



Stronger Together

Stewardship at Northlake, Spring 2025

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. Every day, ongoing events highlight how important this community is to us, and that the things we do as part of this community are what makes it a stronger community. Some of the ways we've worked to deepen our relationships and to be part of a better world include:

- Multi-generational services, with more member involvement in developing worship services
- A very active women's group, with regular walks and values-based actions
- A parents of teens and young adults quarterly meeting to talk about sharing UU values with our kids
- A growing choir and developing music program
- Significant improvements in our service technology (the new AV booth) and information infrastructure
- Continued evolution of governance through policy development and documented procedures
- A justice-focused Our Whole Lives (OWL) sexuality education program for youth, promoting healthy relationships, respect, and inclusivity.

While Reverend Brigitta will be leaving us in July, we are grateful for her work with us this year, which provided so much of what we needed right now: listening, calming, healing, and delivering uplifting sermons that help us acknowledge our feelings and share our strength with each other.

Proposed Budget for next year (FY26)

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

Budget	FY25	FY26	Increase %
Programs	334,662	360,745	7.8
Operations	57,364	59,021	2.9
Facilities	144,055	147,722	2.5
Capital Reserve Addition	15,000	0	
Total Expenses	551,080	567,488	3.0

Programs – This is the heart of our church: 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. It also includes the additional costs of bringing in a new interim minister. The 7.8% increase primarily pays for cost of living adjustments (COLA) and increased healthcare costs for our staff.

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

Facilities – This category includes all the costs of upkeep (essential utilities, regular buildings and grounds maintenance, minor repairs), and onsite administrative support. The modest increase keeps up with inflation.

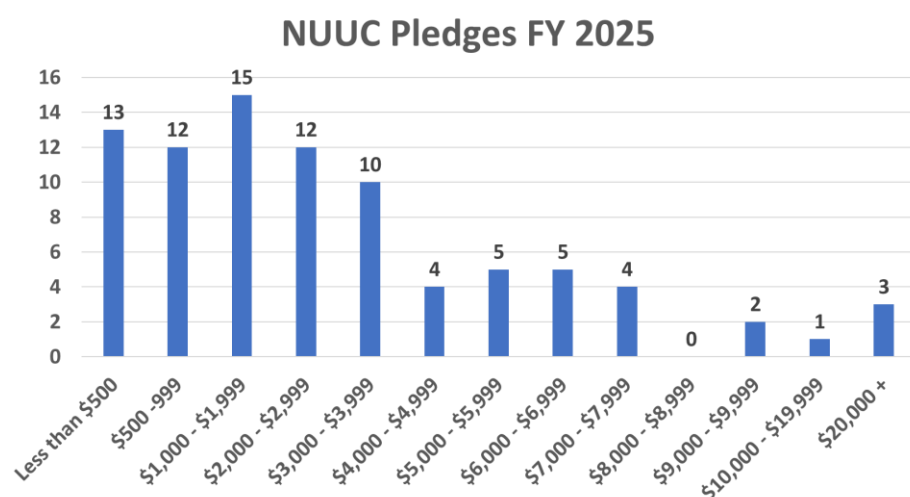
Capital Reserve – This year's proposed budget does not include a designated goal allocation to the Capital Reserves, given the other increases in the operating budget. That said, there are several priority capital projects that the Facilities Committee recommends, including completely replacing the playground fence, refinishing the chapel sanctuary floor, and resurfacing and re-lining the parking lot for safety and longevity. The Capital Reserve that we currently have is considered sufficient for emergencies, but additional capital funds will be needed for these projects. Donations to Capital Reserve were critical to projects we completed last year, and the pledge form again has an option to contribute to the Capital Reserve – please consider making an additional donation for 2025-2026.

How will we fund our church?

One funding source is rental income, which offsets our campus costs through mission-aligned rental of excess and underutilized space. Our rental income is typically about 1/3 of our income and will increase slightly this year. There are some donations, and this year we're planning a fall fundraising event, but the major source of income is pledges, typically about 2/3rds of the total. To meet the proposed budget, we need \$358,453 total in pledges, an increase of 6.1% of the annual pledges.

How much should I pledge?

Last year, we collectively pledged \$337,460 for the operating budget. Bringing our varied and diverse capacities together creates a spirit of abundance, strengthening our community. Your pledge of any amount advances our work together. Below is what Northlakers pledged last year.



Finally, our church connection is 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 the talents you share on the pledge form is an opportunity to reflect on all the ways you invest in our community. Listing your talents and time allows us make a connection with opportunities in the church community. Your answers are recorded in our Breeze database and can be used by church leadership in recruiting volunteers.

How do I pledge?

The online pledge form will go live on March 30, and we ask that you complete it by April 27 so that the Finance Committee can prepare the final budget. The Stewardship Team Chair will be happy to answer any questions or even help complete the form for you. Please contact Dave Thompson at dave@dtji.com or 425-681-5059 for assistance. The online pledge can be found at <https://northlakeuu.org/support/pledge-2025/>.

The Stewardship Team may reach out to talk with you about Stewardship during the campaign. This is a great opportunity to connect with other Northlakers and talk about what Northlake means to each of us and how stewardship works. If you would like to talk about stewardship, please email stewardship@northlakeuu.org.

Faithful Stewardship: Renewing our promise, fueling our future

In considering your pledge and involvement in this community, please hold in your heart these words of Reverend **Brigitta**: *This is the moment to renew our sacred promise to one another – committing to the work of generosity and communal care. We are stronger together. Stewardship is about more than just financial resources: it’s about the faithful resources we need to stay grounded, connected, and emboldened to live our faith out loud for the days ahead. May generosity be our foundation and our fuel for the future!*

Thank you for being part of Northlake!

The Northlake Stewardship Team: Dave Thompson, Melissa Ahern, Kate Conant, Mary DeFriel, Jean Guth