

## A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum: This Year's Pledge Drive

I trust you are doing what you can to stay safe in these times of Covid19. As you know, we have suspended all group meetings (including worship services) at UUFM until the public health directives tell us otherwise. This current health crisis is accompanied by increased financial challenges facing individuals at the time when UUFM is called to do *more* in our community to serve as a bridge and exert leadership reflecting our values

Among other things, the Operating Pledge Drive for this year, already going on in a quiet phase, was to culminate with a Pledge Sunday and Celebration on March 29. And we *will* celebrate our common generosity, when next we are able to gather. But in the meantime....

If you have not already pledged, you should have received a brochure and pledge form in the mail (if not, let me or the office know and we will get one out to you). I know times are uncertain, we do not know how long this will go on nor what its impact will be on our family's and community's finances. But we also need to make plans that will carry us together into the future. Despite the uncertainty, **please complete your pledge form and mail it in**—*pledge your hope* for our future; if things don't turn out as well as that, you can always adjust your pledge in the event (it doesn't take an epidemic for anyone to have permission—we all understand that individual circumstances change).

Also please remember, a pledge of \$0 is gratefully received. We are trying this year to tally the resources the congregation will make available to us, and it helps our planning to know what we should expect from each of us, including those who are living on a constrained budget themselves. Even those who cannot support us financially support us in other ways—by the time you volunteer, the talents you share, and simply your fellowship in our community of free faith.

Your pledges are the core support for nurturing our beloved community. You provide both the basic physical and staff structure that underlies everything we do, and some of the additional funding that allows to reach out and expand our impact in the world around us. Our goal this year is to grow our pledging by 10% (from \$125,000 to \$137,000), and to increase participation in the annual pledge from our current rate (just under 70%) to something closer to 100%.

This year's pledge campaign has already begun. The Board have all made their pledge, and all of the committees & teams have been canvassed. To this point, we have already reached \$78,000 in pledges from about 2/3 of those canvassed. Given the current crisis, we are extending the pledge drive through Sunday, April 19. With all of your help, we will put ourselves over the top and celebrate the place this beloved community holds in our hearts and in our lives.