

Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

P.O. Box 669
Auburn, AL 36831

450 East Thach Ave
Auburn, AL 36830

Dear Members and Friends of AUUF,

As we embark on our annual fundraising canvass, we take a moment to reflect on our mission, our values, and our shared responsibility to sustain and grow our beloved Fellowship. Stewardship is not just about finances, but about honoring our commitment to one another, our greater Auburn community, and the principles that unite us. This year's canvass, running from *February 23 to April 5, 2025*, is our opportunity to come together and ensure the continued vitality of AUUF.

Why Stewardship Matters

- Our Fellowship is an interconnected web of relationships, values, and shared experiences.
- *We're all ministers of our values and mission*, and the UUA's Article II states that our generosity is one of our stated values that further reflects our dedication to a just world.
- Every pledge represents our own individual participation in supporting the values and mission of AUUF. Our places in this community are grounded and flourish because the many become one in our shared place in it.

The Realities of Our Financial Needs

- Our budget supports *Sunday services, programming, education, social action, second hours, memorial services, guest speakers, and more.*
- The cost per person to sustain any organization is only one factor to consider, many more are discussed in the UUA's guide for ethical giving (found elsewhere on this site). It is a great resource for anyone with questions on a suggested contribution suitable for their own situation in life. Of course, any donation is gratefully accepted in helping sustain our Fellowship.
- No outside resources support our operations—*Every dollar pledged is spent on direct funding of programming, staffing, and caring for our community*, as well as the necessary costs of supporting those initiatives.
- As costs of living increase, we must provide fair and equitable wages for our *staff, half-time Minister, and half-time Director of Religious Exploration (DRE).*

The Challenge of Giving

- Conversations about money can be difficult, but *money = mission = values = a just world.*
- *Face-to-face interactions about giving* help build understanding and connection. While that concept will always ring true, our Fellowship will always be looking for new ways to expand and broaden our outreach through whatever means are at our disposal. While we encourage face-to-face interaction among our members, we value everyone's time and ability to participate and respect your individual choices on how to participate.
- According to a study by the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, published October 24, 2017, older donors often contribute more monetarily, yet at a lower percentage of income—*younger contributors follow suit when engaged and educated on the impact of giving.*
- Faith-based charitable giving is declining across the U.S., yet these organizations, including AUUF, have historically been more generous in their giving than non-religious groups and individuals. According to the same study, Faith based charitable giving in the U.S. is more than triple the amount spent on Education in this country.

"The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found to serve."

Albert Schweitzer

The Impact of Your Pledge

- Your support funds *our Fellowship's sanctuary, providing a safe and healthy space for respite, safety, and spiritual growth.*
- AUUF supports *our community, our staff, and the UUA, which supports us.*
- Each commitment *honors our mission and transforms the world—one pledge at a time.*

Five Benefits of Charitable giving

1. It Fosters a Sense of Purpose and Personal Fulfillment
2. It's Good for Our Mental Health
3. It Improves Physical Health by eliminating Psychological Impediments
4. It Strengthens Social Bonds and Builds Unity
5. It Inspires Positive Change

A bird does not sing because it has all the answers; it sings because it has a song to share.

Moving Forward Together

- As we prepare for the *Annual Business Meeting*, we must finalize budgets that reflect our values and commitments.
- Stewardship is more than fundraising; it is *the embodiment of our shared experiences and values.*
- *Find yourself in community, love, compassion, and equity*, and share those ideals to transform the world.

Let us plant the seeds today to grow the gardens of tomorrow. Together, we can **Raise the Dough**. Together we can **Bake the Bread!**

In Fellowship,



Randy Melius

President, Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship