Annual Program Fund by sending

letters of appreciation. She also gives a "pep" talk and distributes certificates to the Fair Share congregations at the Annual District Meeting. Last year, she gave Fair Share certificates to twenty-nine congregations, an increase of two congregations!



If you have ever spoken with Gerry, you will know she is a joy to be around. She is easy to talk to and has many interests and activities. She is a member of the West Shore UU Church, a Fair Share congregation, in Cleveland, Ohio and has, over the course of her time there, filled many roles in the congregation. In her community, she is a member of the League of Women Voters and is a strong supporter of the school system. She also loves to read, garden, travel, keep abreast of government affairs, and has a deep appreciation for art and music. Gerry and her husband, George, have three children and one granddaughter and live in the Cleveland area.



From the General Chair:
Barb Brown

The Apprentice: Building Your Stewardship Practices

Building the Team

A stewardship team is best headed by a strong leader whom everyone respects and trusts and to whom no one can say, “No.” When calling on a member or friend during the annual budget drive, a team approach is best. The Minister and a volunteer who knows the member or friend should also be present.

Keys To Success: Opening Doors of Opportunity

Many resources exist that offer best practices of stewardship (see below for a partial listing). A particular book to look at is *Asking Makes a Difference*. We know from research that the number one reason people don’t give money is that they are not asked! In *Asking*, King looks at the process for making the need to ask secondary to the overall process of seeing to the mission of the group. Why wait for once a year to get a new person’s commitment to your ministry? Why not ask when the new person’s commitment level is at its highest? (Such as when the person has just joined!)

Transformational Leadership

If the mission, vision and ministry of stewardship are clear, they will be supported by the congregation. It isn’t just one person’s ministry—it is the ministry of the congregation. A transformational congregational leadership will give their congregation all the tools needed to make decisions that support the ministry of the congregation fully and completely. Look into Jerry King’s book, *Budgets with a Mission*, for an excellent process for moving your congregation’s budget from the

dark ages into the new millennium.

Review in the Board Room

It will easily take three to five years to re-tool your stewardship process. However, consider the alternative: you keep doing what you are doing now and keep getting what you currently get. Is it enough? If so, don’t change. If not, you have nothing to lose!

You’re Hired!

In the end of the process, it comes down to: did your congregation support its own ministry? It isn’t about making a budget. It’s about supporting ministry. A successful transformational team will first rethink its stewardship practices, and use that to help grow UUism in their own congregation. Is not that what it is all about?

Please let me know if there is any way I can help you and your congregation around the issue of becoming good stewards of UUism in your area. Becoming a good steward means you do more than hold true to the principles of UUism—you let them go, you invite others to learn about them, and most importantly, you nurture and encourage them, then watch them grow in others!

General Chair, UUA Annual Program Fund Committee

NOTABLE QUOTE

**"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."
John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church and abolitionist**

Recognizing Those Who Lead the Way: The 2008 Stewardship Sermon Award

Established in 1984, the Stewardship Sermon Award is granted annually in recognition of the sermon that best explores and promotes the financial support of our Unitarian Universalist faith. The \$1,000 award is jointly sponsored by the Annual Program Fund (APF), the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) and the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA).

The deadline for submissions for the 2008 Stewardship Sermon Award is February 13, 2008. Religious professional leaders are invited to submit sermons delivered between January 1, 2007 and February 9, 2008 to the Annual Program Fund Assistant, Melissa Ferris, at apf@uua.org.

For additional information and instructions, please visit: www.uua.org/giving/awardsscholarships/stewardshipsermon/index.shtml

Resources you may find helpful

- Asking Makes a Difference: A Guide for Stewardship Teams* (King, Jerald L., King and Associates)
- Beyond Fundraising: A Complete Guide to Congregational Stewardship* (Clark, Wayne B., UUA)
- Beyond the Collection Plate: Overcoming the Obstacles of Faithful Giving* (Durall, Michael, Abingdon Press).
- Budgets with a Mission: A Guide to Program Budgets* (King, Jerald L., King and Associates)
- Creating Congregations of Generous People* (Durall, Michael, Alban Institute)
- Fundraising with a Vision* (Landreth, Edward B., UUA)
- Offerings: Remarks on Passing the Plate* (Thayer, Robert, Skinner House)
- The Almost Church* (Durall, Michael, Jenkins Lloyd Jones Press)

All listed resources, and many others, are available through the UUA Bookstore: 1-800-215-9076 or <https://secure.uua.org/bookstore/>

Tips for Stewardship Teams

MOTIVATIONS FOR GIVING

In his book, *Ask, Thank, Tell*, Charles Lane notes that research indicates that there are several key factors or approaches that motivate people in their charitable giving:

- Being asked by someone you know well
- Volunteering at the organization
- Being asked by clergy to give
- Reading or hearing a news story
- Being asked to give at work
- Receiving a letter asking you to give
- Receiving a telephone call asking you to give

From this list, Lane has extrapolated the following important insights which can inform a stewardship team's planning and approach:

- Build a strong volunteer base in your organization.
- Involve the minister(s) in asking people to give.
- Tell a compelling stewardship

story—let the people know their congregation is making a difference in people's lives.

- Remember that people give when asked by someone they know well. Plan so that several of the motivating factors apply to potential givers.

THANKING GIVERS

Charles Lane, author of the book *Ask, Thank, Tell*, also highlights the importance of creating a culture of thanksgiving in our congregations. Lane defines this as "a culture in which people feel comfortable and natural expressing their thanks to one another."

WHY THANK?

"When people are regularly thanked," the author explains, "they will not only feel appreciated, they will feel valuable, they will feel wanted and needed.

When people are thanked and feel appreciated, they will quickly volunteer to be involved in the next project, whether that be through time, talent, or financial support."

HOW DO WE GO ABOUT THANKING GIVERS?

- Express thankfulness for the abundance present in your congregation, for all of the resources you have been blessed with.
- Plan who and how givers will be thanked—everyone all at once and individually, and immediately upon receiving a pledge or gift.
- Expand the circle of those giving thanks, including ministers, elected leaders, and others to whom expressing appreciation comes naturally.
- Share messages of appreciation received from those outside your congregation—from those agencies and ministries you support in the wider community.
- Find opportunities for thanksgiving and celebrating the generosity in your congregation.

Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation, by Charles R. Lane, 2006, Augsburg Fortress. ISBN: 978-0-8066-5263-4

A Vision of Stewardship: The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Falmouth, MA

By Rev. Robert Thayer, Ballou Channing District Chair of the Annual Program Fund, with Rev. Robert Francis Murphy, Minister UU Fellowship of Falmouth, Massachusetts

Every year, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Falmouth hosts the Rachel Carson Harvest Dinner to honor one of America's great environmentalists. Carson was born near Pittsburgh, but in 1929 she came to the Woods Hole scientific community in Falmouth, MA to begin her career in the marine sciences. At the end of her life, "Ray" Carson was involved with All Souls Unitarian Church, in Washington, DC, and since then has been honored by people throughout the world. Books like Carson's *Silent Spring* helped to move liberal religion in new directions by teaching the basics of ecology, by encouraging a sense of wonder and delight in nature, and by educating people of faith about the importance of stewardship.

Rachel Carson never visited the Falmouth Fellowship, but it's the kind of church that she would have liked. The Falmouth Fellowship joined the American Unitarian Association on May 27, 1959, the same day as Rachel Carson's birthday. Many of the congregation's early members were scientists and engineers, teachers and technicians and others, with close connections to the science centers and government agencies in Woods Hole. **The Falmouth society was one of the daring new "fellowship movement" groups of the 1950s.** Reverend Kenneth Warren, the young minister at the Barnstable Unitarian Church, helped guide and inspire the Falmouth congregation during its early days.

For several years, the Falmouth Fellowship lacked a home of its own. The congregation met in a small, lovely Quaker meetinghouse, then moved to the environmental education center known as New Alchemy. During the 1980s, Cape Cod became increasingly popular as a retirement center, and the year-round population grew dramatically. For thirty years, the congregation in Falmouth had enjoyed volunteer and part-time spiritual leadership that included a mix of lay leaders, some local ministers, summer visitors, and one retired Unitarian Universalist minister. This model of leadership was effective while the congregation remained small, but as it developed, the demands on volunteer leaders increased. **By the late 1980s, it was time for a change.**

They opted for the UUA's Extension Ministry program in 1989, and became a ministry-led group with the Rev. David Nash Williams. The lead-up to this decision involved several years of intra-mural dialogue, and it was

finally **the search for a new vision that would actually change the way members thought and felt.** And always there was an uninterrupted, patient, dialogue with the UUA staff; the Fellowship's relationship with the UUA ultimately enabled them to reach a diverse population on Cape Cod, in an effort to embody an inter-generational, welcoming community.

They conducted a general planning program, and subsequently a capital campaign. They went out and bought land, and with a loan from the UUA, they put up a modern building in 1992, with accessible and multi-use capacity. Balance among all the forms of growth came together: membership growth was coupled with spiritual, organizational, and financial development.

The Falmouth Fellowship now identifies itself as "a new congregation in an old New England tradition." Unitarian Universalist churches nearby include the Pilgrim congregation in Plymouth, gathered in 1620. The Falmouth congregation acknowledges its heritage while engaging with the modern needs and concerns of liberal religion. Active in human rights and environmental protection, the church is especially concerned with defending the rights and dignity of the elderly.

With all of these efforts in mind, Falmouth has become a beacon of generosity, with **the longest record (twenty-five years) of Fair Share contributions to the Annual Program Fund in the Ballou Channing District.** "The By-Laws state that this fellowship shall be a Fair Share congregation," notes Peter Grinnell, who is one of the society's past presidents. "If we were to drop the Fair Share, it would mean changing the By-Laws, and that would be upsetting for many."

"Stewardship is a theme that's frequently mentioned in Falmouth," notes Rev. Robert Francis Murphy, who is the Falmouth Fellowship's current minister. "Like Rachel Carson, we're concerned about the future of our environment and we want to affirm the worth and dignity of all of the world's people."

Frequently, in this church, you'll hear the message that **good religion means generosity, caring for each other, and wise stewardship.** The example of the Unitarian Universalists in Falmouth is worth taking to heart. It's an old message in organized religion. It may also be the paradigm that helps to guide the Unitarian Universalist movement through some of the challenges of the 21st century. Learn more about the UU Fellowship of Falmouth at: www.uuffm.org.

Bright Beacon of Justice in the Great Smokies

“Tennessee Valley UU Church has always been a bright beacon for justice in Knox County,” reports Pat Griggs, the Annual Program Fund representative for the Thomas Jefferson District. Pat is referring to the congregation’s active and visible involvement in the Knoxville Interfaith Network, their advocacy for family-friendly personnel and consumer policies, multicultural tolerance in local schools, and environmental stewardship. The TVUUC has helped birth and generously support three congregations: Oak Ridge UU Church, Westside UU Church, and the new Blount County Services in Maryville, TN. **Generosity, growth, and social action have always been a part of the Tennessee Valley UU Church’s rich history.**

After a 15-year period of steady membership growth, prosperity, and APF Fair Share giving, the Tennessee Valley UU Church was ready to pause, take time to assess its needs and its finances. TVUUC leaders had choices to make about staffing and determined it was important to increase the Music Director’s hours in keeping with their developing music program. Circumstances resulted in a reduction in APF contributions in 2006, but not for long.

The congregation decided it was a good time to take advantage of the UUA’s Congregational Stewardship Services. That’s when Larry Wheeler, one of the UUA’s long-time consultants, arrived on the scene to engage the members of the TVUUC in a process that would bring about a new understanding of their stewardship efforts.

“Larry worked very well with the Stewardship Team,” reports Rev. Chris Buice, minister of the church since 1991. “He brought about a new awareness and appreciation for Fair Share giving. The process stimulated new growth and creativity in the church.”

How? Part of the process was the development of a **covenant among the members that clarifies the importance of active stewardship in congregational life.** The covenanting process resulted in a new spirit of cooperation and generosity.

The Results? An ambitious budget was set forth and the members and friends of Tennessee

Continued on Page 6

Fox Valley UU Fellowship Grows in Numbers and Generosity

It has been twelve years since the Fox Valley UU Fellowship in Appleton, Wisconsin, has been able to achieve their full Annual Program Fund Fair Share contribution. At that time, the Fellowship had 161 members and 120 children and youth in their Religious Education Program. Since then, Fox Valley has built a new building, added staff, and expanded their membership to 565—up from 458 in 2006-2007. Senior minister, Rev. Roger Bertschausen, has served the congregation for seventeen years. He and congregation leaders have been working to steadily increase their APF contributions since 2000.

With such significant growth, the financial strains have been significant and difficult to keep pace with. However, with an intentional commitment to growth, the FVUUF has a number of practices to attract and develop new members. They advertise weekly, use

highly visible signage and banners, and are known for their non-traditional weddings. Word of mouth has drawn many guests to their doors.



Fox Valley UU Fellowship celebrates new members at a special luncheon

The Fellowship has completed a feasibility study for a new building expansion project which will begin next spring.

During a recent visit to the Fox Valley UU Fellowship, Neil Lichtman, Central Midwest District APF Committee representative, and Laurel Amabile, APF Director, met with Rev.

Bertschausen and four other members of the FVUUF staff team. Now that the congregation has grown to over 550 members, they can choose to contribute 4.2% of their annual operating budget.

The congregation has stretched to budget and pledge its full Fair Share of \$23,805 for this fiscal year, and intends to continue to grow and prosper.

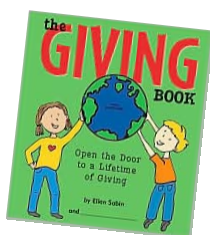
For more information on Fox Valley UU Fellowship, visit: www.focol.org/fvuuf/



Rev. Roger Bertschausen & Founding Members of the Fox Valley UU Fellowship

Stewardship and Our Youth

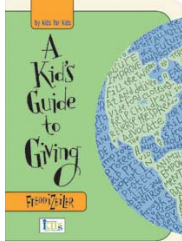
Looking for ways to introduce children and youth in your life to generosity? These resources offer fun, easy and engaging approaches to discover ways to give, how to give, and how to save up for giving. It is never too early, and never too late, to teach the values of sharing with others, and so we offer you a selection of resources to nurture the spirit of giving.



The Giving Book: Open the Door to a Lifetime of Giving, written by Ellen Sabin, provides youngsters a fun way to learn about generosity, identify what causes they care about, discover the different ways they can give and keep a record of

their giving. This visually-engaging and readable book is a perfect resource for children who look to give back.

A Kid's Guide to Giving, written by Frederika Zeiler and published by the time she turned twenty, is a great guide for tweens and teens to learn about generosity and find charities that match their interests. Zeiler organized a list of charities into three groups: people, animals and the environment. Each listing informs of the organization's mission, how they spend donations, how much of each dollar given is used, and how to donate to or contact the charity. *A Kid's Guide to Giving* includes lots of "best practices" when it comes to giving and receiving, as well as stories of inspiration from other youth. This



guide is sure to motivate the youth in your life to embrace the spirit of generosity.

Moonjar is an organization committed to creating products that encourage communication and that empower children with basic life skills. The "Moonjar Moneybox" is a special container with three sections: one for saving, one for spending, and one for sharing. It also includes a family guide to get started and a passbook to record deposits and withdrawals. Moonjar's website (www.moonjar.com)



makes numerous resources available for children and families, including saving

tips for parents and children, an online calculator, storybooks, and two great downloadable workbooks, *Giving with a Mission* and *Growing Up Giving*, published by The Seattle Foundation (www.seattlefoundation.org).

Network for Good provides an electronic mechanism for giving money to your choice of over one million charities. Donations are safe, secure, and private. Their website keeps track of all of your donations so that you can access them at any time in one, convenient location. Over 400,000 donors have already given more than \$100 million dollars to their favorite charities since Network for Good launched in 2001. The website address is: www.networkforgood.org.



Beacon of Justice, continued from Page 5

Valley UU Church met the challenge. They not only contributed enough to fund their proposed budget, but exceeded their goal by \$20,000.

TVUUC also expresses their impressive generosity through their offering give-away program, established to help fund their social justice efforts. The frequency of this action has increased from once a month to twice a month; the church is very active in the care and support of the greater Knoxville's low income and homeless population, serving as a host organization for homeless families.

A long-range planning process is now underway and the church has resumed its Fair Share giving as one of our Honor Congregations. In fact, the TVUUC chose to contribute more than its Fair Share to our Association in 2007. When asked why, the Church Administrator, Jenny Arthur said, "Because it is the RIGHT thing to do." For more information about TVUUC, visit: www.tvuuc.org.

Contact Us!

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When Sending Contributions, Please:

1. **Make checks payable to "UUA Annual Program Fund."**
2. **Send all APF checks to our bank lockbox:**

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Annual Program Fund
P.O. Box 843153
Boston, MA 02284-3153
3. **Include statement stubs with your check.**
4. **Remember to write your congregation ID on each check.**
5. **Keep correspondence separate and mail to our office location.**
6. **Mail checks for other UU entities and programs (such as Association Sunday) to the addresses that correspond to those programs. This will prevent checks from being deposited into APF's account and will minimize paperwork and accounting errors.**

APF NOTES

Online certification will open up November 15 and will close on February 1. Please ensure you enter accurate membership numbers, as we will base FY09 Fair Share on what you enter during this period.

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For fiscal year 2007-08, the Fair Share amount is \$54.00 per certified member (reported as of February 1, 2007). Contributions received between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008 will be applied to FY08.

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For fiscal year 2008-09, the Fair Share amount will be \$56.00 per certified member (reported as of February 1, 2008). Contributions received between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009 will be applied to FY09.