



**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford
31 County Road 198, Oxford, MS 38655**

February 19, 2019

"How we spend our money is a big indicator of our values."
The Rev. Hope Johnson, Living Legacy Project

Dear Friend,

Your pledge to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford is a powerful expression of what you value. It is also essential to our ability to grow, to thrive and to continue the work that brings us together and inspires us to change ourselves and the world.

Why a pledge drive? Our beautiful Sunday services, where we gather to refresh our spirits and learn, are all supported with music, loving child care and essential staff support. Our Youth Group and other planned UUCO events depend on a caring place to meet. To cover the modest costs of all we do, the UUCO Board relies on an annual budget based on members' pledges. At this time the Board is putting together a budget and anticipates it being around \$60,000.

The UUCO fiscal year begins each July 1st. Your pledge is the only thing that allows the Board to establish a budget in April, and plan for the coming fiscal year. **So, go to our DONATE button now (<http://www.uuoxford.com/online-giving.html>), or email or mail your pledge today, or deliver it in person this Sunday. Let's see our collection baskets overflow with Pledge Envelopes! (email for our Administrator is uucostaffer@gmail.com).**

Together, we can accomplish so much more than we can individually. This year, through the passion and financial support of our members, we have done much, including:

- Cared for our children through the gentle guidance of Deborah and her assistants.
- Continued to engage our High School Group, and provided leadership to develop an active middle school group.
- Provided leadership and encouraged participation in the upcoming Mississippi UU cluster gathering in Jackson, MS.
- Engaged in ongoing efforts to purchase the property adjacent to us.
- Run even more smoothly under the guidance of Sandra Moss, our essential paid Staffer.
- And kept the utilities on, and the building sound and insured!!



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Our congregation is generous, with over 50 people making pledges this last year. We pledge in the same way we stand to sing – as "willing and able." As you pledge this year, know that **you** are an essential part of our beloved community, forming the spirit from which we move forward.

With love and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marge Holland".

Marge Holland
UUCO Board of Trustees President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rev. Gail Stratton".

Rev. Gail Stratton
UUCO Stewardship Campaign Chair

"Funding Our Future"
Stewardship Documents for the
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford, MS
Feb. 2109

At this very challenging time in the history of our state and country, it is especially important for this congregation to exist, to provide hope, a place to gather in solidarity and to nurture ourselves and each other as we seek to live our values fully in this world and to bring greater justice to the wider world.

Our Stewardship Season will include sharing information at the Congregational meeting Feb. 24 and sharing information through a Stewardship packet mailed to members. We will also have a lunch gathering at the end of March! We plan to have our stewardship drive completed by April the 7th.

New this year: Pledges can be completed on line for the first time. Find it at [UUOxford.com](http://www.uuoxford.com/pledge.html), under "members and friends." <http://www.uuoxford.com/pledge.html>

So.....here's your job!

1. When you get the packet of materials, please look over the proposed budget, the FAQs and the form. Let us know if you have questions.
2. Either at a gathering or on your own, please fill out the pledge form and return it to one of the Stewardship Team (Gail Stratton, Martha Scott or Sandra Moss) or put it in the collection plate on Sunday. You can also complete the pledge form on line (see above). In all cases the pledges are confidential.

The pledge form can be put in the collection basket of UUCO, or mailed to UUCO (P. O. Box 1822, Oxford MS 38655), or completed emailed to UUCOstaffer@gmail.com or can be completed on line. Please return pledge forms by April 7, 2019!!

3. Enjoy the future you are helping to create!

Thank you,
Gail Stratton and Martha Scott, for Stewardship Drive 2019
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford, MS.

“Leaning In to the Future”— FAQs
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Oxford
Feb-March 2019

What are pledges and why do we need them?

Pledges are promises of financial support for the next year and it helps the congregation plan for the coming year. Because our congregation owns property and has Sunday services and religious education throughout the year it is helpful to be able to plan!

How many people pledge at UUCO?

We currently have 34 “pledging units” as some couples pledge as a family unit, and some people pledge as individuals. In addition, we have at least 3 friends of the congregation who pledge but have not yet joined. **That makes at least 47 people who make a pledge to the congregation!** As we have 69 members, 59% of members pledge.

What is the recent history of pledging? (note this is stated as income for several years)

2014-2015	- \$30,370 (income)	28 pledging units
2015-2016	- \$36,751 (income)	37 pledging units
2016-2017	- \$29,224 (income)	36 pledging units
2017-2018	- \$36,396	36 pledging units
2018-2019	- \$43,714	34 pledging units

How much do people pledge?

It varies!! A lot. And it depends on what people are able to do. Of those people who pledged the range was from \$10 to over \$3000. The average pledge was \$1,286. Any amount is appreciated and certainly helps. We would love to see 100% of our members pledge at a **level that works for them.** For those who have not previously pledged if each could give \$20/month, that would collectively raise nearly \$6000 for the congregation. We can do more together!!

What is the goal for the Stewardship Drive for 2019-2020?

With so many challenges to the values we share as well as attacks on people and the planet, this is a critical time for this congregation to exist and to thrive. We are actively seeking to purchase the property near us and are growing in lots of ways! We have set an ambitious but achievable goal of raising pledges for \$58,500 this year!!

What is needed to reach the goal?

As we have 69 members, if each person were able to pledge \$829/year, we would meet our goal. (That is about \$15/week.) Currently 10 people or couples pledge \$2,000 or more. If we can increase that to 15 people or units who can pledge \$2,000 or more that would meet more than half our goal. Again, every pledge is appreciated and is important in the life of the congregation.

How do people pay their pledge?

Some people pay monthly, others quarterly and a few will pay once a year. It is easy to set up a regular online payment using Paypal (go to UUoxford.com) or you can bring a check to a Sunday Service or mail it in (UUCO, PO Box 1822, Oxford, MS 38655).

Thank you for your support of this congregation!!

