



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

## APF Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Annual Program Fund?**

The Annual Program Fund (APF) is the fund to which member congregations pledge and contribute each year in support of the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA) operating budget. Currently, this financial support makes up nearly half of the UUA's undesignated funding, providing for its many essential programs, services, and operations.

The Annual Program Fund is part of the UUA's Stewardship and Development staff group. Under the guidance of the Vice President for Stewardship and Development Rev. Terry Sweetser, it is led by APF Director Laurel Amabile and supported by APF Assistant Molly Farrell.

Supporting the APF staff within each of the Districts of the Association is a volunteer Annual Program Fund Committee. Each District has an appointed APF Committee representative who encourages Unitarian Universalist congregations to envision abundance, embolden generosity, and enrich the larger faith community.

### **Why are congregations expected to contribute to the Annual Program Fund?**

The congregations that constitute the membership of the Unitarian Universalist Association have voluntarily entered into a covenantal relationship with one another, actively affirming and promoting the purposes and principles of Unitarian Universalism and bringing to the world a vision of religious freedom, tolerance, and social justice. In forming this relationship, more than 1,000 congregations have promised their mutual trust and support to one another.

In association, we can do together what individual congregations would find difficult or impossible to accomplish alone. The generosity of congregations and individual Unitarian Universalists enables the Association of Congregations to support congregational health and vitality through a wide array of programs, services, and resources offered to individual congregations.

### **Why should my congregation be Fair Share?**

Our shared Unitarian Universalist movement has been brought to life through the gifts shared by every one of the congregations joined together within this liberal religious tradition. Together, we unite our energy, commitment, and resources to fulfill the dreams

that no single person or congregation could achieve alone. It is only possible to continue to do so with your congregation's generous and ongoing financial support through Fair Share contributions to the Annual Program Fund.

In fulfilling your congregation's full Fair Share, you are not only recognizing and affirming your connection and commitment to other Unitarian Universalists and their home congregations, but you are serving as a model and exemplar of generosity, living a life of service which arises from a spirit of abundance.

As a support mechanism of our Unitarian Universalist denomination, the Annual Program Fund is a principal means for your congregation to create and sustain all of the diverse programs and services that are offered to each of our congregations. The gifts given to support one another through the Annual Program Fund constitute nearly 50% of the UUA's unrestricted income, directly impacting the Association's capacity to grow and improve the diverse programs and services offered to congregations.

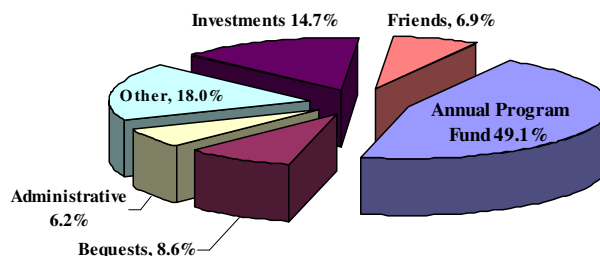


Fig. 1: Unrestricted Income Sources for Fiscal Year 2011

### **What is the Fair Share request for the current fiscal year?**

For Fiscal Year 2010-2011 which runs from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011, the requested contribution (also known as "Fair Share") is \$58 per certified member of your congregation. The certified membership is the number reported to the UUA annually during the certification process, no later than February 1 of each year.

Large congregations with 550 members or more are allowed a percentage of budget option, equivalent to 4.2% of their operating budget. Again, the total expenditures used in this calculation are reported during the certification process.

### **How are these APF contributions used?**

Major roles of our Association of Congregations are to serve and strengthen member congregations, to foster the growth of Unitarian Universalism, as well as to nurture our spirit. The Annual Program Fund, funded by congregations' contributions, provides for a wide range of vital services, programs, and resources of direct benefit to member congregations, such as:

- **Social Justice Initiatives** including the Standing on the Side of Love campaign responding to identity-based violence, exclusion, and oppression; as well as resources

and workshops to start, strengthen, and grow social justice ministries to engage in advocacy work at state and local levels.

- **Advocacy and Witness for Social Justice Resources** to promote a more welcoming, inclusive, empowering, and just faith for all, particularly those marginalized because of racial-ethnic identity, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disabilities. The UUA offers curricula, workshops, worship guides, downloadable resources, and consultation services.
- **Lifespan Faith Development and Religious Education Curricula** for education, worship, advocacy, and social action to address the needs of educators, families, and seekers of all ages, such as Tapestry of Faith and Our Whole Lives. The Religious Education Credentialing Office provides information concerning professional development and settlement.

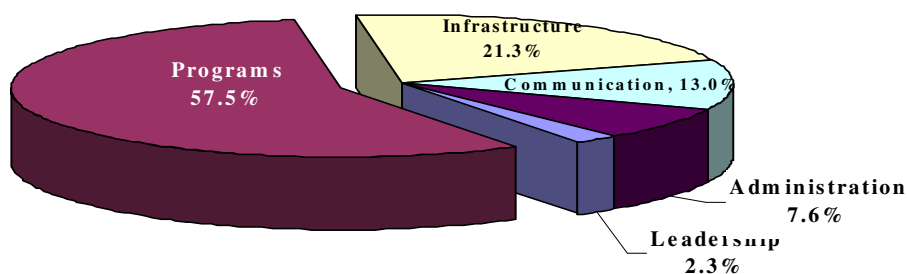


Fig. 2: Program Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2011

- **Advancing Excellence in UU Ministry** through credentialing and fellowship processes, ministerial search and settlement assistance as well as offering professional development grants and workshops.
- **Worship Resources** on a vast array of subjects, encompassing worship theory, music, multi-generational worship, the use of technology, and lay lead worship guidance, plus ceremonies, sermons, readings, and meditations generously shared by their authors.
- **Congregational Stewardship Consultation Services and Congregational Growth Resources** provide consultation and advice on conducting annual budget drives, capital campaigns, financial feasibility studies, strategic planning, practicing hospitality, and membership development.

### **What happens if we're not Fair Share?**

No matter what the size of the gift from a congregation, that congregation receives the full benefits accorded to all member congregations of our Association. Congregations of all sizes experience financial hardship at times, often at points when they most need the resources, support, and services the UUA can provide.

Some programs and consultation services with costs associated have a somewhat higher rate if a congregation has not fully contributed at the Fair Share level. In addition, congregations applying for or receiving grants or building loans from UUA sources are expected to be in good standing with the Association and District with regard to their Annual Program Fund contributions and District dues.

Financial support of our Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations is a choice and a responsibility of membership in good standing. Though the amount of contribution requested each year is voluntary, all member congregations covenant their support of one another and of the principles they hold in common. When member congregations choose not to contribute fully to the Annual Program Fund, they shift the financial responsibility to the other congregations, creating inequity and imbalance in the covenantal relationship.

### **How can I encourage Fair Share contributions in my congregation?**

Speak out! Meet with your minister and members of the board of directors, letting them know that fully supporting the work of the UUA is important to you and to our shared Unitarian Universalist faith as a whole. Open a dialogue with the other members of your congregation about stewardship within Unitarian Universalism. Initiate conversations within your congregation about how the way we relate with finances reflects the manner in which we engage with our world to inspire the change we wish to see.

For assistance, ideas, and materials, remember that your APF District Representative and the APF staff are always willing to assist you in any way that we can. Please do not hesitate to contact us and take advantage of the information and resources that we have available for your benefit.

### **Why is our Fair Share amount based on a different number of members than there are in my congregation's membership book?**

Membership levels within congregations are constantly changing: new members join your congregation, others members may move away or pass on. To remain consistent throughout

the fiscal year, the Annual Program Fund uses the membership level reported to the UUA during the annual certification process to calculate the requested Fair Share contribution.

Under unusual, extenuating circumstances, the APF staff may be able to adjust this number through an appeal process. This process is not intended as a tool to make changes arising from normal membership fluctuation during the course of a year. Please contact us at [apf@uua.org](mailto:apf@uua.org) for more information about initiating this process if this applies to your congregation.

### **How do I make our congregation's contribution to the Annual Program Fund?**

Please make checks payable to "UUA Annual Program Fund." It is helpful to indicate your four-digit congregation ID number in the memo line of your check. Rather than mailing checks directly to our offices, your gifts will be processed more quickly if they are sent directly to our banking lockbox at:

UUA Annual Program Fund  
PO Box 843153  
Boston, MA 02284-3153

### **Can I send my congregation's district dues to this address?**

No. Please send your district dues directly to the district offices. These addresses can be found on the UUA's website with the [District Services](#) section.

### **May I, as an individual, make contributions to the Annual Program Fund?**

The Annual Program Fund is a giving mechanism specifically intended for congregations. Individuals have many other ways to make gifts in support of the work of the UUA, such as the [Friends of the UUA](#) program. Please visit [www.uua.org/giving/](http://www.uua.org/giving/) to learn more about how you can give to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

### **What is my congregation's contribution history to the Annual Program Fund?**

Please contact Molly Farrell, APF Assistant, at (617) 948-6512 or [mfarrell@uua.org](mailto:mfarrell@uua.org) with any questions regarding your congregation's current or past gift history.

### **I'd like to learn more about the APF and what it means to be Fair Share.**

Please contact Laurel Amabile, APF Director, at (617) 948-6513 or [lamabile@uua.org](mailto:lamabile@uua.org) to further discuss the congregation's role in the stewardship of our faith.