



Love in Action: Caring For What We Share

Stewardship at Northlake, Spring 2026

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.

To say it's been a tumultuous year is an understatement: we face war, injustice, racism and cruelty every day. Northlake is a refuge and place to build resilience. The ways we cultivate connection are what makes us a stronger community. Here are some of the ways our church has worked to share our values and build a different future:

- Sunday morning services that inspire and challenge us and provide spiritual nourishment.
- Religious Education is focused on regularly presenting engaging multigenerational services and Sunday morning religious education opportunities for all ages. For the older grades, we completed "Our Whole Lives" training for 7th-9th graders, are promoting connections with UU youth in the region through high school youth cons and began Wednesday Homework Hub study time for middle and high schoolers.
- Our robust women's group connects through regular walks and feminist centered action.
- The facilities team installed new welcoming wayfinding signage around the campus, including the peace pole.
- Our music program is growing and we worked with our accompanist to curate more diverse, inclusive music selections during the service.
- Our tech team advances the reach of our services with newer mic, soundboard and other equipment.
- The Governance team is completing work to improve our policies in a thoughtful, strategic way that will make our church stronger and facilitate operations for an incoming minister.

We welcomed Reverend Sollie to our congregation in the fall and her measured work is healing and steadying us. She has helped to reframe our reactions to the challenges our country faces and find perspectives that make us feel more empowered, while at the same time helping to ready us for our next minister.

Proposed Budget for next year (FY27)

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

Budget	FY26	FY27	Increase %
Programs/Ministry	341,290	344,940	1.1
Operations	57,286	63,368	10.6
Facilities	145,368	156,196	7.4
Total Expenses	543,943	564,504	3.8

Programs/Ministry – 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. The 1.1% increase this year pays for cost of living adjustments (COLA), increased healthcare costs for our staff, a modest increase in Music Director hours, offset by not having the minister relocation costs of last year.

Operations – This includes the administrative costs of the church, including the Administrator, office, and infrastructure costs. The increase is due to an increase in healthcare cost, COLA, and increased software cost.

Facilities – These costs include all upkeep (essential utilities, regular buildings and grounds maintenance, minor repairs), and onsite support. The increase keeps up with inflation, COLA and potential mortgage refinance cost.

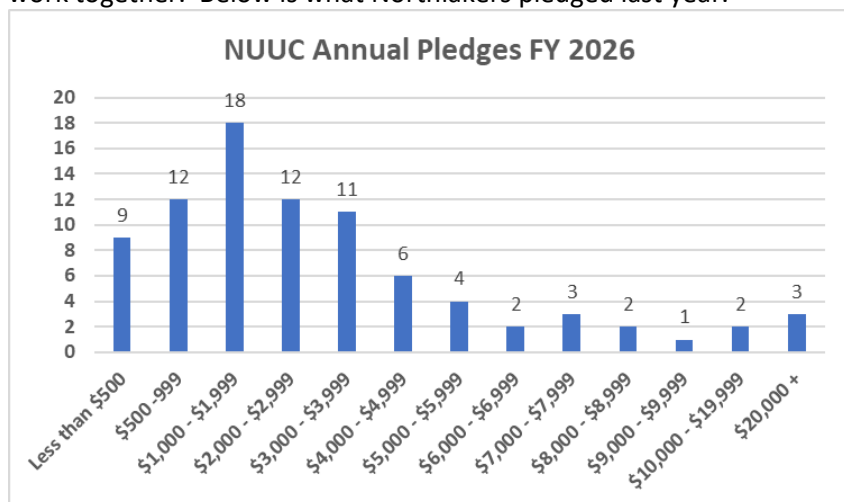
How will we fund our church?

One funding source is rental income, which offsets our campus costs through mission-aligned rental of underutilized space. Our rental income is about 1/3 of our income, estimated to increase by 6.5% this year. The other 2/3rds of our income is donations, fundraisers (some years) and annual pledges. A fundraising event was held last year, but is

not planned for this year. To meet the proposed budget, we need \$354,925 total in annual pledges, an increase of 6.2%.

How much should I pledge?

Last year, we collectively pledged \$334,068 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.



Campus Improvements and the Capital Reserve

Major campus improvements are funded out of the Capital Reserve, separate from the operating budget. The Capital Reserve is established at a minimum level judged to be able to cover unplanned significant costs. Planned major improvement projects are funded from the Capital Reserve above the minimum, currently about \$13,000.

The Facilities Committee has prioritized three projects: Resurfacing our parking lot, refinishing the Chapel sanctuary floors, and replacing the playground fence - all long overdue. Planning for the first two is underway, with initial bids received. If fully funded, the work will happen this August when the affected tenants are out for a week. The cost of all three is roughly estimated at \$40,000 and can be supported with an additional Capital Pledge.

Time and Talent

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. 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 29, and we ask that you complete it by April 20 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 Jean Guth at diguth@outlook.com or 206-679-7186 for assistance. The online pledge can be found at <https://northlakeuu.org/support/pledge-2027/>.

Faithful Stewardship: Renewing our promise, fueling our future:

In considering your pledge and involvement in this community, please think on these words of Reverend Sollie: *We get uncomfortable talking about money and fussy about being asked to part with ours, but it is a simple grownup reality that a brick-and-mortar church with staff costs money. And aren't we lucky to have such superb obligations? "Love in Action: Caring For What We Share" calls us to embody our values through everyday generosity. When we pledge, we nurture the sacred place where curiosity, courage, and compassion meet—supporting worship, learning, fellowship, and the shared work that shapes our communities. I am so grateful to have you all in my life and would be bereft without my faith community. I imagine that is true for you too.*

Thank you for being part of Northlake! The Northlake Stewardship Team