

Annual Meeting Report Packet - June 3, 2018
Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, Va.

PROPOSAL FROM UUCA STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Diane Ullius, Volunteer Coordinator of Stewardship

At the Annual Meeting on June 3, I will propose that the congregation endorse a special fundraising campaign for this summer, to end by July 31, focusing on raising funds to hire a second minister this year. I hope you will vote in favor of it.

Why this proposal? As you may know, the pledge total for 2018-2019 was \$132,333 short of last year's total, and comparably lower than annual totals over the past five years. The number of pledges was 103 fewer than last year. If you attended any of the seven open budget meetings, you know that the first draft budget showed a deficit of more than \$200,000; the budget approved by the Board in May (and up for a vote at the Annual Meeting) has a deficit of just \$77,000. How did the staff and Board do it? By removing funds for a second minister, in addition to making other cuts. These decisions preserved all other staff positions—but staff and volunteers are no substitute for a second minister, especially in an interim period.

I will move the following: "That the UUCA membership authorize a special fundraising campaign in July 2018, soliciting funds with the goal of hiring a Contract Assistant or Associate Minister as soon as feasible, for whatever remains of the 2018-2019 fiscal year once that person has been hired." (This item appears on the proxy ballot as "In favor of moving to have an additional fundraiser to solicit funds for a second minister.")

A vote "in favor" of this motion will be a vote to authorize the fundraising campaign. It will not commit you to contributing, but I hope you will do that too. In the current circumstances, I believe that this highly unusual special campaign is our clearest path to a healthy and vibrant congregation.

COMMENT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Warren Wright, Chair

The UUCA Board of Trustees unanimously agreed at its board meeting May 15, 2018 to support a special campaign in July in order to hire a second minister. The board has a unique responsibility to consider how today's decisions affect the well-being of the church community in the future. In a large church with a community of over 1,200, employing a single minister—even if it is just for one more year—could have long-term negative consequences on our church community.

The important responsibilities that keep the church a vibrant and healthy place begin to erode over time in the absence of a second minister, particularly after the recent resignation of our Senior Minister. This second minister would most likely take on the responsibility of pastoral care, social justice, and filling in the duties of the pulpit when our Interim Minister is not present.

While a selective fundraising campaign is not the norm, neither is our current situation. In the spirit of a better future for our church, we encourage you to support this effort.

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ENDORSEMENT FROM TEMPORARY SENIOR MINISTER

The Rev. Beth Miller

I join the Stewardship Team and Board in saying that UUCA really needs to do this! And I will help by giving \$10 for every new pledge, increased pledge, or special gift of \$200 or more up to \$5,000. That's how important I believe this is and how much I care about your success.

You need a Contract Assistant or Associate Minister to manage essential ministries such as pastoral care and coordination of social justice activities, and to offer some adult religious education programs, preach at least once a month, help with rites of passage, etc. in consultation with your Interim Senior Minister arriving August 1. Why, you ask? Because in a church this large, it's simply too much for one minister, especially an Interim. We've managed with just one minister since January for two reasons:

- First, our exceptionally capable Intern Minister, Christin Green, took on more than a half- time intern would normally do. Christin preached once a month, led adult programs, conducted memorial services, and provided pastoral support to many members and staff in the wake of Rev. Aaron's departure. UUCA won't be eligible for an Intern again until the next settled minister's second year, at least three years from now.
- Second, I have taken on the role of holding you during this traumatic time to begin the healing process, primarily through preaching and pastoral care. My time has been focused on those tasks; I have been only peripherally involved in administration and stewardship. The Interim Senior Minister will need to do all of that.

I'm so glad your Interim Senior Minister is the Rev. Terasa Cooley. Her vast experience, organizational development skills, and collaborative style will continue the healing and lead you through the assessments, evaluations, and systems changes you need to prepare well for your next called Senior Minister. But no one minister can do all of that and attend to all of the ministerial duties of a large church. Please invest in the success of the interim period and put in place the ministerial support that a new called minister will need upon arrival.

And I know you can do this. Many of you have pledged as generously as you can, and you are exempt from this campaign. But others have been waiting to see what would happen. Well, it's happening NOW. The congregation has survived the trauma and even thrived. Although there is healing still to come, there is also health and vitality, an Interim on the way, a solid Search Committee nominated, and much to look forward to ahead. Please consider NOW as the time to make or increase your pledge or make a special contribution. Let's do this together!