

Stewardship at FUPC

2026 Annual Giving Campaign

Frequently Asked Questions



WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE 2026 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN?

In the early fall of each year, the session plans for the upcoming year and prepares a proposed church operating budget which supports the plans. The Challenge budget for 2026 includes

- Funding an increase to the Outreach and Service Ministry budget to help support local organizations that serve those in need, the youth mission trip, and our hands-on mission project.
- Providing a 3% cost of living increase for our valued church staff.
- Funding all other church ministries at their requested levels for 2026.

A significant portion of the budget (approximately 70 percent) is funded through the receiving of pledges from the congregation. A 1.5% increase in pledge income is needed in order to meet the projected budget for 2026.

- If you currently pledge, you are encouraged to increase your pledge by 1.5%.
- If you have not pledged in the past, you are encouraged to begin.

Additionally, the Stewardship Ministry hopes that more donors will choose to automate their giving by setting up automatic payments and giving electronically.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PLEDGE?

Pledging is the act of letting the church know your giving plans for the coming year.

- **Pledging is more than financial planning—it's a discipline of faith.** When we make a plan to give, we practice intentional generosity, giving of the “first fruits,” trusting that God will provide enough for us to share. Just as prayer and worship shape our spiritual lives, so does the act of pledging: it reminds us that all we have comes from God, and that we are called to use our resources in service to God's work.
- **Pledging strengthens the entire church community.** When members pledge, it allows church leadership to budget thoughtfully and plan confidently for ministry, outreach, worship, staffing, and maintenance of our sacred space. While plate offerings are always welcome and appreciated, they cannot offer the same level of stability or foresight. A pledge tells the church, “You can count on me,” and that decision becomes part of the foundation on which we build our shared mission.
- **Every pledge makes a difference.** Whether your pledge is large or small, what matters is that it's made with prayer and intention. Together, our pledges sustain the life of the church, enabling us to be a “light on the hill.” Please consider how you can be part of this work—and how pledging can be part of your own spiritual journey.

Contributed by Don Johnson

HOW SHOULD I/WE FULFILL OUR PLEDGE?

There are several ways to accomplish your charitable giving to the Church.

- The tried-and-true method would be to drop your contribution in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Always a good option.
- You could also drop a check in the mail to the church office.
- Many people like the ease of an automatic draft from their bank to the church account – an ACH deposit. If you are in the habit of contributing the same amount each week or month, this is a great time saver for the financial administrator.
- If you have an IRA that requires you to make Required Minimum Distributions (RMD), another option would be a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Talking to your financial advisor is a must, but generally, you can transfer your RMD to the church and that amount does not get included in your taxable income. You don't get to include the contribution in your itemized deductions, but you may not be itemizing anyway. A win/win situation.

As always, the decision is yours but if I or anyone else on the Stewardship Ministry you in making it easier to fulfill a commitment, we would be happy to help.

Contributed by Lisa Higgins

WHAT ABOUT PLEDGING OUR TIME AND TALENT?

During past stewardship campaigns, members have been asked to how they would like to share their time and talents in order to further the kingdom of God and serve the church in the coming year. Session has been discussing changes to the church committee structure. The Stewardship Ministry Team decided to wait until after the church committee structure is finalized to develop a list of opportunities for members and visitors to share their time and talents. Once, the church committees are in place in 2026, a time and talent form will be created and you will be given the opportunity to pledge your time and talent for 2026.

That being said, there are lots of **ways you can get involved** in ministries of the church and/or our local community **now**.

- If you would like to **sing in the choir** for the Advent Season, contact our Music Minister, Isaac Thomas.
- **Greeters** are needed for our church services and other special events, contact Jane Steinkraus if you are interested.
- If you would like to volunteer at **Cooperative Emergency Outreach**, please contact David Clay or Sara Koenig.
- Volunteers are needed to help with costume preparation for **Celebration at the Manger** and to assist during the celebration. Contact Kristi Button for more information.
- Our **Earth Care Taskforce** is always looking for volunteers to help ensure we are good environmental stewards. If you would like to help please contact Rebecca Haden.

Be on the look out for our **Advent Newsletter** which will have information about additional opportunities to share your time and talent during the remainder of 2025,

Do you have additional questions about stewardship?

Please contact a member of the Stewardship Ministry Team or one of the staff members listed below.

Stewardship Ministry Team: Don Johnson (Elder and Moderator), Tom King (Elder), Chris Bell, Lyle Gohn, Howard Higgins, Lisa Higgins, Mark Power, Amy Rossetti, Tom Verdery (Church Treasurer)

Stewardship Staff Support: Stewart Smith (Interim Pastor), Stacey Luebker (Financial Administrator)

For contact information contact the church office (officemanager@fupcfay.org, 442-4411).