

Association Sunday 2011: Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need Association Sundays?

Unitarian Universalist congregations are self-governing entities whose connections to one another sometimes seem tenuous. We need Association Sundays to strengthen the bonds of common purpose among congregations. Even more importantly, we need to combine our resources in order to make Unitarian Universalism a stronger voice of liberal religious values in the world.

We need to bring our congregations together to pursue our mission of affirming the "inherent worth and dignity of every person". These Association Sundays will strengthen our connection, and combine our resources, enabling us to have more of an influence on our country. Now is the time for our congregations to grow stronger and more effective because our religious values are needed to help heal the wounded world.

What are Association Sundays?

Since 2007, the UUA has asked congregations to participate in annual Association Sundays to recognize and support, both spiritually and materially, the national work of the Association. We envision a day – an “Association Sunday” - during which thousands of UUs across the nation are simultaneously celebrating our shared commitment to Unitarian Universalism.

Like *Ministry Sunday* in 1995, (which was a request to support the financial needs of ministers and seminary students) and *Mind the Gap Sunday* in 2002 (which was focused on supporting Youth and Young Adult Ministries), each Association Sunday will include a worship service based on a particular theme and congregations will be asked to host a special collection to support the Association of Congregations. This year’s theme is *Celebrating Excellence in Ministries*.

How is Association Sunday different from other UUA fundraising efforts?

Association Sunday is different from The Annual Program Fund (APF) and Friends of the UUA; those programs help to pay for the operating budget of the UUA. Special projects require additional funding and that’s the purpose of Association Sunday.

[Read more](#) about the differences between Association Sunday and the Annual Program Fund.

When is Association Sunday, and what will its funds support?

The theme of Association Sunday 2011, scheduled for October 2, 2011, is *Celebrating Excellence in Ministries*. The UUA will partner with the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA), the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (UUMN), the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA), and other professional organizations to celebrate Association Sunday this year. Funds raised will be distributed as grants to these professional organizations to support a range of projects, including scholarships, continuing education, an

assessment of our ministries, and other projects that help religious professionals get the ongoing training they need to support thriving congregations.

Some of the proposed projects that may receive Association Sunday 2011 funding include:

- Small group training, support, and coaching for ministers to work together on building ministerial skills.
- Scholarships for religious professionals to attend the bi-annual Institute for Excellence in Ministry, the 2012 UUMN Conference, LREDA Fall Conferences, and other meaningful professional education events.
- A multicultural competency assessment, multicultural training for religious professionals and lay people, and a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of skills necessary for professional ministries in the next generation.
- Collaborative partner learning programs between UU professional organizations.
- A Shared Ministry Workshop Series focused on collaborative planning and implementation of multi-generational worship services for religious educators, musicians, and ministers.
- Additional support for the UU Children's Choir, music professional credentialing, and the composition of new UU music.
- New approaches for connecting with religious professionals in isolated areas through webinars and other communications.

How will the money be raised?

We ask that each member and minister contribute individually as part of a special collection during services on Association Sunday. We suggest a recommended donation of \$20 per member. Some may even wish to inspire generosity in their congregation by making a large lead or matching gift and announcing it prior to their service.

If you or a member of your congregation wishes to make a leadership contribution, matching gift, stock gift or bequest to benefit Association Sundays, please contact us.

How can my congregation register for Association Sunday?

Each congregation has a different way of managing special services and collections, so it is important that you check with your minister and board before taking any steps to register. Once you have followed the guidelines set out by your congregation, please:

1. Have your minister or board president register with the Stewardship and Development Office by emailing AssociationSunday@uua.org or online at www.uua.org/associationsunday;
2. Schedule Sunday, October 2, 2011 or another date for your "Association Sunday" service;
3. Spread the word about Association Sunday among members of your congregation.

Newsletter articles, pulpit announcements, and emails are all good ways to share your enthusiasm for this project. After your service, please share your stories and photos with us at associationsunday@uua.org. More information and resources can be found online at www.uua.org/associationsunday.