

Stewardship & Development Quarterly Staff Group Report

To: The Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association

From: Terry Sweetser, Vice President for Stewardship and Development

Date: March 17, 2008

SUMMARY

Unrestricted Income	As of 3/11/08¹
Annual Program Fund	\$ 4,460,259
Friends of the UUA	\$ 1,026,422
Unrestricted Gifts	\$ 3,619 ²
Legacy Gifts	\$ 319,836
Subtotal Unrestricted Income	

Restricted Income (Year to date FY 08)	
Now is the Time! Campaign	\$ 2,484,992
Campaign for UUism	\$ 99,047
Handing on the Future	\$ 14,063
Subtotal Restricted Income	

¹ Actual income through March 11; updated report through March 31 will be provided

² Through January 31

- Association Sunday 2007 brought together 632 congregations and raised \$1,372,515
- The *Now is the Time* Campaign has raised over \$37 million, with another \$16 million in negotiation

ANNUAL PROGRAM FUND

Year to Date as of March 11, 2008:

FY	Actual	Goal	% to Goal
2008	\$4,460,259	\$7,019,739	63.5%
2007	\$4,211,770	\$6,717,684	62.7%

For a complete summary of Annual Program Fund income including breakout by region, see *Appendix 2: Annual Program Fund Statistics*

Congregational giving trends stayed steady and strong through the year, reaching the half-way mark before the end of January. The APF Committee and staff worked diligently to gather in pledges which provided more accurate and timely income projections at earlier points in the year. As of March 11, 2008, contributions totaled \$4,640,259, or 63.5% of the \$7,019,739 FY08 goal. This compares to contributions of \$4,161,366 at this time the year prior. By all indications, the Annual Program Fund is expected to meet or perhaps slightly exceed its goal by the end of this fiscal year.

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FRIENDS OF THE UUA

Year to date as of March 11, 2008:

FY	Actual	Goal	% Goal	Avg. Gift	Donors	Avg. per Donor	Median Gift	Largest Gift
FY08	\$1,026,422	\$1,625,000	63.2%	\$ 58	11,035	\$ 93	\$25	\$14,000
FY07	\$1,020,600	\$1,600,000	63.8%	\$ 57	11,151	\$ 92	\$25	\$14,100

Currently the FY08 Friends income has caught up to FY07 year to date income. Based on returns for similar appeals at similar times in previous years, we estimate that the Friends program will bring in approximately \$1.5 million in income this fiscal year, equal to our results for last year but below our \$1.625 million goal. In January an appeal based on the National Awareness Campaign was sent to over 25,000 households. The appeal was well received and generated support exceeding returns for the January appeal last year by nearly \$20,000. In February our donors are being approached on the theme of Tapestry of Faith. Just over half of all “Friends households” have been called by Outreach Associates generating \$92,000 in cash and pledges. The remaining households have been mailed and returns are expected in the next two weeks.

We plan to add a “lift note” to our May mailing with a suggestion that UU’s consider donating all or part of their “economic stimulus” tax rebate to the UUA. We are also looking into a one page appeal with a similar message to send to UU’s in our database who have not made previous contributions to Friends. A similar appeal in 2001 was very effective.

LEGACY GIFTS

Legacy Gifts Summary as of 3/11	UUA		UU Entity	Total
	Unrestricted	Restricted		
<i>Matured Gifts – QTD</i>	\$ 133,242	\$ 30,021	\$ 31,917	\$ 195,180
<i>Matured Gifts – YTD</i>	\$ 319,836	\$ 101,395	\$ 183,461	\$ 604,692
<i>New Gifts* - QTD</i>	\$ 36,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 38,000	\$ 75,000
<i>New Gifts* - YTD</i>	\$ 80,131	\$ 56,031	\$ 436,651	\$ 572,813
<i>Commitments - QTD</i>	\$ 299,600	\$ -	\$ 400,000	\$ 700,000
<i>Commitments - YTD</i>	\$ 1,404,600	\$ 546,668	\$ 590,400	\$2,541,668

* New gifts listed at face value; remainder value at maturity generally will be less

During the third quarter we have received matured bequest income totaling \$195,180, bringing the year to date total to \$604,692. This includes: unrestricted income of \$319,836; \$101,395 for restricted purposes, and \$183,461 for umbrella gifts that benefit other UU entities. Unrestricted income from planned gifts available for general operating purposes is at 75% of the annual budgeted income of \$425,000.

We have received three new life income gifts totaling \$75,000, bringing the year to date total to 20 new gifts for a total of \$572,813. Of this total \$80,131 is unrestricted, \$56,031 is restricted, and \$436,651 (76%) is designated for UU entities.

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New bequest intentions this fiscal year now total \$2,541,668. Of this total \$1,404,600 is unrestricted, \$546,668 is restricted, and \$590,400 is designated for UU entities.

“NOW IS THE TIME” COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN AND MAJOR GIFTS



We offer our thanks to the Board of Trustees for their continued support of the *Now is the Time* Campaign.

We are pleased to report that as of March 11, 2008, we have secured \$15,798,928 in cash and pledge gifts and \$21,460,372 in bequest gifts towards our goal of \$50 million for *Now is the Time*. Not included in these figures is an additional \$16,538,040 in negotiation. A Campaign Flash Report as of March 11, 2008 is attached to this report; an updated Flash Report is available weekly and will be distributed at the Board of Trustees meeting.

The Tampa Bay Area UU Regional Marketing Campaign launched successfully in February 2008. Anecdotal response has been positive so far. Stewardship and Development staff continue to work closely with the Congregational Services Department to identify future regional marketing opportunities.

Other campaign projects this quarter have included

- Fundraising for National Marketing: A generous donor has provided \$500,000 in cash to be used as matching gift to help us raise \$1 million for unrestricted and National Marketing gifts in FY08. So far, we have secured a total of \$845,000 towards that goal.
- Fundraising for the GA 2008 presentation of Rev. Jason Shelton’s “Sources - A Unitarian Universalist Cantata”: We have so far raised 75% of the \$15,000 needed to present “Sources” during the opening session of the 2008 General Assembly.
- Fundraising for a new position in MPL (see attached description): A generous donor has agreed to fund the first three years of a full time position at the Unitarian Universalist Association titled Director of Worship and Music Resources.
- Fundraising for a new UU military manual (see attached description): Skinner House Books proposes a pocket-size collection of roughly 100 readings to which military service people and their supporters can turn for inspiration and comfort. As of February 25, 2008, a generous donor has committed \$5,000 toward this important project. We hope to raise \$25,000 to fully fund this project before General Assembly 2008.
- Consulting with the UU Ministry for Earth: Emily Meixell Sullins and Terry Sweetser of the Stewardship and Development Department have been consulting with the UU Ministry for Earth (UUMFE) as they embark on a fundraising

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campaign to help pay for their upcoming national environmental justice conference. Donations for the conference may be made through the Umbrella Giving Program of the *Now is the Time* Campaign.

As of this writing, Association Sunday 2007 has raised approximately \$1.37 million (includes the \$500,000 anonymous matching grant) from over 8,500 donors and over 630 congregations. Current projections estimate that we will bring in an additional \$8,000 by the time the dunning is completed.

Association Sunday 2008 will be held on Sunday, October 12, 2008. So far, 40 congregations have signed up to participate (see Appendix 6). This April, a letter from President Sinkford to all congregations encouraging them to sign up for Association Sunday 2008 will reach mailboxes. Also in April, the UUA will conduct an online survey so that UUs can help decide which Growth in Spirit projects, supporting excellence in ministry and lay theological education, they would like to see funded by Association Sunday 2008.

Through personal consultations with ministers and lay leaders, President Sinkford and Rev. Stephan Papa will develop a simple survey, which will be available on uua.org. The survey will also be distributed via the Giving and Generosity E-Newsletter, which is sent to over 12,000 UUs, including all ministers, congregational presidents and directors of religious education.

The Stewardship and Development Department's Giving and Generosity E-Newsletter is going strong. Thanks to the support of the Board of Trustees, the newsletter is getting excellent response.

Date	# Emails	Open Rate	New Subscribers	Un-Subscribes	Correlated Donations
12/18/07	4,902	35.77%	17	13	\$ 0
1/15/08	5,109	35.74%	22	7	\$ 0
1/29/08	12,354	33.19%	66	71	\$ 315
2/12/08	12,325	31.27%	22	50	\$ 200
2/26/08	12,272	28.21%	2	50	\$ 525
TOTAL			129	141	\$1,040

In addition to new gift activity, we continue to receive payments on pledges made to previous campaigns. So far this year we have received \$99,047 in receipts for the Campaign for Unitarian Universalism (cash pledge receipts of \$14,400 and matured legacies \$84,847). We have also processed an additional \$76,008 in maturities of CFUU legacy gifts for the benefit of congregations.

Stewardship and Development welcomes a new staff member, Devin Letzer. Devin is a Campaign Assistant and will focus on supporting Association Sunday. Larry Stritof was promoted in January from Campaign Specialist to Coordinator of Legacy Gifts. Katrina

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Bergmann was promoted in March from Assistant to the Vice President and Associate Vice President to Campaign Specialist.

The continuing positive response to all our programs and campaigns reinforces our overall impression that Unitarian Universalists are showing tremendous generosity to the Association, our congregations, and other UU entities. It is an affirmation that the work of the Board of Trustees, the Administration, and the staff of this Association of Congregations is worthwhile and appreciated by our constituencies. It is also a blessing for our ongoing collaboration to make this a better world.

We are grateful, as always, for President Sinkford's attention to and support of our efforts to create abundance in a culture of gratitude.

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Appendix 1: Annual Program Fund Statistics

FY 2008		
\$7,019,739	Goal	
\$8,377,655	Total Fair Share	
1,045	Total Number of congregations	
FY 2008 YTD		
\$4,382,864	Total gifts received to date	
52.32%	Current Fair Share dollars received to date	
62.44%	Current Goal dollars received to date	
\$6,589,643	Pledged dollars	
78.66%	Current Fair Share dollars pledged	
93.87%	Current Goal dollars pledged	
\$6,966,273	Projected dollars*	
83.15%	Current Fair Share dollars projected*	
99.24%	Current Goal dollars projected*	
891	congregations have pledged	
714	congregations that pledged have pledged Fair Share	
269	congregations have given their full pledge	
199	congregations have given Fair Share	
FY 2008 YTD		
% Fair Share Dollars received	DISTRICTS	% Projected Dollars received*
34.4%	Ballou Channing*	60.0%
44.6%	Central Midwest	55.1%
42.0%	Clara Barton	59.8%
50.0%	CLF	50.0%
62.0%	Florida	63.5%
49.8%	Heartland	55.8%
70.3%	Joseph Priestley	65.8%
51.6%	Mass Bay	63.9%
55.2%	Metro New York	57.1%
50.0%	Mid-South	51.0%
59.5%	Mountain Desert	66.2%
47.7%	New Hampshire/Vermont	63.2%
53.0%	Northeast	70.2%
43.7%	Ohio-Meadville*	70.1%
58.8%	Pacific Central	62.1%
59.6%	Pacific Northwest	63.9%
58.7%	Pacific Southwest	62.1%
56.4%	Prairie Star	64.7%
56.5%	Southwest*	81.6%
54.7%	St. Lawrence*	69.6%
56.3%	Thomas Jefferson*	59.8%
* Districts for which APF does not have complete projections		

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Appendix 2: Now is the Time! Comprehensive Campaign
State of the Fund Flash Report as of 12/12/07

Campaign Income Vitals

	Income	Goal	% goal
Cash Gifts	\$ 15,798,928	\$ 20,000,000	79%
Legacy Gifts	\$ 21,460,372	\$ 30,000,000	72%
Campaign Total	\$ 37,259,300	\$ 50,000,000	75%
<i>In Negotiation</i>	<i>\$ 16,538,040</i>	-	-

Cash Detail (including pledges)

UUA Restricted	\$ 11,285,522
UUA Unrestricted	\$ 123,791
Umbrella	\$ 4,389,615
Total Cash Gifts	\$ 15,798,928
Outstanding Pledges	\$ (4,715,586)

Umbrella Giving Detail

UU Organizations	\$ 8,643,494
Congregations	\$ 5,881,402
Total Umbrella Gifts	\$ 14,524,897

Includes both cash and legacy umbrella gifts updated 10/15/07

Legacy Gifts Detail

UUA Restricted	\$ 9,819,589
UUA Unrestricted	\$ 1,306,382
Umbrella	\$ 10,334,401
Total Legacy Gifts	\$ 21,460,372

Legacy Gift Vehicles

Bequests	\$ 13,961,035	57
Charitable Gift Annuities	\$ 3,144,940	88
Deferred Gift Annuities	\$ 250,000	7
Pooled Income Funds	\$ 257,136	14
Trust Gifts	\$ 3,842,313	7
Life Insurance Policies	\$ 4,949	2
Totals	\$ 21,460,372	175

Life income gifts are included at face value

Appendix 3: Campaign Cash Receipts

Campaign Income: Cash Receipts	New Gifts FY 08 YTD	Total Prior to 7/1/2007	Cumulative Total
Now is the Time! Campaign	\$ 2,484,992	\$ 9,004,684	\$ 11,489,676
Campaign for UUism	\$ 99,047	\$ 8,938,313	\$ 9,037,360
Handing on the Future	14,063		
Total	\$ 2,598,102	\$ 17,942,997	\$ 20,541,099

Appendix 4: Now is the Time! Special Fundraising Projects



Director of Music and Worship Resources

We intend to fund a full time position at the Unitarian Universalist Association titled Director of Music and Worship Resources to develop and enrich Unitarian Universalist worship experiences across its over 1,000 member congregations.

This Director will work as part of the UUA's Ministry and Professional Leadership (MPL) staff group which exists to assist our ministers, religious education directors, administrators, and music directors from discernment through retirement and beyond. The new Director's specific projects will be overseen by the Director of the MPL, the Rev. Beth Miller, who served for 15 years as a congregational minister before joining the UUA staff in 2006.

The new hire's responsibilities will primarily include:

- developing new worship materials
- serving as a clearinghouse for "best practices" in Unitarian Universalist worship
- offering programs for clergy and other UU professionals in worship and music development
- training lay leaders in worship arts.

This project will be institutionally supported solely by the UUA but will require collaboration with other Unitarian Universalist entities; the new Director of Music and Worship Resources will also serve as a liaison to the Unitarian Universalist Musicians' Network (UUMN).

For more information, please contact
Moirra Pulitzer-Kennedy at (617) 948-4661 or mpulitzerkennedy@uua.org.
Contributions can be sent to UUA Stewardship & Development Department,
25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108.
Make checks out to UUA with "Director-MWR" in the memo line.

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Think on These Things*

Serving Unitarian Universalist service members in the 21st century

In 1942 Beacon Press published a pocket-size volume called *Think on These Things: Sources of Courage, Hope, and Faith for Those Serving Their Country*. In his foreword to that book, Frederick M. Eliot wrote, “This book has been planned and prepared to **offer to young men in the national service a means of fortifying their faith in the basic religious principles of democracy.**”

In that same tradition, Skinner House Books proposes a collection of roughly 100 readings that military service people can turn to for inspiration and comfort. We believe this collection would **provide a religious alternative to the Christian books of inspiration** that are most commonly available to members of the military and would be good way to **spread the word about our Unitarian Universalist values.**

Our goal is to produce a pocket-size volume containing a mix of prose and poetry from UU and non-UU sources, edited by UU minister Edward Searl. Searl is the editor of five Skinner House anthologies on the subjects of birth, coming of age, marriage, death, and animals.

We estimate the total cost of the book at **\$25,000**. Of that total, \$7,000 is for production (manuscript development, permissions, editorial and design) and \$18,000 is for manufacturing (20,000 copies of a pocket-sized 120 page book, with a leather-like, foil stamped, flexible binding) and distribution. **This budget assumes all 20,000 copies are distributed at no charge.**

Once we have assurance of funding, we estimate the book can be published within 12 months. As of February 25, 2008, a generous donor has committed \$5,000 toward this important project. We hope to have it fully funded before General Assembly 2008.

For more information, please contact Catherine Lynch
at (617) 948-6392 or campaign@uua.org
Contributions can be sent to UUA Stewardship & Development Department
25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108.
Make checks out to UUA with “UU Military Book” in the memo line.

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Appendix 5: Association Sunday 2007 Summary

Total raised (including matching gift)	\$ 1,372,915.63		
Total # of gifts	8412		
Number of participating congregations	633		
District Grants			
District Name	Amount per District	% of Grand Total (Amt per / Grand Total)	Grant Allocation (grant allocation x % of total)
Northern New England District	\$ 17,998.67	2.12%	\$ 6,879.87
Massachusetts Bay District	\$ 74,803.16	8.79%	\$ 28,592.98
Ballou Channing District	\$ 50,713.08	5.96%	\$ 19,384.72
St. Lawrence District	\$ 17,778.97	2.09%	\$ 6,795.89
Metro New York District	\$ 76,374.05	8.98%	\$ 29,193.45
Heartland District	\$ 39,156.27	4.60%	\$ 14,967.21
Clara Barton District	\$ 18,235.39	2.14%	\$ 6,970.35
Joseph Priestley District	\$ 103,294.72	12.14%	\$ 39,483.68
Thomas Jefferson District	\$ 38,309.73	4.50%	\$ 14,643.63
Florida District	\$ 40,118.60	4.72%	\$ 15,335.05
Mid-South District	\$ 11,761.61	1.38%	\$ 4,495.79
Ohio-Meadville District	\$ 31,208.75	3.67%	\$ 11,929.33
Central Midwest District	\$ 51,234.46	6.02%	\$ 19,584.01
Prairie Star District	\$ 32,344.54	3.80%	\$ 12,363.47
Southwestern District	\$ 50,844.26	5.98%	\$ 19,434.86
Pacific Northwest District	\$ 32,389.33	3.81%	\$ 12,380.59
Pacific Central District	\$ 59,654.95	7.01%	\$ 22,802.69
Pacific Southwest District	\$ 75,428.28	8.87%	\$ 28,831.93
Mountain Desert District	\$ 29,057.81	3.42%	\$ 11,107.14
Total Raised from Districts	\$ 850,706.63		
X 25% for District Grants	\$ 212,676.66		
+ 25% of matching funds	\$ 112,500.00		
Total Grant Funds Available	\$ 325,176.66		
Total Grant Distribution			\$ 325,176.66
Other (not eligible for district grant)	\$ 22,209.00		
Total Congregational Donations	\$ 872,915.63		
Prepared by C.Lynch 3/11/2008			

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Appendix 6: Association Sunday 2008 Enrolled Participants

District Territory	City	State	Participant Name
#10 Massachusetts Bay	Boston	Massachusetts	King's Chapel
	Concord	Massachusetts	First Parish in Concord
	Quincy	Massachusetts	United First Parish Church (Unitarian) in Quincy
	Wellesley Hills	Massachusetts	UU Society of Wellesley Hills
#33 Ballou Channing	Canton	Massachusetts	First Parish UU Canton
	Sharon	Massachusetts	Unitarian Church of Sharon
#40 St. Lawrence	Binghamton	New York	UU Congregation
#45 Metro New York	Manhasset	New York	UU Congregation at Shelter Rock
	New York	New York	Unitarian Church of All Souls
	Stroudsburg	Pennsylvania	UU Fellowship of the Poconos
#50 Heartland	Lima	Ohio	UU Fellowship of Lima Ohio Inc.
#51 Clara Barton	Meriden	Connecticut	UU Church in Meriden
#53 Joseph Priestley	Washington	District of Columbia	All Souls Church Unitarian
	Annapolis	Maryland	UU Church of Annapolis
	Bethesda	Maryland	Cedar Lane UU Church
	Bethesda	Maryland	River Road UU Congregation
	Chestertown	Maryland	UUs of the Chester River
	Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	Unitarian Society of Germantown
#60 Thomas Jefferson	Knoxville	Tennessee	Westside UU Church
#62 Florida	Brooksville	Florida	UU Church in the Pines
#63 Mid-South	Jackson	Mississippi	UU Church of Jackson
#70 Ohio-Meadville	Erie	Pennsylvania	UU Congregation of Erie
#76 Central Midwest	Appleton	Wisconsin	Fox Valley UU Fellowship Inc.
	Wausau	Wisconsin	First Universalist Unitarian Church
#83 Prairie Star	Minneapolis	Minnesota	First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis
	Rochester	Minnesota	First UU Church
	St. Paul	Minnesota	Unity Church Unitarian
	Menomonie	Wisconsin	Unitarian Society of Menomonie
#88 Southwestern	Dallas	Texas	The First Unitarian Church of Dallas
	Memphis	Tennessee	First Unitarian Church
	San Antonio	Texas	Community UU Church
#90 Pacific Northwest	Moscow	Idaho	UU Church of the Palouse
	Florence	Oregon	Florence UU Fellowship
#93 Pacific Central	Sacramento	California	UU Community Church
	Salida	California	UU Fellowship Stanislaus County
#97 Mountain Desert	Denver	Colorado	First Universalist Church of Denver
	Golden	Colorado	Jefferson Unitarian Church
	Parker	Colorado	Prairie UU Church

Appendix 7: Stories of Generosity

Gift of the Week – January 4, 2008

Who Gave It: River of Grass UU Congregation in Plantation, FL

How Much: \$9,490.00

Who Got It: Association Sunday

How It Happened: The River of Grass Congregation has only 114 members, but makes up for its size with incredible vision, inspirational leadership, and a deep spirit of generosity. As a member of the Annual Program Fund Committee, the congregation's minister Naomi King has demonstrated her strong leadership in our Association. When asked to elicit support from her congregation for Association Sunday, she did so with alacrity, and stellar success. In order to inspire members of her congregation to give, Naomi and her partner made a large pledge, and vowed to add \$10 for every person who showed up for services that Sunday. She also asked the board to participate in Association Sunday by authorizing the special collection, and by making a leadership pledge themselves. One leader lovingly called her "a gifted, spiritual pickpocket."

At the service, Naomi said:

Our congregation's Board has felt this test of our emergency faithing system, of our connections to this tradition and to each other, was so important that every member of our Board has already pledged their support to Association Sunday. I am now giving from the abundance with which I have been blessed and am now giving until it feels good. That is leadership. Giving until it feels good.

Naomi generated enthusiasm for this special collection by "greening the plate" and talking up the spiritual importance of being generous until people were waving their wallets and purses calling for the collection plate to be passed.

When asked how this small congregation raised so much money Naomi said, "It may simply be the culture of Florida congregations loving our Association of congregations and especially the River of Grass feeling strongly about our Association. Some of it may just be the Spirit."

The Association Sunday Program established the title *Empowering Congregations* for those that gave an average of \$50 per member. At \$84.73 per member, only River of Grass has attained that honor so far.

Gift of the Week – January 9, 2008

Who Gave It: UU Church of Tampa

How Much: \$2,500 +

Who Got It: Tampa Bay Regional Marketing Project

How it happened: Fundraising for the Tampa Bay Regional Marketing Project kicked off in fall 2007, around the same time as fundraising for Association Sunday 2007. To minimize conflicting messages, each participating congregation agreed to commit a portion of the funds raised on Association Sunday to the Tampa Bay Regional Marketing Project.

The UU Church of Tampa was in a difficult situation; they had planned to hold *their* Association Sunday service in February 2008 – which would be well past the fundraising deadline for the marketing project. Other dates in the fall and winter simply would not work.

The leadership of the congregation came up with an innovative plan – they would encourage individuals in the congregation to donate on their own – but they would also designate 50% of the proceeds from their winter auction to the Tampa Bay Regional Marketing Project.

Enthusiasm was so great that the auction brought in twice as much money as the previous year, ensuring that both the congregation AND the marketing campaign received significant funds. In addition, a group of generous donors in the congregation made a matching gift challenge to bring their total past \$3,000.

Thank you UU Church of Tampa!!

Gift of the Week – January 16, 2008

Who Gave It: Anonymous

How Much: \$60,000

Who Got It: Unrestricted Deferred Gift Annuity

How it happened: In early 2007, two anonymous donors contacted the UUA to set up an Annuity. They told us that their health had been declining and they weren't sure how much longer they'd be around; but, they wanted to provide income to their two children and support the organizations they love.

It was a sad day over a year ago when one of these two donors gave up her keys to the fellowship door at the Minnesota Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. During the past 15 years, she had spent her time volunteering in her congregation, the Prairie Star District, and the Religious Freedom Coalition. Their Gift Annuity has allowed this couple to give both to their children, and to the organizations to which they have already lent so much of their time and talents.

Gift of the Week – January 21, 2008

Who Gave It: Sarah Armstrong

How Much: \$1,000

Who Got It: Friends

How it Happened:

A long-time Friend of the UUA, Sarah Armstrong of Berkeley, California describes joining her first UU church as “coming home.” At that time, Sarah was overjoyed to have finally discovered a group of people with ethical and humanitarian values so similar to her own, a deep appreciation for diversity, and no dogma or prescribed belief system.

Sarah Armstrong gives generously to the Friends because of the Association’s strong leadership on civil rights and social justice issues, in particular that of gay marriage. Sarah feels strongly that gay rights are a civil rights issue and that the denial of civil rights to any group threatens us all.

Most importantly, Sarah believes that her contributions will be well used – to further civil rights, to strengthen and build congregations, and to spread the word about the UUA and Unitarian Universalism – but she also takes pleasure in reading her periodic Friends of the UU updates. “Bill Sinkford (and his staff) write(s) great fund-raising appeal letters. And host great meetings in cities across the US. And he stands personally for what he believes.”

Gift of the Week – January 30, 2008

BRIGHT BEACON OF JUSTICE IN THE GREAT SMOKIES

The Tennessee Valley UU Church, Knoxville, TN

<http://www.tvuuc.org>

“Tennessee Valley UU Church has always been a bright beacon for justice in Knox County,” reports Pat Griggs, the Annual Program Fund representative for the Thomas Jefferson District. Pat is referring to the congregation’s active and visible involvement in the Knoxville Interfaith Network, their advocacy of family-friendly personnel and consumer policies, multicultural tolerance in local schools, and environmental stewardship. The TVUUC has helped birth and generously support three congregations: Oak Ridge UU Church, Westside UU Church, and the new Blount County Services in Maryville, TN. Generosity, growth, and social action have always been a part of the Tennessee Valley UU Church’s rich history.

After a 15-year period of steady membership growth, prosperity, and APF Fair Share giving, the Tennessee Valley UU Church was ready to pause, take time to assess its needs and its finances. TVUUC leaders had choices to make about staffing and determined it was important to increase the Music Director’s hours in keeping with their developing music program. Circumstances resulted in a reduction in APF contributions in 2006, but not for long.

The congregation decided it was a good time to take advantage of the UUA’s Congregational Stewardship Services. That’s when Larry Wheeler, one of the UUA’s long-time consultants, arrived on the scene to engage the members of the TVUUC in a process that would bring about a new understanding of their stewardship efforts.

“Larry worked very well with the Stewardship Team,” reports Rev. Chris Buice, minister of the church since 1991. “He brought about a new awareness and appreciation for Fair Share giving. The process stimulated new growth and creativity in the church.”

HOW? Part of the process was the development of a covenant among the members that clarifies the importance of active stewardship in congregation life. The covenanting process resulted in a new spirit of cooperation and generosity.

RESULTS? An ambitious budget was set forth and the members and friends of Tennessee Valley UU Church met the challenge. They not only contributed enough to fund their proposed budget, but exceeded their goal by \$20,000.

TVUUC’s impressive generosity is also expressed in their offering give-away program, established to help fund their social justice efforts. The frequency increased from once a month to twice a month. They are very active in the care and support of the greater Knoxville’s low income and homeless population, serving as a host organization for homeless families.

A long-range planning process is now underway and the church has resumed its Fair Share giving as one of our APF Honor Congregations. In fact, the TVUUC chose to contribute more than its Fair Share to our Association in 2007. When asked why, the Church Administrator, Jenny Arthur said, “Because it is the RIGHT thing to do.”

Gift of the Week – February 6, 2008

Who Gave It: Anonymous

How Much: \$5,000

Who Got It: Emerson UU Chapel in St. Louis, Missouri

Late last year, a generous donor approached the campaign team in Stewardship and Development with an offer to help a member congregation meet its financial goal.

Emerson UU Chapel, a small congregation outside St. Louis, Missouri, was facing a budget shortfall that would force the church to cut staff time. The donor wanted to make a gift which would inspire Emerson's members and friends to prevent the cuts and meet its budgetary needs – no easy task in a small congregation whose members had already dug deep for its annual pledge drive.

Through the UUA's Umbrella Giving program, this donor anonymously made a matching challenge gift: if the congregation could raise \$10,000 in new gifts before the end of March, 2008, then each of those dollars would be matched 50% up to \$5,000. The combined total of \$15,000 would rescue the budget and keep all staff members working. Little did they know what a success this endeavor would be! Campaign staffers notified the congregation of the gift in mid-December 2007. Emerson immediately began a "Thirteenth Month" supplemental giving campaign, asking members to pledge an extra monthly payment on their annual pledge. If every member had done so, the total would have been \$11,000.

As of February 4, 2008, members and friends of Emerson UU Chapel had raised over \$18,000 in new contributions! Congregational treasurer Barb Brown reports that the congregation's generosity fully funded its Board's budget for the fiscal year and exceeded all expectations. Upon hearing the news, the anonymous donor was delighted at Emerson's generosity, and grateful for the opportunity to make this gift anonymously through the *Now is the Time!* comprehensive campaign.

Gift of the Week – February 20, 2008

Who Gave It: Todd and Lorella Hess

How Much: \$180,000

Who Got It: The Chuck and Nancy Thomas
Scholarship Fund

In December of 2007, Todd and Lorella Hess gave their final contribution to fully endow The Chuck and Nancy Thomas Scholarship. This scholarship honors the Rev. Chuck Thomas' career in Unitarian Universalist ministry and his family's long-standing commitment to lay leadership.



The story of Chuck Thomas, Lorella's father, bears witness to the belief that a history of service and leadership are critical elements of the call toward professional theological training. Through their exceptional gifts, Lorella and Todd will be giving many future generations of lay leaders the chance to answer this call.

This scholarship is awarded to an in-coming first year student who has shown an outstanding commitment to Unitarian Universalism as a lay leader before preparing for ministry.

Gift of the Week – February 27, 2008

Who Gave It: Rev. Dan King and
Ms. Nina Benedetto

Who Got It: Unitarian Universalist Association,
Starr King School for Ministry, The Mountain,
UU Church of Augusta, First Parish in Needham,
and the First Congregational Parish in Kingston.



The Rev. Dan King, and his wife, Nina Benedetto, have notified the Legacy Office of their intentions to leave an umbrella bequest that supports the Unitarian Universalist Association, several Unitarian Universalist congregations, and other Unitarian Universalist affiliates. These groups have played an important role in Dan and Nina's lives, and this commitment is one way they have chosen to show their thanks.

The Rev. Dan King and Nina Benedetto have been married over 30 years; they have two adult children, and have recently become grandparents. Rev. Dan King is currently the minister of the First Congregational Parish in Kingston, previously served as the minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta, Georgia for 9 years, and worked at the UUA to help launch the *Now is the Time* Campaign. Nina Benedetto is an artist and works as art instructor and primary school teacher.

Gift of the Week – March 5, 2008

Who Gave It: Eloise Dycus

How Much: \$300 (giving over \$4,700 since 1981)

Who Got It: Friends of the UUA

How it Happened: Eloise Dycus was raised in a small town in the Midwest where her father was a Methodist minister. She remembers helping him fill communion cups and thinking she didn't need all of the complex trappings of her father's faith. In 1954, she discovered UUism and has been a dedicated UU ever since.

Eloise recently suffered a brain aneurism and was force to move from Okalahoma City to Tulsa to be closer to her family. There, she was delighted to discover that the retirement community where she now resides provides a shuttle bus service to Sunday services at her local UU church!

Her recent brain injury has caused memory problems, but Eloise always remembers to help the Friends of the UUA – because she recognizes that the services and support provided by the UUA make it possible for her church be the welcoming faith community that she has grown to love.