



Best Practices for Congregational Giving During Tough Economic Times

Compiled by Unitarian Universalist Association Stewardship Consultants

The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto, Florida District Executive

Here are some tips on how to do congregational financing well — at any time!

1. Share the history of giving to faith communities during previous recessions.
2. Stay positive.
3. Act and lead with confidence.
4. Assume that all will be well . . . Don't assume the worst.
5. See the recession, and the start of a new presidency, as an opportunity to welcome new people, and to revisit your congregational vision and mission.
6. Ask *"How important is the congregation to you?"*
7. Believe that caring for people always trumps brick and mortar needs.
8. Use pie charts to depict the distribution of the previous year's spending.
9. Use pie charts to indicate the anticipated distribution of financial commitments when the goal is met.
10. Develop a line-item annual operating budget after completion of stewardship conversations.
11. Do not presume other's financial situation. Ask everyone for an annual financial commitment.
12. Be pastoral. Focus on "how are you doing" personal conversations.
13. In addition to monetary goals, create a goal for the number of congregants participating in the annual budget drive. Define success more broadly.
14. Sponsor a "turn down the heat" day each week and host a pot luck meal at church.
15. Sponsor a job-seeking club / a referral network / a resume writing workshop.
16. Promote open conversations about "living well in tough times."
17. Market a "business is booming" slogan to spread the good news of the congregation.
18. Focus on three key words; help, hope, and home.
19. Emphasize that the faith community is a haven during tough times.
20. Congregations that were strong before the recession, will remain strong during a recession.
Weaker congregations will succeed if they have strong leaders.

January 2009

Serving Unitarian Universalists to Create Joyful Congregations Covenanting in Love & Faith

Florida District · Unitarian Universalist Association

1901 East Robinson Street; Suite 18 · Orlando, Florida 32803 · 407.894.2119 · <http://www.floridadistrict.org/>