

Keeping Follen Strong

December 2015

Dear Fellow Follenites,

Since becoming our minister in 2013, the Rev. Claire Feingold Thoryn has brought great energy, spirit, insight and caring to our community. Her wisdom from the pulpit and vision for the future of Follen have engendered a new wave of growth.

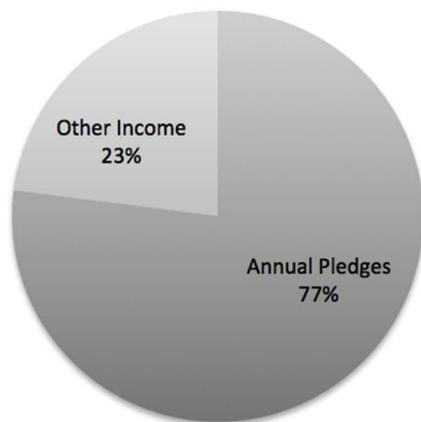
Now, more people attend Sunday morning services. Our choirs, RE classes, youth and covenant groups have all experienced robust growth. There are more and varied adult support groups. We support more social justice initiatives. We revel in the increased vitality new congregants bring, and new staff will enable.

Supporting Staff for Growth

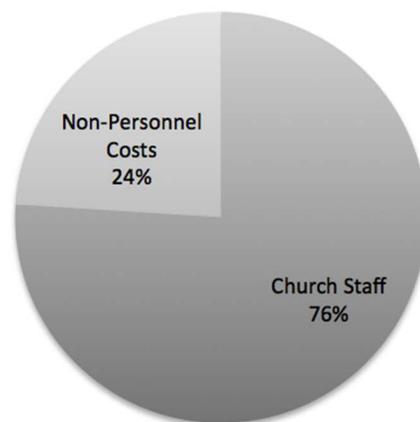
Our church staff supports our growth, and, as we grow, we have a responsibility to meet the increasing demands with which staff grapple to coordinate new members and volunteers and to maintain and enhance the excellence of our programs.

Our staff costs now will be over half a million dollars. And it is pledging that supports that expense.

Where Funds Come From



Where Funds Go



What's Ahead?

On the horizon are the new Director of Community Engagement, new Music staff, new Youth Advisory staff, a new Ministerial intern, additional support for RE and childcare, summer services, and benefits and compensation meant to assure that we attract and keep the superb quality of staff we have come to expect and depend on.

As we ask more and more of our staff to support our rich and varied shared experiences at Follen, we must provide the resources needed to support them.

Your Pledge Matters!

While Follen has other sources of income (rents and annual events), **over 75% of our church budget comes from our pledges!** Annual pledging enables Follen's very existence. It's what makes possible what we do together.

Your pledging support is absolutely vital to enable us to continue to do all the things that make Follen the amazing place it is.

Where is Your Place in the Spectrum of Giving?

The average pledge for this year across the whole community is about \$2,100. Over 25% of us are "leadership" pledgers at \$3,000 or more. Reverend Claire has suggested a "starter" pledge for newcomers might be set at about \$100 a month or \$1,200 for the year. Almost all of our newcomers have been pledging at or near that amount. But please know that pledges of \$1,200 or less taken together represent an important contribution to church revenue. Every pledge is appreciated.

What's Next?

In January, a Follen congregant who has volunteered as a steward in this year's pledge drive will contact you. Please welcome this call and please contribute as generously as you can to help fund Follen's 2016-2017 church year.

We have already asked leaders from Follen's governing bodies and from our stewardship and financial committees to pledge. Each has responded generously. As a result, we have already raised *more than half* of our \$520,000 pledging goal. But to reach that goal, we need you now to do your fair share to help support our staff, our programs, our building and our vision for a vibrant, fulfilling future together.

Thank you for helping make this happen!

Fred Johnson, Marlene Stone and Chris Farnham, Stewardship Chairs
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