

Stewardship Conversations

From 12/7/2016 Focus

As I write this, it is the day after Giving Tuesday – the day each year when every non-profit organization in the country sends you an email or a letter asking for money. It got me thinking about the fact that some nonprofit organizations seem to be able ask for money all the time, yet we at Countryside Church hardly talk about it – generally, once a year during the annual stewardship campaign.

Since our stewardship campaign will begin in a few months, I wanted to start the conversation about money a little early so that we are all ready for it. Specifically, I wanted to talk about how to determine a fair and responsible annual pledge amount.

CCUU requests that its members pledge between 3% and 5% of income. In addition, the UUA has a Fair Share Giving Guide. It lists four levels of commitment along with recommended percentages of income to give. They are:

1. **Supporter:** The congregation is a significant part of my spiritual and intellectual life that I want to support. My fair share financial commitment starts at 2% of my income and rises to 6% as my income and capacity rise.
2. **Sustainer:** The congregation is my central community; I am committed to sustaining the programs and ministries of my congregation. My fair share financial commitment starts at 3% of my income and rises to 7% as my income and capacity rise.
3. **Visionary:** My commitment is a clear demonstration of the unique importance of this congregation and of my spiritual principles. My fair share financial commitment starts at 5% of my income and rises to 9% as my income and capacity rise.
4. **Transformer:** I am deeply committed to the congregation; my contribution provides fuel for transformation and is part of my spiritual practices in living out my UU Principles. My fair share financial commitment represents 10% of my income.

I realize that some of us can't give 2% of our income, let alone 5% or 10%. But if your pledge started out as an arbitrary \$50 or \$100 a month and hasn't increased in years while your financial condition has improved, then maybe it's time to rethink your commitment to the CCUU. Unitarian Universalism and CCUU are needed now more than ever. Just imagine the difference we could make in the world if every member who could, gave their fair share.

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