

January 21, 2009

Dear Friends,

We are profoundly grateful for our congregations' contributions to the Annual Program Fund (APF), which provides nearly half of the UUA's unrestricted funding. APF supports a wide range of vital services and programs, such as lifespan religious education curricula, ministry and professional leadership credentialing, ministerial search and settlement services, social justice resources and advocacy, youth and young adult programs, and an array of Unitarian Universalist publications. Without our congregations' generous contributions year in and year out, none of this work would be possible.

It is the responsibility of the UUA Board of Trustees to establish the requested APF per-member contribution for each fiscal year. The Board does so based on recommendations from its Finance Committee, which in turn seeks input from the UUA Administration, its Stewardship and Development staff, the UUA Financial Advisor, and the APF Committee. In April 2008, the Board of Trustees determined that the Fair Share for Fiscal Year 2010 (July 2009 – June 2010) would be \$58 per certified member, an increase of two dollars over the FY 2009 rate to keep up with inflation.

But our world has changed significantly since last April. Over the past several months, we have been hearing concerns from our member congregations – through the APF Committee, the Trustees, District Presidents, and District Staff. You have let us know that our congregations may be facing difficult decisions about cut-backs to the core services you provide, about implementing salary freezes, and about limiting contributions to the Annual Program Fund that supports our Association.

Our entire Association has been challenged by the recent economic downturn. And in response to the present realities, the President requested that the Board of Trustees consider the following motion, which they passed at their January meeting:

Recognizing that the economic recession being felt across the country affects Unitarian Universalist congregations, the lives of their members, and the Association, the UUA Board of Trustees resolves that:

- Together we shall seek creative ways of reducing costs while enhancing environmental sustainability, using technology in new ways, and supporting one another through the challenges sure to be ours over the near future.
- The Association shall continue to deliver essential services to member congregations and assist them in addressing fiscal challenges, while examining all expenditures and programs care fully for their centrality to our mission.
- We approach these challenges with the spirit of positive reinvention.
- Further, we will hold the Annual Program Fund Fair Share contribution for fiscal year 2009-2010 at the current rate of \$56 per member and hold the percent of budget option for large congregations at the 2008-2009 level.

We are all working hard at both the local and national levels to find new and creative ways to reduce costs while carrying on the invaluable work of Unitarian Universalism. And like all our congregations, the Association is committed not only to providing core services, but to increasing our visibility and our capacity for social justice work, especially now, when our message is sorely needed.

Our Association's 1,050 Unitarian Universalist congregations have entered into a covenantal relationship and so promised to one another our mutual trust and support. The Board of Trustees and the President and staff of the Association take our relationship with you no less seriously. Your concerns are our concerns; your pain is our pain. Reaffirming our covenantal bonds, we dedicate ourselves to helping to ease the strain on our congregations in these challenging times.

Thank you for your continued support of our Association. We firmly believe that together, we can lead the way into a better future for our world.

In faith and gratitude,

Rev. William G. Sinkford
President, Unitarian Universalist Association

Gini Courter
Moderator, Unitarian Universalist Association

Dan Brody
Financial Advisor, Unitarian Universalist Association