

Follen Church Society

Unitarian Universalist

Changing Lives, Together

Fellow Follenites,

December 27, 2012

A dozen of us gathered back in the spring to talk through our hopes and dreams for the Follen community at a pivotal point of new minister recruiting — and to consider the financial foundation our future requires.

Changing Lives, Together

We left these “ReThink” discussions energized. We are energized by the re-affirmation that Follen is a very special community — a community where we lovingly give of our time to build something that marks our lives deeply.



We also reflected at those spring-time sessions, and during a fall Leadership Event, on the specific reasons we value Follen. We heard stories about how Follen has changed our lives and the lives of others in our broader community.

We talked about the life-changing role of FUUY, Operetta and New Orleans trips in the maturation of Follen’s youth. We heard of the role of Covenant Groups, Sunday Services and other programs that help Follen’s adults chart our spiritual paths. Some recollected the awareness gained from involvement with Roxbury Youth Programs and

Follen’s Partner Church, while others were grateful that Follen’s Volunteer Service Network helped them during a challenging time.

Calling a New Minister

As we stand on the threshold of calling a new minister, it is an important moment to solidify our church’s financial sustainability. Annual fundraising campaigns aren’t just about money — they are occasions for building community, and they deserve a special place in the cycle of Follen’s church year.

With this turn of the cycle, we are all challenged to step up our pledging to bolster our ability to self-fund our programs and activities — as well as those that go beyond Follen’s octagon. We look forward to engaging with a new minister who will help us to continue the proud tradition of changing lives.

Improving Sustainability

The need for financial self-reliance is driven home by the news that Nextel, a long-time renter of our steeple, will not be renewing their \$46K annual contract. Sprint Nextel is closing its entire Nextel network. Many other wireless carriers are not in “build out” mode at this time, so we cannot rely on a replacement revenue stream.

Follen Financial Snapshot	
Overall budget 2012 - 2013	\$ 543
Income from pledging	\$ 380
Income from Nextel rental	\$ 46
Income from rentals, EVE, Xmas trees, etc	\$ 117
Pledging as % of Follen budget	70%

Follen lay leadership planned a partial “buffer” for the loss of Nextel this year, wisely anticipating an eventual end to the contract. We are not in crisis, but we are fully awake to the reality of our need for self-funding.

Our objective is to increase pledging to 80% of the Follen budget from its current 70%. This is a goal in keeping with other financially-healthy church communities. Achieving 80% of income from pledging dollars is a multi-year objective. This year we plan to make a strong start and welcome our new minister with a firm financial foundation in place — one based on each of our commitments.

What is next?

In January you will be contacted by a fellow Follenite who has agreed to be a steward in this year’s fundraising drive. Please welcome this call.

Recognize that this pledge drive is different — marked by the opportunity to welcome our new minister to join us in launching a new stage of Follen’s proud history. And also marked by a clear signpost to the need for more self-reliance. We recognize that the work of our community requires us to be masters of our financial future.

Our goal is nothing less than to do the most important work — to continue to change lives. Please contribute as generously as you are able.

Maggie Pax and the Stewardship Committee

755 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington, MA 02420
781-862-3805 • www.follen.org