



Weaving Our Community Together

Stewardship at Northlake Spring 2024

Our Vision: To be a vibrant and welcoming community, feeding the human spirit, lighting a beacon for love and justice

Our Mission: To celebrate life by worshiping together, serving others and nurturing a diverse, loving community.

It’s been a tumultuous year for the world we live in. It is a reminder of how important this community is to us – and that the things we do as part of this community are what makes it a community. Some of the ways we’ve worked to maintain our relationships and to be part of a better world include:

- Inspiring services with more multi-generational involvement and music through our choir and orchestra
- Being together in-person more and also using technology to continue to support participation for all
- Gathering together in coffee hours, potlucks, suppers, small group ministry, and Pub Theology
- Special learning sessions about the rise of fascism and White Christian nationalism and ways to resist
- Participation of youth in regional UU conferences “Cons”
- Launching a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) affinity group
- A flourishing Women’s group, with activities ranging from regular walks to “UU the Vote”
- Ongoing thoughtful, yet somewhat playful, exploration of preparedness for climate disasters (Zombie Apocalypse Team)
- Increased awareness of and membership in the UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee)

We’ve also worked to maintain and improve our buildings and campus, for both our benefit and the benefit of the organizations we share our space with. With a heightened awareness of security issues, improvements were made in doors and windows and parking lot lighting. The Chapel Side Room was renovated. A new AV booth is under construction to make it easier for the tech team to effectively support our hybrid services.

With the sad news that Reverend Nancy will be leaving us at the end of June, we reflect on the many things she’s done for us with her creative and tireless nurturing of our spiritual growth. The best way to thank and honor her for that is to resolve to build on that foundation, to live our UU values in order to strengthen and “weave together” our beloved community - at Northlake and beyond.

Proposed Budget for next fiscal year (FY25 – July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

The proposed Budget reflects the priorities for the next year and has four major areas:

Budget	FY24	FY25	Increase %
Programs	\$316,634	\$323,795	2.3
Operations	\$71,369	\$77,511	8.6
Facilities	\$137,784	\$144,078	4.6
Capital Reserve Addition	\$6,150	\$10,000	63
Total Expenses	\$531,937	\$551,187	4.4

Programs – This is the heart of what our church is: supporting our community of belonging, nourishing our spiritual grounding, and helping us be part of healing this broken world. It funds the ministry of the church, including, most importantly, the program staff: The Minister, the Director of Religious Education and the Music Director. This year, it also includes the additional costs of bringing in an interim minister.

Operations – This includes the administrative costs of the church, including the Administrator, office, and infrastructure costs. The 8.6% increase is due to an increase in professional fees and administrator compensation.

Facilities – The facilities budget includes all the costs of our buildings and grounds and onsite administrative support. The modest increase keeps up with inflation.

Capital Reserve - Major investments in our property in the last few years include a new roof, painting, and front deck work. This year, we'll continue rebuilding the Capital Reserve, for both major maintenance and unanticipated expenses. The Finance and Facilities committee will be building a 5-year rolling capital plan for sustainability.

How will we fund it?

One source is our rental income which offsets our campus costs through mission-aligned rental of excess and underutilized space. Our rental income is typically about 1/3rd of our income. This year, because of the new preschool, it will increase even after reclaiming space (Audubon leaving), which is great news. Then there are some donations, but the major source of income is pledges, typically about 2/3rds of the total. To meet the proposed budget, we need \$338,920 total in pledges.

How much should I pledge?

Last year, we collectively pledged \$324,000 total, including \$299,000 annual plus \$25,000 supplemental pledges. To support the proposed budget, we need a total increase of 4.5% of the annual and supplemental pledges.

Your **annual pledge** is what you would typically pledge and might have a modest increase year-to-year. A **supplemental pledge** is the opportunity, if your circumstances permit, to pledge an additional amount for this year, "supplementing" your annual pledge. Bringing our varied and diverse capacities together creates a spirit of abundance, strengthening our community. It can help us meet special needs, such as bringing in an interim minister this year, and building our capital reserves for future sustainability as we're able.

You may also find the included **Northlake UUC's Giving Guide** helpful, which has information about what your fellow Northlakers pledged last year. As well, it has a table from the UUA's "Fair Share" Giving Guide that offers a way of thinking about how your involvement in Northlake relates to your financial commitment.

Finally: It's not just about pledging money, i.e., contributing your "**treasure**". It's also about contributing **talents** and **time** – our church, like all churches, runs on all three. Indicating your time and talent contributions on the pledge form is an opportunity to reflect on all the ways you invest in our community.

How do I pledge?

This year we are going to online-only pledge forms. The online pledge form will go live on April 7 and we ask that you complete it by May 5th so that the Finance Committee can prepare the final budget. Recognizing that online-only pledging is new, the Stewardship Team Chair will be happy to answer any questions or even help complete the form. We're making this change based on the many issues we've encountered with paper: delay, loss, misread handwriting, etc. Please contact Dave Thompson at dave@dtjj.com or 425-681-5059 for assistance. The online pledge can be found at <https://northlakeuu.org/support/pledge-2024/> or use the QR code to the right. 2



We will also be having stewardship conversations with members and friends during the campaign. These are a great opportunity to connect with other Northlakers and talk about what Northlake means to each of us – not just "asking for money". If you would like to talk about stewardship please email stewardship@northlakeuu.org.

Sustaining Beloved Community

In considering your pledge and involvement in this community please hold in your heart these words of Reverend Nancy Reid-McKee's sermon on stewardship: *Being part of church, and financially supporting this institution, is both a moral and spiritual practice... Stewardship is our way of saying, "We got you. Your passage has been paid by those who've come before. Come on board, sit down, and take a rest. You, the stranger, you, the sad, you, the fearful, you, who feel alone; your passage has been paid by people of faith who've built these walls and built these ministries and built this faith of hope and love."*

Thank you for being part of Northlake!

The Stewardship Team: Dave Thompson, Melissa Ahern, Mary DeFriel, Brian Gawthrop, Janet Hall, Jay Johnson