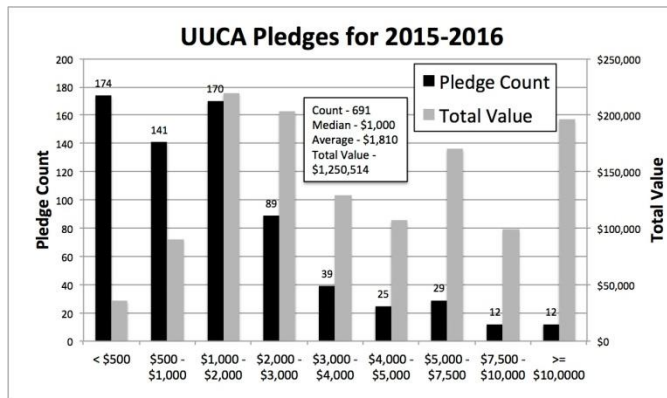


## Stewardship: Annual Giving Questions Answered

As we approach the time when all UUCA congregants are asked to pledge their financial support for the coming year, here are some of the questions that come up:

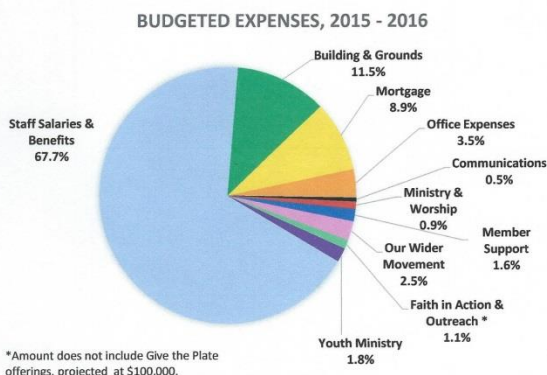
**What is the right amount for me and my family to pledge?** As much as you can, of course! Some ways to consider that question: With last year's budget of about \$1.45 million divided by about 1,000 households, the cost of serving UUCA's mission was about \$1,450 a year per family. Well under half of our households pledged that much; in fact, half of our households pledged less than \$1,000. That's not sustainable. Consider your own circumstances. Consider the relative importance of UUCA in your life. Consider what relationship you wish to have with this religious community. Then decide.



**Besides my pledge, what are UUCA's other sources of income?** Pledges are about 85 percent of the income. Other sources include rental income (which has increased this year), occasional special gifts, and other streams—all of which add up to only 15 percent. Pledges are by far the most important source.

**What is the timing for the Annual Giving campaign?** The official launch of the campaign is Sunday, February 7; you'll receive a letter around then, with a pledge card asking for your intentions. Return your pledge card (or pledge online) any time in February. Remember, the pledge is your prediction of what you will give between July 2016 and June 2017; no one expects you to pay when you submit the card. The Annual Giving campaign officially ends on Sunday, February 28. By mid-March, we will announce the final results.

**What's the relationship between our pledges and the annual budget?** The budget will be created by staff, advised by finance leaders and congregants, with our pledges as its basis. It will not be a deficit budget; that is, what we give is pretty much what we get. If we pledge enthusiastically, the new budget will allow the church to grow; if not, the church will need to contract.



**How big will the budget be?** We don't know yet. It will be based on our pledges. If we are to move beyond last year's constraints, if we are to grow again, it will need to be significantly larger than last year's roughly \$1.45 million. At that, the cost of operating UUCA was more than \$4,000 a day; it will need to be higher this year.

**What are the main needs in the budget?** Staffing is always our biggest cost, by far. For the coming year, mortgage costs will increase, as our construction loan ends and terms are renegotiated. (This increase has been anticipated since the beginning of the capital campaign five years ago; now is the time.) The pie chart shows last year's categories.

**I affect budget decisions?** First, pledge as generously as you can; urge your friends to do the same. Second, attend one or more of the three open budget meetings as the budget is drafted and refined. They will probably start in March or April and end in May; dates will be announced in *Connections* and through other communications.

**Where can I take my other questions about pledging and Stewardship?** Come to a listening session with the Annual Giving team—January 27 or February 11 at 7:00 p.m. Visit the Annual Giving table in Fellowship Hall any Sunday in February. Find me in Fellowship Hall on Sundays even before then, or contact me by email ([du4uuca@comcast.net](mailto:du4uuca@comcast.net)). Invite me for coffee or a beer. As always, I look forward to talking with you.

—Diane Ullius, coordinating Stewardship under the Green Umbrella



