

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

A Welcoming Congregation

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Dear Fellow Stewards,

Imagine a world where peace, love and justice prevail. Imagine a world where all people consider themselves stewards of the earth. Imagine a world transformed by people living Unitarian Universalist values. That is a vision of the world that we want you to consider as we begin our 2012 Stewardship Campaign, *Working Together to Bring our Vision to the World*. This Stewardship Campaign replaces the canvass campaign from previous years. As part of this Campaign, small groups within our community will gather to make connections, share stories, and make financial commitments to the future of our congregation.

Why a “Stewardship Campaign”?

As stewards of this historic institution, we are called not just to preserve FUUSA, but to nurture it so that it thrives and grows. We must keep the flame alive for this small religion with such huge potential. The goals of this Stewardship Campaign are for all of us to:

- Feel renewed commitment to FUUSA and Unitarian Universalism
- View generosity and sharing as fundamental parts of our congregational fabric and UU principles
- Be inspired to make financial commitments that will enable us to turn our vision and goals into action.

How the Stewardship Campaign differs from past canvasses

Community is central to who we are as a congregation. This year’s Stewardship Campaign will continue to build and strengthen our community. As an alternative to the one-on-one canvass visits of previous years, we are offering all members and friends the opportunity to attend small Stewardship Gatherings. These facilitated conversations will provide you the opportunity to talk with others about the importance of FUUSA in your life, your vision for the future and how you view your responsibility as a steward. At the end of the conversation, you will have a few minutes on your own to complete your financial commitment form. *Please refer to the attached insert to learn how you can participate in these conversations.*

Why your generosity matters

Our shared commitment as stewards along with our combined creativity and generosity can lead to an inspired set of actions. Some of those actions might be:

- An intern minister every year

- An expanded Economic Distress Support System for our members experiencing economic difficulty
- A community ministry to serve our neighborhood
- An expanded music program with an accompanist, a children's choir, and instrumental groups
- A women's retreat, a men's retreat, an offsite retreat, a day of mindfulness to practice peace
- More adult programs to foster life-long learning and spiritual development
- More small group ministries
- Improved technology with wi-fi throughout the building, a state of the art projection system, and improved sound system in Emerson

We are sure that more ideas will be generated at the Stewardship Gatherings. Clearly, some of these ideas require additional financial resources beyond what we need to maintain the status quo. We hope the energy generated by these ideas will inspire you to raise your commitment level. Guidelines for financial commitments are shown in "Leveraging Our Power for Good." Over the next two months, let us gather and learn how we can "Work Together to Bring Our Vision to the World."

Yours in Service,

Dick Dana, Stewardship Chair

Rev. Sam Trumbore

Chuck Manning, President

See next pages for:

- *How the Stewardship Campaign Will Work*
- *Stewardship Gathering Schedule and Sign-up Form*

How the Stewardship Campaign Will Work

Every Stewardship Unit (formerly Pledge Unit) will be invited to spend a couple of hours with a dozen or so fellow FUUSAns at a Stewardship Gathering. Some will be at FUUSA and others will be hosted in members' homes. The schedule for the Gatherings is shown below. **Please pick a date that will work for you.** There are a number of ways to sign up for a Gathering.

- On Sunday March 4th we will have a sign-up opportunity during the service
- You can contact Stephanie, our Office Administrator, and she can sign you up
- You can drop off the form at the Office

If you don't have a chance to sign up, someone will be contacting you. If you would prefer a one-on-one canvass, the Stewardship Committee will arrange that for you. Conversations at the Gatherings will focus on:

1. Describe how FUUSA and Unitarian Universalism are important to your sense of who you are.
2. Review our successes in meeting the goals in our Strategic Plan.
3. What more could FUUSA do to transform the lives of its members, our larger community and the world?
4. What does being a steward of FUUSA and our Unitarian Universalism mean to you?

At the end of the evening you will be asked to confidentially fill out the financial commitment form. Couples will have an opportunity to discuss this privately before making their commitment.

Stewardship Gathering Schedule

- Sunday March 25th and Sunday April 1st after the service from 11:45-2:00 p.m. – a free pasta lunch where families come together and eat, then childcare is provided while the adults break into small groups and talk.
- Friday April 6th from 5:45-8:15 p.m. – a free pasta dinner where families come together and eat, then childcare is provided while the adults break into small groups and talk.
- Evenings at homes around the area. Each home will host 8-10 people with coffee and snacks. These gatherings will be held from 7:00-9:00pm on March 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, April 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 15.
- March 19 at Noon at FUUSA, as part of Channing Circle

Stewardship Gathering Sign-Up Form

Name(s)

Option A

I (we) would like to sign up for a FUUSA Stewardship Gathering on March 25th, or April 1st, or April 6th with food and childcare (**Please Circle one date**)

of Adults Attending _____; **# of Children Attending** _____

Option B

I (we) would like to attend an evening Stewardship Gathering on March 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, April 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 15. (**Please circle one date** that would work for you and we will confirm the details.)

of Adults Attending _____

Option C

I (we) would like to attend the Channing Circle Stewardship Gathering on March 19th.

of Adults Attending _____

Option D

_____ I would prefer a one-on-one Stewardship visit

Please send/bring this completed form to the Stewardship Committee, FUUSA , 405 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY, 12206