Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your generosity to this campaign and to our UUC community! The following document attempts to answer some of the frequently asked questions that donors are raising as conversations about additional support for the Building for Our Future campaign are underway this fall.

Q1: Why are we having another capital campaign called Building for Our Future and how does it relate to the Not For Ourselves Alone building campaign?

A: Thanks to the generous contributions of time, talent, and the $17.5 million raised by hundreds of our members during the Not For Ourselves Alone building campaign (2016-2023), we now enjoy a revitalized church home with myriad building improvements supporting us as we worship, teach, learn, and work for social justice. The final project had building costs $1.7 million higher than the amount we raised during NFOA, and that excess cost must now either be paid off or converted to a long-term loan in February 2024. The Building for Our Future campaign is our congregation’s effort to pay off this remaining building project cost before a loan is needed, to avoid the burden of significant interest cost on our annual budget.

Q2: Why was there a gap between the NFOA building project budget and the funds raised in our NFOA capital campaign? Cost overruns? Unfulfilled pledges? Other?

A: Our congregation members fulfilled their pledges and made gifts toward the building campaign which met our $17.5 million original fundraising goal - this
generosity and follow-through is simply amazing, and quite unprecedented for church capital fundraising efforts. As with nearly all building projects, there were some significant unanticipated additional expenses during the project related to the condition of the building itself and rapid increases in the cost of materials, among other factors. These unanticipated expenses exceeded the original contingency buffer included in the project budget. The building team carefully managed the scope and situation throughout, making weekly assessments and decisions over multiple years, and helped the project to come in within 10% of its original budget. It is this 10% that we are now attempting to pay off during the *Building for Our Future* campaign, in lieu of paying for it with a high-interest commercial loan.

**Q3: How do I decide what is an appropriate gift for me to make to this campaign?**

A: We are hoping that all our members will thoughtfully discern about our church building and this campaign, and that a large number of our members will be able to make a generous gift -- whatever that looks like for each member -- to this *Building for Our Future* campaign. Each of us has our own unique situation to consider: some have already made enthusiastic pledges to this new campaign (examples include: $1,500; $5,000; $10,000; $50,000; $100,000!); others did not have the opportunity to participate in the original campaign and are taking this opportunity to make a contribution to our beautiful new building; still others have made generous gifts during the original capital campaign and are not able to make an additional gift at this time; and, of course, others are still discerning. While each of our giving decisions are highly personal, you may wish to review the Aspirational Giving Guide adapted for this campaign as you consider your gift.

**Q4: When does the church need/want to receive my gift?**

A: During the building project, and over the last five years while members have been fulfilling their original pledges, UUC has used a line of credit to cover the outstanding building project costs. That line of credit is expiring at the end of January 2024, necessitating new financing, either directly from the congregation or a new commercial loan. We ask that members make their pledges to this *Building for Our Future* campaign this Fall, and fulfill those pledges with their gifts as soon as possible, but in any case, no later than January 2024.
Q5: What if I cannot make a gift immediately, but could make a gift some time in 2024?

A: Our congregation will gratefully receive member gifts at any time, of course! However, as noted above, near-term capital gifts by January 2024 are most helpful at this time, given the deadline of February 2024 to convert any outstanding building project debt to a commercial loan. If we do ultimately need a commercial loan, subsequent gifts will be used to continue to pay down the loan balance. And once any loan has been retired, additional gifts will become a part of UUC’s capital reserves, helping us to responsibly maintain our church building in the future.

Q6: I need to plan my giving to the church: when is the next capital campaign after this one going to be?

A: Like you, our church is trying to plan as carefully as possible for future expenses and capital needs. In fact, this year volunteers from our congregation have joined a newly formed Building and Grounds Team. The team is currently working on a 30-year plan for what our building is likely to need in terms of long-term capital maintenance and possibly some new capital improvements. This plan will then be presented to the congregation for our consideration and feedback. This will allow us to plan the capital fundraising that will be needed in the coming years in order to fulfill the plan and care for our church home. We hope and expect that capital fundraising at UUC will migrate toward becoming a regular and periodic element of our church life - which our members can plan for - rather than a once-in-a-generation heroic effort.

Q7: I’m making annual/regular gifts to UUC already; how is this campaign different?

A: We are profoundly grateful to our members who make annual pledges - and gifts to fulfill those pledges - to pay for the regular ongoing operating expenses of the church: for staff, for musicians, for programming, for utilities, for routine maintenance and the like. Each year the congregation reviews and approves the church budget, and then we fund it with our annual gifts. This Building for Our Future capital campaign is different in that it is squarely focused on the needs and cost of the church building itself: specifically, the opportunity to pay off the remaining expense from our building renovation project which took place during 2018 and 2019. For more info, see FAQs #1 and #2.
Q8: I only have $X that I can budget to give to UUC in total this next year: how much should I give to this capital/building campaign versus the regular annual campaign?

A: We encourage all our members to maintain their regular annual pledges and gifts to support the ongoing operations of the church. We ask that those who are inspired and able please make an additional gift to this Building for Our Future capital campaign. We are grateful for all your gifts to our community and its mission!

Q9: It feels like there have been more regular asks from UUC for giving in the last few years: can you help me understand why this is the case?

A: You are right: there have been more asks, to which our congregation has generously responded! In addition to our regular annual campaign in support of UUC’s ongoing operations (see FAQ #7), we have spent the last more-than-a-decade (really!) living into our new church mission, identifying the long-term building needs, planning a major renovation of the church, and of course conducting a capital campaign in support of that renovation.

June 2023 marked the end of the five-year-period for our members to fulfill the pledges they made to the Not For Ourselves Alone capital campaign in support of that church renovation. Now we are enjoying our newly renovated church home, and at the same time, as a church community, we have been working diligently to become more discerning and planful in all that we do, including identifying our operations and capital needs and fundraising for them. Our first step is to finish paying off the costs of the recent building renovation, which is the purpose of this Building for Our Future campaign this Fall.

Long-term capital needs planning is somewhat new for UUC. In fact, our congregation has recently formed a Building and Grounds Team. This team’s first task is to prepare a 30-year plan for what our building is likely to need in terms of long-term maintenance and replacement, as well as possible building improvements. With that plan in hand, we will be able to plan the required projects, and periodically conduct capital fundraising efforts to support them. While the transition to this “new way” requires some getting used to, we are confident it is the best approach for us to maintain what we have already so dearly invested in and move forward confidently with our church life and mission.
Q10: If we don’t raise the whole amount outstanding by January 31, what happens? If we raise more?

A: We are hopeful that we will be able to raise all, or nearly all, we need by January 2024 to pay off the remaining debt from our recent church renovation project. More than a dozen families have already made significant pledges toward this campaign of over $1 million, so we have great early momentum for this campaign!

However, if we come up short, the remaining balance will convert to a commercial loan, and the interest payments will need to be paid from our annual operating budget. In effect, we will be transferring the cost of this loan to our annual operations, which would in turn draw funds away from our church’s annual budget and ministry program. Servicing a loan means increasing the ask for the annual pledge campaign to cover our regular budget plus this new interest cost and other loan expenses such as an external audit. And we would need to continue raising capital funds to pay off the principal of the loan. We would like to avoid this outcome.

If we are fortunate to raise more from the Building for Our Future capital campaign than is immediately needed to retire the renovation project debt, the additional raised will become a part of UUC’s capital reserves and applied toward ongoing building maintenance and improvement (see FAQ #6).

Q11: What are the different ways I might make my gift to this campaign? (see the pledge form options)

A: The church can receive your generous gifts to this campaign in the same ways you make operating gifts: personal checks, transfers of stock, grants from donor-advised funds, and qualified charitable distributions from retirement accounts. If you have questions about these or other options, please contact UUC’s Director of Operations, Byron Krystad at Byron.Krystad@uuchurch.org.

Q12: I have more questions, where should I go with those?

A: On October 1st and October 8th, there will be an opportunity to drop-in to Knatvold and hear more and/or ask questions of a member of the capital campaign team after both the first and second Sunday services. Members of the Building for Our Future capital campaign include: Steve Carlson, Kevin Clark, Kathleen Cromp, Katie Renschler, Scott Renschler, and Jim Thompson. If you have technical questions about different ways to make your gift, please contact UUC’s Director of Operations, Byron Krystad at Byron.Krystad@uuchurch.org.
Aspirational Giving Guide: Building for Our Future Capital Campaign

To help you determine how much to give to our Building for Our Future capital campaign of 2023, UUC offers the following aspirational or “fair share” giving guidelines, which are shown as a suggested percentage of adjusted household income. Income may be adjusted to reflect household income minus major medical expenses, child or elder care expenses, and costs of higher education.

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The Aspirational Giving Guide is just a guideline, a starting point. Your pledge to Building for Our Future should fit your heart and your resources. You may discern that your gift to this capital campaign is similar in size to your pledge to UUC’s annual campaign. Everyone’s circumstances are different. Let your pledge be an expression of joy. Every gift, no matter the amount, is important and is cherished.

Each of us also supports UUC and its mission through our myriad volunteer efforts as we: work for justice and equity, teach and mentor children and youth, share the inspiration of worship and music, offer our leadership and service, volunteer our time in support of the operations of the church, advocate for those whose voice needs our support, and reach out to one another in care and compassion.

Thank you for your generosity to this campaign and to our UUC community!

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