

Help us to thrive.

As CJ has explained, last year's level of giving would be sorely inadequate for next year

So, you ask, how much would you recommend I pledge this year?

Here are three approaches to suggested giving levels. Take your pick, Goldilocks.

ONE

We love you and want to spare you any discomfort in the pledging process.

Our recommendation is to assume someone else will make a huge pledge and everything will work out OK in the end. So go ahead and make a safe, painless, conservative pledge. Don't cause yourself any trouble. By all means, save your money for something more important than a mere community of hope, exploration, excitement, and love.

You can always volunteer for something at AUUF now and then, can't you? That'll help, and you'll feel good about it, knowing that Alabama Power accepts volunteer hours in payment for electricity.

We love you. We don't want to rock your boat, so just pledge what you pledged last year. The Fellowship will survive.

Won't it??

TWO

OK, wimps, listen up!

Enough with the handwringing and sniveling, "I don't have enough money to increase my pledge, boo hoo, sob sob." Of course you do. It's just a matter of self-discipline, you weakling. SUCK IT UP!

You have enough money to waste on Hulu subscriptions, new shiny cell phones every year, donations to websites that promise to help the poor and downtrodden but don't. A sucker born every minute, eh P. T.? You keep buying geegaws on Amazon that you don't really need, and splurging on "little treats" for yourself that turn out to be pathetic junk. And the lattes, the lattes. Don't get me started! You have money for all *that* stuff, but a pittance for AUUF.

Bollocks!

Put your money into something real. Local. Alive. Changing lives. Changing *your* life. Put your money into AUUF, capeesh?

So write down the amount you pledged last year. Then write it again, right under the first one. Draw a line under the two and add them up.

Now you're looking at what this year's pledge should be.

Done. Simple.

Or do I need to get my Uncle Vinny to come over to your place and slap you around a little, do a little attitude adjustment? He'd be glad to. He's been vaccinated.

THREE

There are well-meaning guides to Canvass giving that have been proffered by the UUA and others. They try to be sensitive to different financial situations of members and friends, but also try to encourage generosity. Some say, "Give until it hurts!" Some emphasize the level of the donors' economic well-being or lack of it. Some tie giving (a quantitative thing) to the depth of commitment to Unitarian Universalism (a qualitative thing).

The net result is confusion.

You want simple? Here's simple: *Commit 5% of your income to AUUF.*

It's an idea that was born elsewhere but would work here. Elsewhere, it was called "**Five To Thrive.**" If you are already giving 5% of your income to the Fellowship, great! Thank you. Consider a hefty increase if possible. If you are not pledging 5%, aim to pledge 5% this year. If you cannot swing it this year, give yourself 3 years to increase gradually to the 5% level. Remember, this is offered as a suggestion.

Simple.

A single dream is more powerful than a thousand realities.

J.R.R. Tolkien