



First Unitarian Universalist Society of Newton

Erin Splaine, Minister • 2018 Budget Drive Co-chairs: Brian Gill, Saul Lookner, Julia Wolfe

Dear FUUSN Friends,

As 2018 begins, we find ourselves feeling grateful to and inspired by FUUSN. In the larger world we see too little respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Justice, equity, and compassion are in short supply. But FUUSN fuels the fire of our commitment, standing—in the words of Jason Shelton's hymn—as a beacon bright and clear, demanding a deeper justice.

What fuels your fire of commitment? Worship? Religious education, music, or social justice? Many of us have found at FUUSN community and friendship, comfort in times of need, opportunity for spiritual growth, and collective social action to make the world a better place. On the back of this letter, you can see some of the wide range of FUUSN activities that support, educate, and inspire us.

At this time each year, we ask everyone to make a financial pledge to support FUUSN for the coming year. We are deeply grateful for the time and talent that you commit to keep FUUSN running, and for the pledges you have made in the past. **Your pledges raise two thirds of the funds required to maintain the programs and services we love and depend on.** Next year, that means collectively we need to pledge \$585,000 in support of a budget of around \$900,000.

What is the money for? This year we aim to increase FUUSN's pledge income by 7 percent—a substantial but fully attainable increase—to ensure FUUSN's financial viability now and in the future. The attached *Goals and Giving Guide* describes how we will use your pledges to achieve that aim. Achieving sustainability in the short and long term will require us to increase our pledges if possible. And it requires all of us to participate. Nine out of ten of us pledged last year; this year we are aiming for 100 percent. *We need everyone's help.* Please join us in ensuring that FUUSN's fire remains strong.

The *Guide* also includes information to help you determine the size of your pledge. You can make your pledge at a pledge party, where you'll socialize with old and new friends. Or, if you prefer, we will arrange for you to have a personal stewardship visit in a setting of your choice, where you can discuss your pledge.

Whichever you choose, we ask you and your loved ones to reflect as you decide on your pledge: **What fuels your fire and nurtures you at FUUSN? How might FUUSN sustain you as you strive to actualize your dreams and live out your values?** What commitment can you make to help FUUSN's beacon shine bright and clear, this year and in the years that come?

We sincerely thank you for your generosity and support of our congregation.

Sincerely,

Brian Gill

briang.uu@gmail.com

Saul Lookner

saul@gblaw.com

Julia Wolfe

juliawolfe@yahoo.com

FUUSN PROGRAMS

In addition to Sunday morning worship and coffee hour, FUUSN offers outstanding religious education and music programs that welcome your participation. This list highlights some of the many diverse program opportunities that are available to the FUUSN community:

FOR ADULTS

- **Adult Faith Development:** supports journey toward spiritual and intellectual growth, offering a variety of programs and a lending library that address the spirit, the heart and the mind
- **Chalice Circles:** small group ministry fostering connection and spiritual growth
- **Over 60's Club:** offers a multitude of learning and growth opportunities

FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

- **Children's Programs:** cooperative religious education classes for babies–7th grade, taught by volunteers
- **Our Whole Lives (OWL):** a series of six comprehensive sexuality curricula for children, teenagers, young adults
- **Youth Coming of Age (COA):** 7–9th grade youth program, supported by mentors. Includes: UU identity development, comparative religions, and a social action component, culminating with a special worship service
- **Youth Ministry (High School Age):** youth are involved in the youth group, as youth teachers, and as youth board members, and attend overnights and volunteer opportunities, organize an annual Youth Coffee House, and lead a worship service

FOR ALL

- **Child Dedications, Weddings, and Memorial Services**
- **Social Justice, Refugee/Immigration Work, Social Services**
- **Intergenerational Faith Development:** monthly pizza and principles discussions

- **Lay Ministers and Care Crew:** available for caring, listening and assisting community in dealing with life transitions
- **Leadership Opportunities:** from operations, stewardship, religious education, greening our sanctuary, to other administrative committees, opportunities for leadership
- **Multicultural Ministry:** multicultural engagement and answering the call to support the Black Lives Matter Movement
- **Music Ministry:** adult and family choirs, folk-rock band, intergenerational orchestra, and liturgical dance
- **Support Groups:** small groups that provide connection around specific life experiences
- **Welcoming Congregation:** creating a space that honors every part of our identities, backgrounds, and experiences, including gender and sexuality
- **Historic Preservation:** researching the history of our congregation, its building and the surrounding community

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- **Alternative Gift Fair, Holiday Fair, Services Auction, Community Yard Sale, and Youth Coffee House:** fun community and fundraising events
- **Community Breakfasts:** monthly fellowship for all congregants
- **Fun Friday Nights:** time for adults and children to play games and share a meal
- **Holiday Events:** celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Passover, Rosh Hashanah, New Year's Eve at FUUSN
- **Social Retreats for All Ages:** fall and spring intergenerational retreats to Ferry Beach (Saco, Maine), and Sandy Island (Lake Winnepesaukee)

OTHER

Discounted facility rental for members, the FUUSN Yellow Pages, bridge group and book clubs. And, there are *always* opportunities to form new groups based on interests.