



# The NUUS

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Ellsworth  
121 Bucksport Rd., Ellsworth, ME 04605  
(207) 667-4393 [www.uuellsworth.org](http://www.uuellsworth.org)

## Stewardship Edition

This is a village. Some of us were raised here. Some have arrived only recently. We have different skills and talents, different challenges, and a wide variety of hopes, dreams, and futures. But in this moment we are all collected here, interconnected by our shared visions and passions and values, and by our shared lives. We have chosen each other as companions, as supporters, as community. There are many ways in which community life can be complicated. But for every complication there are two or three or ten rewards, and so we keep at it, because it brings us joy and pleasure and because this is where we belong. This is a place of belonging.

And we want everyone here. We want everyone to be here. This village is too good not to share. We have inspiration and interconnection and love; we feed each other and listen to each other and teach each other and grow together. We practice understanding across differences and changing our minds; we sing and we drum and we take classes and we work and worship together. How could this not be a place to share? And with everyone here, we have a lot of possibilities. We do a lot of things to live deeply into our potential. We support programming, well-designed and coordinated. We keep our spaces sustainably maintained and improved for us and for the people of Ellsworth who rely on us for space. We reach out into the community and give generously to support what we believe; we make sure that our own people are safe and healthy and warm and loved. We are a leader in the community when questions of equal rights and justice arise. We use ourselves: our resources and our presence-for good.

We do not have to *be* good-as Mary Oliver says-

but we have to *do* good. Supporting this community is putting on our own oxygen masks first, taking good care of our own needs so we can in turn support others.

We want to make a village circle big enough to bring everybody in - in where we value respect. In where we value diversity. In where we change and learn and grow and reach out and are willing to be transformed by our learning; in where we do what is right while we figure out and share and evolve with what we believe.

Making this happen takes money. This year, about \$130,000. Some of that we can make together-through fundraisers and rent and investments. The rest we give. And we give like we do everything else--with everyone playing a part. Our village is built by many hands. Our community room was literally built that way. Our RE wing was paid for by member gifts. We can do this. We know how. We have done it before. We're doing it again.

In the community room, on the bulletin board, is a circle of houses--a village. Outside the circle are people. That's us--those who are now among us and those who are waiting to come in. Each person figure represents \$1000. As you figure out how much you're planning to give, please move the right number of people (one for every thousand dollars) into the circle. If you won't be at church before Stewardship Night (April 10 at 5 PM--don't forget to RSVP to Peggie Geiger!), ask someone to do it for you. You will probably have a remainder--some fraction of a thousand left over. We're not going to cut people in half. But please work with other members--we're in this together. See if you can find people to team up with to make a complete

thousand, so you can together bring another person into the village. You do NOT have to tell them how many people you have or have not already moved.

Just talk about the remainder. No one will know if you gave \$6300 or \$1300. All they will know is that you have a \$300 remainder and you're looking for people to team up with so you can get to \$1000 together. It takes a village to change the world. We are that village, and we're starting the revolution right here. It's a revolution of possibility, of connection, of love. Let's bring *everyone* in.

Leela

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## Thoughts from the Treasurer's Corner

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The preliminary budget of \$130,000 represents our hopes and our responsibilities – what we hope to accomplish and what we are responsible for providing for ourselves and those who work for us. A \$130,000 budget means that we need to raise \$115,000 in pledges which is \$25,000 more than the \$90,000 we raised last year.

Tom Grogan has made a commitment to us and I hope we will be able to provide him with an RE budget that will assist him in developing a strong RE program. We need to make a small capital investment in a computer for Tom. He has been bringing his own computer back and forth from home to church which is inconvenient.

We have a responsibility to provide a small payroll increase to our Church Administrator, Cleaning Person, and Music Director. Our Music Director has not had an increase in pay since he agreed to replace Kathleen Sikkema six years ago.

Leela agreed to work for a reduced salary package (\$43,245) in the 2009/2010 church year because we were unable to raise the money to pay her what she was earning in 2008/2009 (\$57,500). She is requesting a salary package for this coming church year of \$56,995 (a \$13,750 increase). If we want to keep a full time minister, we need to be responsible for paying for one.

Neil Davis, our piano tuner, who is a registered piano technician, informed the music committee

that we need to take better care of our piano by tuning and adjusting it four times a year. It is over seventy five years old and would cost over \$65,000 to replace. UUCE member Sally Bell donated her grandmother's piano to the church many years ago.

The worship committee wants to raise the honorarium we pay to substitute ministers from \$150 to \$200. This is a substantial increase since we have to fill the pulpit 22 times per year. We have a responsibility to provide enough funds for all of the church committees to perform their tasks. And of course we have the utility bills and building maintenance, and our commitment to the Northeast District and to the UUA.

I encourage you to consider increasing your pledge but I hope you will be responsible and realistic when doing so. It is important that you are able to pay your pledge in full. We have responsibilities to ourselves and our staff to meet our expenses. We need to think hard about where we hope to be at this time next year – a growing and vibrant congregation with hope for a better future that will bring excitement and meaning in our lives. It is with responsibility that we make these decisions, not lightly but realistically, with hope for our future.

Don Martin, Treasurer



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## Glenn Beck and UUCE

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Leela asked me to write an upbeat, vision-oriented article about stewardship. I have been dragging my feet and putting this off for days now. I know UUCE's needs and I know that Kay and I are going to pledge more this year than last. But in our current political and economic climate I am having a hard time being upbeat.

Then I happened upon Roger Ebert's blog of March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Roger, as you probably know, is a beloved movie critic who, despite serious health issues, maintains a positive attitude toward life. His blog is an engaging commentary on his world and experiences. But his March 14<sup>th</sup> blog, titled "Jesus was a Nazi. So's your preacher," stopped me in my tracks.

In a recent broadcast Glenn Beck said "I beg you, look for the words *social justice* or *economic justice* on your church web site. If you find it, run as fast as you can. Social justice and economic justice, they are code words. Now, am I advising people to leave their church? Yes! If you have a priest that is pushing social justice, go find another parish. Go alert your bishop and tell them, 'Excuse me are you down with this whole social justice thing? If it's my church, I'm alerting the church authorities: 'Excuse me, what's this social justice thing?' And if they say, 'yeah, we're all in that social justice thing'—I'm in the wrong place."

Beck continued, "Social justice was the rallying cry—economic justice and social justice—the rallying cry on both the communist front and the fascist front."

Roger was appalled and he began with this statement, "Pretty near everything Glenn Beck says strikes me as absurd, but he scored a perfect 10 when he warned his viewers against the dangers of Christianity."

Please do not discount Glenn Beck as just a nutcase. He is a very influential voice on cable television and talk radio. This strikes close to home. My son-in-law works in the TV news business and even,

when Beck was on CNN, worked for him. Beck's ratings are consistently high.

The use, or misuse, of religion by political radicals always gives me serious indigestion. In this case it is close to an ulcer. Beck has a much greater audience than either James Dobson or Pat Robertson.

So what can I do? How can I counteract this poison?

I can try to change the world by working where I am put. I am a member of this church and want it to be *what we say it is*, the **beacon** of liberal religion in Downeast Maine.

What follows are a few of my ideas:

- A beacon needs to project into its neighborhood, into its area. One of the primary means of communication in this day and age is the internet. Web pages, email, blogs, facebook, twitter. We need an enlarged web presence, well maintained.
- Our building needs to be more visible.
- We need to continue and increase social services (-yes- social justice) in response to need.
- And we need staff, well-compensated staff.

These are not the only possibilities. What are your dreams for our church community?

These things are not cheap. It is time to dig down and give. Kay and I are going to pledge more this year than last. We intend to give 5% of our annual income. Please join us.

*We are standing on the side of love:  
Hands joined together as hearts beat as one.  
Emboldened by faith, we dare to proclaim  
We are standing on the side of love.*

In love,  
Diana Cate

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## Stewardship Conversation

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This is harder than I thought. I am pretty verbal about the need to be more open about our relationship with money, because through that conversation with others and ourselves I believe we are better able to become clear about our values, our fears, and our inconsistencies. This conversation helps us understand our immediate needs and how we meet them and our long-term goals and how we meet those. But as I sit at the computer typing, I am asking myself just how open and revealing do I really want to be about all this. In agreeing to write a short article for this special addition Newsletter, I believe I was agreeing to push my own comfort level a bit, and I am pretty comfortable with openness. So here goes-starting with the personal.

I am not wealthy, but I am comfortable in relation to my needs. I am retired, and have no one dependent on me for support. My income from social security, a small retirement fund and investments give me around \$34,000 per year. Of that I give 10 % to “charity”. Last year I choose to give 6.5% to UUCE and 3.5% to other causes. I choose to spend more on food, because I try to buy local and/or organic as much as possible. More often than needed or in tune with my values, I treat myself to a meal out. I smoke and that is an expense on many levels that is way out of tune with my values! So in reality I could be giving even more to the causes dear to my heart. I no longer spend very much on travel, I don’t have the same desire to do that as I used to. In fact, I am at a point in my life where I am more interested in deepening my roots than in using my wings.

With regard to the church, in the early years of my involvement with Unitarian Universalism, we gave about 2% of our income. We had a larger amount to give from, however we defined our needs (not necessarily for the better) differently. As my ex-husband and I gradually realized the importance of the UU community to our children and ourselves, that percentage inched upward. As a single person without dependents at this stage of my life and with a much smaller income, I am able, and most importantly choose, to support my UU community at 5 to 7% and to give considerable time. This is not selfless; in fact it is quite selfish. The more I

give the more I get as is probably true with all aspects of life. My path and choices are not (nor should be) for everyone. What gifts your life is a very individual choice. What is important is to be able to have a conversation, first with yourself and then with others to help clarify your choices and sometimes theirs. For example, do you use money and your time to support and nurture what you value or to reward and punish. These questions we need to be in conversation about are important and go a long way to enriching our lives.

The UUCE community is very important to me, even when at any particular moment I may feel a bit disgruntled, impatient, or disappointed. As with my children, I have high expectations for the manifestation of the best in UUCE. Most often I find that best; occasionally I don’t. But I am there for the long haul (48 years so far with UU churches, 41 with my children). Bottom line: I will support them and UUCE to my utmost with time and money. My children and my community are more important to me than any other single cause, no matter how worthy. Through them (my children and my UU community) I can hope to have a larger impact on what I value than one march, one vigil, one \$50 check (or even 100 of those) might have. They (my children and UUCE) have the potential to be a stronger voice and actor for my values than I alone can be. This is my beloved community, and I want it to thrive with all my heart. UUCE provides the soil where my values take root; it helps nourish my spiritual growth, and it surrounds me with people I care deeply about.

Judy Rothrock



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121 Bucksport Road  
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## April 2010

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**We covenant to affirm and promote:**

**The inherent worth and dignity of every human being;**

**Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;**

**Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual  
growth in our congregations;**

**A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;**

**The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process  
within our congregation and in society at large;**

**The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice  
for all;**

**Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which  
we are a part.**

