



Annual Budget Campaign 2021

Holding Together While Staying Apart

Our Mission

Strengthened in spiritual growth, supported in diverse community, we strive to transform ourselves and heal our world through compassionate action.

Words from our Minister

Collectively and individually we've been reflecting a great deal on what is essential when so much has been stripped away during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As we reflect now on our spiritual lives, congregational community, and the work we do together to make the world we live in more just and sustainable, it is hard to fathom what our lives would be like without this church.

If you didn't have any of the connections you have in the congregation, or the opportunity to pause and reflect on questions of meaning and purpose, and the chance to join together with others to work on climate change, or ending homelessness, or racial justice (to name just a few)...what would you be missing? What if it all went away?

In some ways, this year's ABC campaign is just like any other. We ask you to consider the value of this community in your life, how much it matters to you that it exists and continues to exist, and then to give as generously as you are able to keep it going.

This year, however, does feel different. We've been challenged to feel connection across distance, to have services online, and to continue to grow in our understanding and work around all of the major challenges facing our community while

staying apart.

We don't know when a vaccine will appear, or when it will be safe to resume meeting as we did before (and likely with changes kept from pandemic time that were for the better).

What we do know is that we want this community and the unique place it holds in our lives to continue to be. The people make the place. Together we have created something special, and at times, have shared magical moments.

Please give to keep that spark alive as we lean on one another in this time of deep challenge and then find our way into the next chapter—together.

Here's to the next ten years (and 2021)

Rev. Shana

Important Dates

Sunday, October 4

ABC kick-off Sunday

October 4-17

All Members and Friends Canvass

Sunday, October 25

Close of Canvass

Let's get activated on



Our church stores information on a Breeze database. Shannon Oatway, FUCV Communications Assistant, will help Members and Friends get connected to Breeze. You can use Breeze to remind yourself of your 2019 pledge (and much more). Here is how you can do it:

To see your Giving History, login to your profile page, click on the Giving Button located on the far-left side of your profile page, in a list under "Details". This is a great way to look up your record of contributions. Once into your Giving information, click 'Pledge' to see your pledge history.



Who is being canvassed this year?

From October 4-17, the ABC Canvass Team will call every member and friend of our congregation. It has been 6 years since we last did this and in these COVID times, it seems to be an 'oh so necessary' connection. We may not be able to have in house visits, but we can expect most everyone to be home!

When should I pledge?

Please pledge ASAP after you have been canvassed October 4-17.

Income tax savings

For those who are fortunate enough to pay income tax, the following table gives an idea of your approximate savings. Your actual tax credit is based on your taxable income and may vary from below.

When you pledge:	Estimated tax credit:	Actual cost:
\$600 (\$50/mo)	\$216	\$384
\$1,200 (\$100/mo)	\$478	\$722
\$1,800 (\$150/mo)	\$740	\$1,060
\$2,400 (\$200/mo)	\$1,003	\$1,397
\$3,600 (\$300/mo)	\$1,527	\$2,073
\$4,800 (\$400/mo)	\$2,036	\$2,764

How do I pledge?

To pledge, go on the website for the First Unitarian Church of Victoria. Click on Annual Budget Campaign 2021 for the online brochure and pledge form.

Making an online pledge will help our Treasurer as well as the environment as we try to minimize our use of paper. (For those of you who need the paper copy, please tell your canvasser and a pledge form will be sent to you).

Why this phone canvass?

We want to see how you are connecting with the church community during the pandemic, discuss how we could help, make sure you are connected with our Breeze database, answer any questions you might have as to our church finances during the pandemic and your new online options for making payment.

Why is it important for you to pledge?

Your pledge allows our church to budget for the year. If we don't know how much you and others will be donating, we can't contract with our employees (including our ministers), or be certain of making our mortgage payments, or maintaining our property.

Your monthly pledge allows us to anticipate our cash flow so that we are confident that our employees and creditors will be paid on time.

The most important thing is to make your pledge in a timely manner so Finance and the Board can develop a budget for 2021.

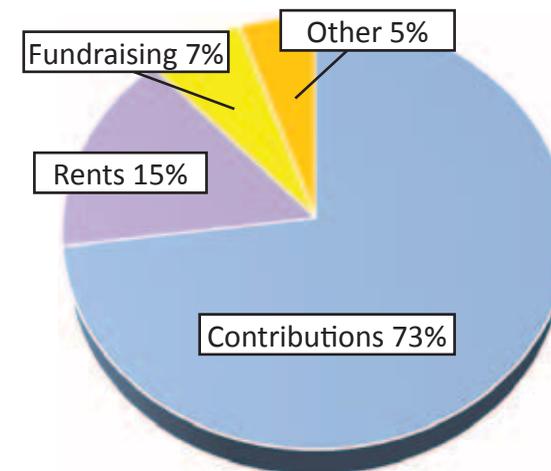
How much should I give?

Some of you have reduced finances because of COVID while others will want to be more generous. You know what you can manage. A pledge of any amount large or small is appreciated including \$1 pledges (for a contribution of record).

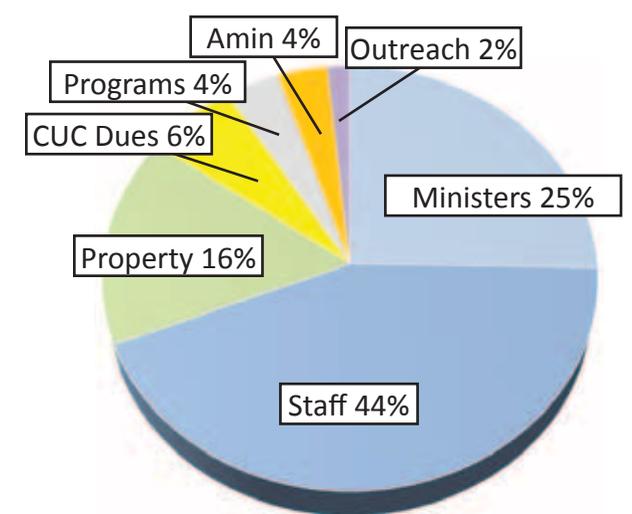
Just so you know: It costs us about \$1550 per member to operate with our present level of programs for one year. Pledges for 2020 totalled \$310,000 from just over 200 pledges.

2020 will be forever remembered as the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Our future will be shaped by what you find in our church community that is valuable.

Where does the money come from?



How is the money spent?



What matters most...

...is standing up for the inherent worth and dignity of every being. In addition to all of the members of our congregation, it includes the animals, birds, fish and insects which we are destroying. The connections with the wonderful people in our congregation are what make me want to keep coming back. Especially in these uncertain times it is important to think of the others, including the non-humans, who need our support and love. **Jim Willis**

Many things are important to me, spiritual inspiration which Rev. Shana & Melora provide, fellowship with others, singing in the choir and much more. Though, one thing stands out in particular, being part of the auction team! This was again a thoroughly uplifting experience. Working together was testimony that our community is strong and determined to navigate these uncertain times. It was heartwarming to see how everyone came together with a "can do" attitude, which made this event such a resounding success. I was elated to share in this success and be part of our resilient church community!

Astrid Firley-Eaton

It's spiritual deepening and connecting with others. **Roberta Clair**

I enjoy the community aspect of the church. The sense of belonging and being able to contribute to worthwhile causes. Also, the music. The choir is very important to me. **Barry Wiebe**

...is that First Unitarian stay strong, engaged and united through this pandemic until we all can meet again. We WILL weather this storm! **Andy Lee**

...in this community is that it is a very supportive one. Even with the Covid restrictions I find that there is still support for all of us, not only through our ministers, but in our neighbourhood groups and also through the groups that have been set up to address different issues this fall. **Maggie Nixon**

This church is our anchor: Our spiritual anchor, our intellectual anchor, and our social anchor... And like an anchor, it allows us to rest while swinging with the tides. Some things are more important to us at different times. A sermon will challenge us and lead us in a new direction. A course will make us evaluate our behaviour. A new social experience will expand our hearts. We love the variety in the messages that we hear from both our extraordinary ministers. Hearts, heads, and hands. All are enriched here.

Liz and Mike Graham

Social Justice Storytime has been a source of consistency and resilience through the spring and summer. My kids and I have made new friends and seen old friends in a new light, discovered new stories and shared some of our favourites, explored challenging ideas with support and encouragement, wept (that was me) and laughed (that was all three of us). These fifteen minutes each morning matter dearly to me, and the people even more so. I am grateful. **Nicole Bichard**

What matters a lot to me is that the incredible generosity of the FUCV membership be respected and rewarded by not being asked for money frequently. I'd like to see the ABC campaign for pledges run over just a few weeks to a month.

Audrey Taylor

Our church is my extended family and most of my closest friends are members of our church community. Every time I have needed help or advice, someone in the church has stepped up. When I needed rides to radiation, church members set up a schedule and took me. When I was too ill to cook, members of my Neighbourhood Group filled my fridge. When the time comes for my memorial service, I am comforted, knowing the ministers will support my sons, and the church community will gather to celebrate my life. **Suellen Guenther**

I don't like "church." I do love "community" and that's how I see us. For me, that word means a gathering of diverse people who listen pretty well, have many views but share a common quality – compassion. Over the 16 years I have administered the Lifeline List Project, we have together helped hundreds of hard-pressed neighbours with a genuine need, providing about \$200,000 in practical assistance. Money talks. Our money speaks love. That's reason enough to help keep the lights on and the doors open. **Don Vipond**

...during all the Covid restrictions is connecting with people in small groups in a meaningful way with an opportunity to check in and support each other. **Patricia Hofstrand**

Community and shared values. I stay with this institution because I can rely upon it making me feel I'm home, among people who share my core values and who stand up for those values and for the connections among us all. I know I can expect to find the things I value most in this community: curiosity, openness of mind and heart, self awareness, compassion, nurturance, gratitude, creativity, and vision. I feel so grateful to be living in a time when technology allows this community to remain strong and connected even when we need to remain physically distanced. **Katherine Maas**

We have passed into a timeless era of great loss of our balance of sustainability: Earth, Air, Fire, Water. I believe this virus has catapulted us into the realism of seeking a truth: Is human life sustainable on a Mother Earth while nature unravels to destruction? This truth carries a heavy weight for my small spirit. Individual spirits can grow stronger, but I need to be in a community with a heart of transformation that can grow collective SOUL POWER. Our community offers an invisible door. This door of hope swings open on a soul level through us. Our creative lives our dreams are interwoven into epic tapestry. In my community no one laughs at me if I express my concern for the health of this planet. No one says 'your living fear-based beliefs'. I have found my belonging to a place where many people believe the environment is an important issue.

Our ministerial leadership of Reverend Melora & Shanna has proven to be a constant compassionate loving pair of role models. Although ZOOM has its faults, I have been grateful for seeing deep into the eyes of our Ministers. Sometime their eyes like 'windows of the soul' hold laughter and other times they wept. There is an authenticity in our ministerial leadership which sutures a thread of devotion. There is a strong commitment from the Ministers, church leaders, congregation, & children that form a binding sanctuary of love. Regardless of what happens in the wider world my greatest wish for our 2021 congregation is that we will thrive and continue to grow into the sacred light of wisdom. Namaste,

Jewel Spooner

I've never felt that I am very good at articulating "what the church means to me", I just feel it in my heart. Looking forward to 2021, what resonates with me most are some of the items you mentioned: connections with each other (even though we can't meet in person), spiritual deepening, maintaining hope, helping each other, and finding inspiration from each other's actions. At the moment, what matters particularly to me is keeping an intergenerational connection and I so appreciate the Social Justice Storytime each morning. The stories and the interactions with others provide a positive start to my day!

Jane Wilson

*I find that the ability to become antifascist is foremost in my mind now. I also long for physically distanced visits with loved ones. I have been helped financially by the church and am so grateful. Having the zoom services is amazing, especially with the breakout rooms. The beauty of the property and building feed me spiritually. I want to continue to connect with UUs deeply and authentically. Resilience, support, and the ineffable knowing we are in this world together make me devoted to this congregation. **Patty Disbrow***

Our Ministers Matter! Serving FUCV for 10 Years

The First Unitarian Congregation is, indeed, fortunate to have Revs Melora and Shana as our ministers. We know that we get far more than one full time minister commitment from them as they work many more hours than their contract requires.

Having two compassionate, dedicated, and talented spiritual leaders doubly benefits the congregation and we are enriched by their different styles of services. Shana often "sings her sermon" and Melora regularly incorporates images and videos to illustrate her message. Their sermons are truly inspirational.

We appreciate their additional commitment during the pandemic as they juggle family needs with the extra work required. We all value their compassionate attention to members who are ill or grieving. They both regularly express appreciation to people who volunteer at the church. They are passionate about the life of our church and the inclusivity of our friends and members. Their commitment to family ministry has expanded our membership base and enlivened our community

We benefit from the programs they offer, such as Soul Matters, the all-day Indigenous Cultural Perspectives Training

workshop, and the upcoming program on Race and Ethnicity. Our ministers also give us wider outreach through Shana's Jazz Vespers, Times Colonist column, and UVic chaplaincy and Melora's participation in GVAT. Both of them are widely respected in the larger CUC and UUA communities.

*Jeri Dause
on behalf of Committee on Ministry*



Our Zoom Team Matters...

Being a guest speaker on a Zoom Service can sometimes be challenging as we all adjust to the technology.

From the get go, I found working with the Sunday Service/tech team at Victoria First Unitarian a pleasure.

Beginning with a conversation with the service leader, David Vest, through the Friday evening rehearsal to the actual service I felt like a well-integrated part of the team. The service went smoothly and the video recording was of professional quality.

After the rehearsal I turned to my partner, Wilburn Hayden, and said, "Let's visit Victoria Unitarian in person (when safe to do so)."

*Rev Pat Trudeau
Minister, Unitarian Fellowship of NW Toronto*