

## Follen Stewardship Drive Case for Giving

The 2018 -19 church year will be an exciting time at Follen:

- The building project enabled by the capital campaign will be underway
- We will have a full time permanent director or minister of Religious Education
- We will make important decisions about how best to ensure continuity in our music programs, and
- For the first time in five years we will be without our beloved minister Rev. Claire Feingold Thoryn, as she takes a four-month sabbatical.
- We will continue to offer strong social justice campaigns, Food for Thought and meaningful Sunday morning experiences throughout the year.

### Religious Education Search

Many people first come to Follen when they are looking for religious education for their children that aligns with their world view. We offer programming and childcare from birth through high school graduation.

For the past two years we have been ably served by our Interim Director of Religious Education, Deb Weiner, but it is time to look for a full-time permanent leader. The selection committee is hard at work assessing our needs and preparing to recruit an individual who will oversee our religious education activities, guide development of programming, and provide our children and youth with engaging faith formation experiences.

Keeping our RE program strong is an important way to ensure that our children will spread our UU values into the future and that our congregation will continue to attract young families. Living our UU principles means aspiring to meet the UUA Fair Compensation guidelines. Our ability to recruit the best candidates for the RE Director or Minister Role relies on our offering the best compensation package we can.

### Permanent Music Director

We have come to expect an extraordinary music program at Follen. Music greatly enhances our worship services. We have become accustomed to having a youth and children's choir program that includes an end-of-the year musical production, usually an operetta. We have been able to attract and retain an amazing number of both professional and amateur musicians who regularly share their talents.

Singing together helps us create community. Listening to our choirs allows us to appreciate a broad range of musical styles. Enjoying the soaring notes of our soloists and being soothed by Introit offerings by our accompanist round out our Sunday morning experience.

Providing professional leadership for a music program with this level of activity and talent is an important way to ensure it will continue to be a key part of the Follen experience. To hire the best music director we can, we need to offer the best financial package we can.

## Building Project

The capital campaign team challenged us to dream big and we delivered. With over \$2.5 million raised and a \$1 million challenge gift from an angel family, we will soon begin the Building for All project that will transform our church into a fully accessible, energy efficient and beautiful space. The enlarged, more usable space will better accommodate the wide variety of programs and activities that bind us as a community.

The building committee is hard at work developing a construction plan that will minimize disruption. We plan to operate as usual as much as possible, offering year-round Sunday worship, along with the wide array of programs and experiences that change lives. The capital campaign will cover the expected loss of rental income.

## Sabbatical

It is hard to believe that nearly five years have passed since we called Claire Feingold Thoryn to be our senior minister at Follen. The energy, enthusiasm and engagement within our congregation are as strong as ever. With Claire's leadership, we have increased our commitment to social justice through new programs. We have revitalized our adult programming team and begun a monthly Food for Thought evening. We have added monthly two-service Sundays to provide better opportunities to hear our youth and children's choirs. We have added summer worship services that enable us to connect with each other all year long.

As part of our contract with Claire, we are committed to providing six months of paid sabbatical after her fifth year. Claire serves us expertly, in many ways. Her powerhouse sermons are the highlight of an engaging weekly worship experience that inspires us to maintain hope and enables us to keep our balance in the face of an unsettling world. Providing a sabbatical for Claire is one way we live out our covenant with her by providing some time away from the hustle and bustle of our congregational life for study and spiritual renewal. Our Worship and Music Action Team is working closely with FHRAT to ensure we are able to fund hiring of a temporary minister to preach and provide pastoral care during Claire's 4-month absence.

## A Look at the Numbers

	2013-4	2014-5	2015-6	2016-7	2017-8
<b>Total pledge Income</b>	\$407,532	\$436,324	\$480,177	\$486,354	\$505,098 (projected)
<b>Fundraisers</b>	\$ 48,892	\$ 53,719	\$ 52,269	\$ 50,650	\$ 46,405
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$539,799	\$587,525	\$630,467	\$642,470	\$684,821

Overall the stewardship pledge drive contributes approximately 75% of our annual budget. In contrast, the contribution of the 3 major fundraisers combined (East Village Fair, Christmas Tree Sales and the Goods and Services Auction) is less than 10%.

On the expense side, approximately 75% of the budget goes for personnel expenses.

For more information about the Follen budgeting process see

<http://follen.org/community/stewardship/>