

# Connections You Can Count On

## The Stewardship Pledge Campaign—2009

### Frequently Asked Questions

April 2009

Annual Stewardship Drive Co-Chairs: Maureen Butler & Ralph Brown



Many people have asked us similar questions about the stewardship pledge drive at Old Ship, about the budget process and financial info. Similarly, many have recommended gathering these answers in one place. Voila! Here you have it.

We hope that together with next week's Stewardship Pledge Campaign Mailing to your homes, that this is useful.

#### **What is The Stewardship Pledge Campaign 2009?**

It is the annual giving campaign for Old Ship. It begins in late March and runs through April, culminating on Celebration Sunday April 26th. We ask you to pledge early and make Old Ship a priority! Giving generously to Old Ship makes possible so much— for ourselves, our church, each other.

#### **Who participates? Why is my pledge needed?**

Your pledge, all of our pledges, create the fiscal foundation of our shared church. It is a critical way to support Old Ship and each other. All members, friends and newcomers are asked to pledge financial support to fund our minister and staff salaries, our varied & terrific programs, social outreach, administrative costs, fair share giving to the national and local Unitarian Universalist Associations, and the operating / facilities costs for our historic buildings.

#### **What is the goal of The Stewardship Pledge Campaign 2009?**

The goal is 100% participation of the congregation, the members and friends, to support our shared vision for Old

Ship in the upcoming year and in the future. When everyone gives generously, we will raise the money that is needed to support our level and quality of programs, services, initiatives. When we all give generously and open heartedly, the connections and opportunities between us at Old Ship, and between Old Ship and the world, are strengthened.

#### **How much should I pledge and where can I find guiding information?**

Consider what feels meaningful and possible to you and reflects the value of the connections you have with Old Ship. As a reference, you can use information that you will receive by mail in your Stewardship Pledge Campaign letter and the Connections booklet. Included there will be The Unitarian Universalist Association's Fair Share Giving Guide.

#### **Why should I consider increasing my pledge?**

Old Ship appreciates all gifts, large and small. However, we hope that you can see your way to increasing your pledge, because our fiscal health is very important, and church expenses rise each year. This is no different from other churches and the outside business world - even as Old Ship practices conservative budget planning. Information about the [Preliminary Fiscal Year 2010 Budget](#) will be in your mailing, and/or you can ask about and discuss the budget at any time with our Board of Trustees and/or Finance Committee members.

#### **I have a limited income, what should I pledge?**

Know that you are always welcome at Old Ship. If you're out of work, have a modest income, or are facing demands on your resources, please pledge what you

are able. Also know that if you pledge generously, and increase your giving this year, and your circumstances change during the year, adjusting later if needed is possible as well.

#### **I'm doing well, what should I pledge?**

If you attend Sunday services, are involved in programs, activities or committee work, and/or if you or your children attend Lifespan RE, and these Old Ship connections are important in your life, please consider the information in the Connections Booklet. Review the UUA fair share giving categories that work with your income and your desired level of commitment. Many people find a new, increased target pledge amount there for this year; others a target they will be making steps towards reaching over the next few years.

#### **When should I make my pledge?**

Please pledge as early as possible, during mid-April. You can mail (or deliver) your pledge card to the church office. We will also be collecting them at coffee hour during the next few Sundays.

You can also email your pledge information to Julianna in the office at [Office@oldshipchurch.org](mailto:Office@oldshipchurch.org).

The members of the board of trustees and many other lay leaders often pledge very early in the process—and we appreciate this very much.

#### **Will I be contacted during the Stewardship Pledge Campaign?**

All Old Ship members receive a stewardship pledge mailing in mid April. We hope everyone will respond by April 26th. We may be calling people prior to the 26th— to encourage pledging activity and to be available to answer any questions you may have.

**When does my pledge need to be paid? And how ?**

Your pledge payment begins July 1, 2008 and is paid in full by June 30, 2009. You may make your pledge payments weekly, monthly, quarterly, or at one time. Many people make 10 equal payments, Sept. through June. Some place a weekly check in the Sunday plate. Please consider having your pledge deducted monthly from your checking or savings account, or paid via credit card, through automatic debit. We will provide you with the form to select this terrific, consistent option.

**Why do we pledge so early in the year, before June?**

The Board of Trustees needs to know that our upcoming income and our expenses will balance before the May Annual Meeting. We need to know what pledges have come in before we plan staff salaries and benefits, the various ministries and programs, & building expenses, to finalize the budget for July 2009 through June 2010.

**How should I pledge if my children are in Religious Education?**

Your generous pledge supports not only the dynamic Lifespan Religious Education Program, but also the costs of all the church staff members, facilities and all of Old Ship's programs. Please consider, as you are reflecting on the meaning of Connection to decide this year's pledge amount, what your children's participation in RE means to you and to them. It is very likely a priority in your lives and provides important educational, relational and community opportunities, that are uniquely offered by Old Ship and our congregation..

**What about the Sunday plate offering?**

We appreciate Sunday offerings, but they represent only 2% of our income. Our *pledging* represents over 80% of the Old Ship income. If you are a visitor, we thank you for your Sunday Plate donations. If this is when you submit your financial pledge, please use envelopes ( you may get them in the office ), or clearly mark your check as a pledge donation, so we can credit you accurately, and when you receive updates by mail and tax information it is 100% accurate. General, non-pledge, Sunday offering money is split between Old Ship and many local charities, which are determined each year.

If you are a regular participant at Old Ship, please pledge — you rely on and are connected at Old Ship, Old Ship relies on you, and we rely on each other.

**What about the time I contribute?**

Your volunteer efforts are truly appreciated! You understand & add to the value of our staff, our buildings, and the things that we do for each other and for the rest of the world. Our volunteer support is a cornerstone of Unitarian Universalist faith and the democratic, participatory nature of our congregations. All of these responsibilities and opportunities require money as well as our time. Please pledge and make Old Ship a meaningful priority in your financial giving life.

**Are there other ways to donate to Old Ship ? Such as with appreciated stock and /or planned giving programs ?**

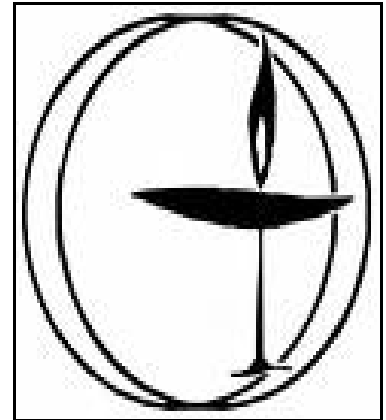
Yes, both of these options are possibilities. If you are interested in either- please contact either one of us, or John Sneath, the current treasurer and chair of the finance committee. Additionally, in the next few months - we will have specific written materials available about both of these opportunities.

**Do you need any additional help in future Stewardship and / or Pledge Campaign efforts ?**

We sure do - and thank you for asking ! If you have an interest we would love for you to join us in this important work.

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Most importantly- Thank you for your generous support of our wonderful church and our congregation.



If you have additional questions please ask them when you see one of us- or email them if you like. We will find the answers and get back to you quickly.

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