

# Spirituality of Stewardship

Rev. Lauren Smith  
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# Chalice Lighting

“When Giving Is All We Have” ~ Alberto Rios



# Introductions

Who are we?



# Why

Why did we want to do this workshop?

# 3X5 Cards

Please write an issue on the 3X5 card  
that you would like for us to cover in  
the Saturday workshop



# Why

Why did you choose this workshop?  
What are your hopes?  
in pairs or threes

# Ground Work

- Spirituality
  - Your own transformation
  - Values at the heart of your integrity
- Leadership
  - Leadership as a spiritual practice
- Stewardship
  - Generosity foundational

# Generosity

- The Gift - From *Money and the Meaning of Life*

*The subject is love and giving. Do we ever really give anything, whether love to money or an object or time, without, however subtly, claiming something in return?*

*Have we ever been on the receiving end of a pure gift, where we did not feel the slightest need to pay something back? Is such an exchange even possible, or desirable - between people or in nature or, if one thinks in spiritual terms, between God and an individual human?*



# Spirituality of Stewardship

- Generosity - is breathtaking, magical, awesome, inspiring - and we are afraid to try it. “Moving at the speed of trust” invites a different way of thinking, and a different quality of being in community



# A Trusting People

- Are we a trusting people
- Why is trust important
- The missing ingredient



# Trust

- Trust as the foundation of generosity
- Reflection - remember a time when trust in a relationship drew you into something of value
- Share with a partner



# Define Trust

- What's trust? Popcorn
- What does it mean to be trustworthy?  
Popcorn
- How can we be both wise and trusting?
- How do boundaries fit into this?





# Unitarian Universalism

*One holy love for all*

- Hope, Love, Justice, Courage and Joy
- Covenantal
- Pluralistic
- Transformative

# Covenant and Trust

Covenant - A deep abiding promise to myself, grounded in my highest values, the values that I hold myself accountable too, and call myself back to.

With hope for a bright future - I come in trust.

With love in my heart for all creation - I come in  
humility.

Seeking justice for all, marginalizing none - I  
come in open-mindedness.

With courage - I come willing to be  
transformed.

With great joy - I come to bind myself to you,  
so that together we can do what I cannot do  
alone.



Reflection - Think of a time in the life of your community when mutual trust allowed something to come into being. When did you see your community as most faithful or most trusting?

<https://brenebrown.com/videos/anatomy-trust-video/>

# Trust

- Charles Feltman “Trust is choosing to make something important to you vulnerable to the actions of someone else. Distrust is when what I’ve shared with you, that is important to me, is not safe with you.”

- Built in small moments
- John Gottman - sliding door moments
  - not losing the opportunity to connect
  - paying attention
- Build trust or betray
- Triggers of anxiety - money, sex and the difference between the ideal and the practice

## The Anatomy of Trust

- B - Boundaries - setting and respecting
- R - Reliability - over and over again
- A - Accountability - forgiveness and forgiving
- V - Vault - not my story to tell
- I - Integrity - choosing courage over comfort - choosing what right over what's fun fast or easy - practicing your values not just profession your values
- N - non-judgement - struggling together never one-sided asking for help
- G - Generosity

- The gap between the ideal - **our values** - and the practice - **what we do**
- Covenant - A deep abiding promise to myself, grounded in my highest values, the values that I hold myself accountable too, and call myself back to.
- It's aspirational. I will be broken - I will hold myself accountable and call myself back into Covenant.
- Do I trust myself?
- Do I love myself?

The background of the slide features a repeating pattern of stylized green leaves. The leaves are arranged in vertical columns, with some overlapping. They have a simple, rounded shape with a pointed tip and a small notch at the base. The color is a light, muted green.

## ***Stewardship is Sacred Work***

- The work of the church is to offer an alternative to living a life grounded in consumerism
- People yearn for deeper meaning

The background of the slide features a repeating pattern of stylized green leaves. The leaves are arranged in vertical columns, with some leaves pointing upwards and others pointing downwards, creating a sense of growth and balance. The color is a soft, muted green.

## *Stewardship is Sacred Work*

- Enrollment in an IRA
- **Integrity / Resource  
Alignment**





## *Personal Discernment*

- Integrity / Resource Alignment: personally, as a couple, as a family
- What are your core values?
- How are those expressed through your spending?
- How much is enough? To keep? To give?
- **Make a Move = Momentum**

# *Personal Discernment: What Gets in the Way*

- “They have the threat of hell; we don’t” - escatology
- “We give to so many causes” - IRA
- “We have members who can’t afford to give; we don’t want to offend them” - true inclusion
- “There just isn’t enough money”  
- data



## ***Institutional Discernment***

- Integrity / Resource Alignment as a congregation
- Start with Mission/Vision and our Principles and Purposes

# ***Institutional Discernment***

- Budget = Financial Statement of Mission
- Fair Compensation for all staff
- Honor level giving to Annual Program Fund
- Giving from church to community
- **Make a Move = Momentum**

## *Recap*

- Sacred work of stewardship = IRA
- ***This is the work of the church***
- Good resources exist
- Truly serving our people to live out their values
- Is congregation (as institution) living out values?

The background of the slide features a pattern of stylized green leaves. The leaves are arranged in a way that they appear to be part of a larger plant, with some leaves overlapping others. The leaves are a light green color and have a simple, rounded shape with a pointed tip. The overall effect is a clean, naturalistic design.

## Be Thinking:

- **Is there something that you want to try (or build upon) that will inspire your congregation to risk generosity in support of the mission and values of our faith?**
- **One sentence**

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***See you Saturday!***

- Here in this room, Saturday 3-4 pm
- Fill out 3x5 card if you haven't
- Visit UUA in the Exhibit Hall

# Spirituality of Stewardship Saturday Session

Rev. Lauren Smith  
Rev. Vail Weller  
Connie Goodbread



# Chalice Lighting



# Day 2

## Sharing Tools & Resources

Exercise: Addressing Trust & Mission Concerns  
Year-Round Pledging  
Endowments and Legacy Giving  
Implementing an IRA

Exercise:

Leading Stewardship  
From a New Story

**Use the power you have, to effect the change you can**

There may be systemic issues in your congregation around

***Trust***  
***Mission and purpose***  
***Power***

that impact stewardship in your setting.

Find ways to lead from a new story.

Root yourself in the story you want to be in, and invite people to join you from a place of abundance.

Build from centers of health.

“That which we give attention to,  
grows”

## **Your Current Story**

**We're stuck in our efforts  
to raise money for the church because**

When we ask directly for money, people feel excluded or  
people accuse us of being exclusive..

We're afraid to ask for money.

No one wants to lead the stewardship drive.

If we talk about mission, vision, and the spiritual component  
of generosity, we'll alienate people who respond to a  
practical pitch or peer pressure.

A small percentage of the congregation gives most of the money, and they're a dying generation.

New members aren't as invested in the congregation and don't make significant gifts.

We can't raise money effectively because our congregation is so disrupted by issues with the minister or ministerial transition, a capital campaign, or conflict over racial justice.

**Is my painful story working?**

**Is my painful story true?**

**Reflection Exercise**

# Year Round Pledging

Simpler...yet more complex

Quartiles & Rolling Asks

One way to begin now: recurring pledge amount

[www.uua.org/finance/fundraising/presentations/year-round-pledging](http://www.uua.org/finance/fundraising/presentations/year-round-pledging)



# Endowments & Legacy Giving

[www.plannedgiving.uua.org](http://www.plannedgiving.uua.org)

Endowments \* Susan Helbert \* treasurer@uua.org

Legacy Giving \* Jay Pacitti \* jpacitti@uua.org

# IRA within your congregation

**staff analysis**

fair compensation guidelines

[www.uua.org/finance/compensation/program/salary-recommendations](http://www.uua.org/finance/compensation/program/salary-recommendations)

benefits

appreciation and gratitude

# IRA within your congregation

annual program fund support

quartiles

be in touch with us at [apf@uua.org](mailto:apf@uua.org) for help strategizing



# closing thoughts

Give, give, give –

what is the point of having experience, knowledge or talent if I don't give it away?

Of having stories if I don't tell them to others?

Of having wealth if I don't share it?

I don't intend to be cremated with any of it!

It is in giving that I connect with others, with the world and with the Divine.

~ Isabel Allende



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