

What is a pledge?

A pledge is a statement of your intention to give a stated amount of money to First Unitarian Society of Westchester for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Pledging is important because it allows us to plan our expenditures prudently and to budget for the programs of the congregation. The pledged amount can be paid weekly, monthly, or quarterly, whatever is convenient. We encourage setting up recurring payments through your bank account online. While unpledged contributions to the Sunday offering are important and gratefully accepted, they do not allow us to accurately plan for the future.

Who should pledge?

All members and active friends of the First Unitarian Society of Westchester are asked to make a financial pledge for the upcoming fiscal year during the annual Stewardship Campaign (also known as a pledge drive or canvass).

People who are involved in the congregation through regular attendance, enrollment in Religious Education, or involvement in other programs, but who have not signed the Membership Book, are considered active friends and are invited to pledge.

Our Society depends on the annual pledges of members and friends to continue its legacy of religious freedom. Through the annual Stewardship Pledge Drive, members and friends can give back to support ongoing, as well as new and expanded programs, through our financial pledges.

What is new in the pledge process this year?

To simplify the canvassing process, the pledge form last year offered the option to have your pledged amount be ongoing for future fiscal years, with a small 2% increase, until you indicate otherwise. Those who selected this option will have their pledge renewed automatically and will be contacted. Should your situation have changed, your pledge can be adjusted by notifying the Treasurer or completing a new pledge form. The option to select an automatic annual pledge adjustment will also be included in the 2017 Pledge form. Pledge amounts are kept confidential.

2017 Annual Pledge Drive

“Honoring our Past, Celebrating the Present & Building our Future”

Our congregation provides a constant in our quickly changing world – a caring community, spiritual nourishment, religious education for our children, wonderful music and more. Together we have created an ethical community where we can raise our children and work together to help build the world we dream about.

We each have come to FUSW for our own unique reasons and recognize the importance that this lively spiritual community holds in our lives. We have inherited a gift that has been passed along from generation to generation for over 160 years. Just as we have benefited from those preceding us, each of us has the opportunity to consider how our own gifts will contribute to the ongoing vitality and quality of experience here – to keep our chalice burning for the next generations.

As you read this brochure and ponder your pledge, please consider the pledge process as an opportunity to celebrate the gift that we have inherited from generations past and that we can continue to nurture by making a commitment to our future that reflects First Unitarian Society’s meaning to you.

If you have questions or would like to have a personal conversation about pledging, please contact [Gina Piazza](#), President or [Amy Jo Neill](#), Treasurer.



First Unitarian Society of Westchester

25 Old Jackson Avenue
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10562
914-478-2710



First Unitarian Society of Westchester

2017 Annual Pledge Drive



**Honoring our Past,
Celebrating the Present,
Building our Future**

Take the time to understand the meaning and importance of your pledge to the continuing life of our congregation.

How much should I pledge?

There is no set monetary requirement for membership in this congregation, but the same sense of individual responsibility that we find in our Statement of Principles and Purposes in our Bylaws also guides us in our level of financial commitment.

The proposed budget for the coming year has been prudently planned by the Board and committee leadership. As part of the budget, the congregation, as an affiliate of the UUA, makes a full share dues contribution of \$89 per adult member annually to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

If everyone for whom this congregation is an integral and important part of their life makes a contribution that represents their 'fair share', we will be able to meet our goals and provide the programs we all wish for. Expenses for the current fiscal year are expected to be around \$250,000, and approximately 75% of those costs are paid by our pledge dollars.

If the proposed budget cost were spread out evenly over all members and active friends it would be about \$2000 per person or \$3000 per pledging family. Not all of us can contribute at the same level. Pledges range widely. However, if we each give our fair share, our goals can be met.

What you will want to pledge will depend on many factors involving your financial status and degree of commitment to the First Unitarian Society, our programs, and UU denomination. Determining value is a personal decision. How much is this community worth to you? How important is it to you for us to insure that our message of welcoming and religious freedom has a home where it can be made available to others looking for a religion that promotes inclusion, diversity and hope? How much is the education of our children worth? Or perhaps just a positive Sunday morning experience where we know we are heard?

The table to the right shows some figures that will provide a perspective for your decision.

What is a 'fair share' pledge?

Following are some pledging guidelines to help you determine your pledge amount. Because everyone cannot contribute at the same level, nor does everyone feel the same level of commitment, these are suggested guidelines.

Annual Household Income	Suggested %	Monthly Donation	Annual Donation
Less than \$50,000	0.5% - 1.0%	\$10 - \$40	\$100 - \$500
\$50,000 to \$100,000	1.5% - 3.5%	\$60 - \$290	\$750 - \$3500
\$100,000 - \$150,000	2.5% - 4.5%	\$210 - \$560	\$2500 - \$6750
\$150,000 - \$250,000	3.5% - 5.0%	\$438 - \$730	\$5250 - \$8750
\$250,000 and up	5.0% and Up	\$1050 and up	\$12,500 and up

How do I make my pledge?

Pledge forms are available at FUSW during the pledge drive and will be mailed if you were unable to pick one up in person on Sunday, March 19. The [2017 Annual Pledge Drive form](#) may be also downloaded from the FUSW website and will be linked to the Society Scoop newsletter during the Stewardship Campaign which runs through Sunday, April 16.

Each individual or family fills out a pledge form indicating the amount of their pledge. Pledges can be paid all at once or over time throughout the year through a variety of options – by check, online bill paying from your bank account, online via PayPal through the FUSW website, or by transferring shares of equities. Contributions to FUSW are tax-deductible.

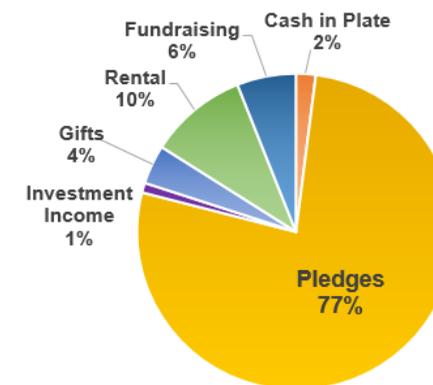
Please return your completed pledge forms and send to the Treasurer at FUSW by mail or place in the Treasurer mailbox **by Sunday, April 16, 2017.**

Thank you so much for your contribution to our shared future at the First Unitarian Society of Westchester. Any gift you are able to make is deeply appreciated.

Deepening Spirituality — Nurturing Community — Advancing Justice

Together we have created a community that means many things to its members. We gather to share in the experience of our ministries and many vital programs and services.

*Our Minister * Lay Led Program Groups & Summer Services * Celebrations of World Religions * Youth and Coming of Age Services * Guests at our Pulpit * Music from Our Choir and Musicians * Candles of Joy & Concern * Congregational Response to Sermons * Fair Trade Coffee Hour * Path to Membership & New Member Celebrations * Lay Ministry and Pastoral Care * Small Group Ministry * Caring Committee * Social Events (Potlucks, Dinners, Parties) * Multi-Generational Events * Community Nights * Men's Group * Women's Groups * Religious Education * RE Classes Pre-K to High School * Junior & Senior Youth Groups * Lifetime Faith Development (Adult RE Programs) * Denominational Programs UU UNO, UUSC, etc. * Social Justice * Share the Plate * Climate Justice * Black Lives Matter * Immigration Issues * LGBTQ Issues * Common Ground Coffee House * Midnight Run * Community Garden * Food Pantry Collections * Bread for the People **



Our Income

Where do our funds come from?

Pledges are relied upon as a substantial portion of our funding.

Our Expenses

Where do our funds go?

Among ongoing operating expenses, the single largest expenditure of pledge donations pays for the salary and benefits of our Minister, part time DRE and part time Administrator.

