



Dear Fellowship Members & Friends,

The Executive Team (X Team) and Governing Board have spent the past few weeks in deep discernment about how to balance our financial realities with the mission, vision, and strategic goals of the congregation. We have also centered this congregation's commitment to fairly compensating our staff and treating them with dignity and respect.

Our proposed budget includes several cuts this year, which are being made in response to a looming \$106,000 budget deficit. The size of this deficit reflects both widespread economic anxiety that has depressed giving and the increased costs of just about everything, from keeping the lights on to offering health insurance to staff, and the maturity of our current mortgage at a substantial interest rate increase.

We have included the following proposed cuts to our personnel expenses for the 2025-2026 fiscal year:

- After our current Music Director, John Popke, concludes his tenure with us on June 8<sup>th</sup> we will only hire some very part-time music staff totaling a quarter-time position, prioritizing finding a skilled accompanist (rather than hiring a combined accompanist/choir director at half time) and potential addition very part-time support staff.
- We will eliminate the 4k-1<sup>st</sup> grade Religious Exploration teacher position, which has been vacant for much of this current program year.
- We will reduce our Director of Religious Exploration position from full-time to 30 hours a week. We will retain our 10 hour a week RE Administrative Assistant position.
- All staff professional expenses (the money used to pay for professional development courses, purchase books, and attend collegial gatherings, among other things) will be reduced by half.

We will also reduce the dues we pay to the UUA from around \$12,000 to \$1,000 and have made other small cuts across budget lines as warranted.

As always, our revenue streams are limited to individual and household giving, some fundraising efforts, and a very small amount of rental or other income. If you are able to increase your household giving, we invite you to let us know. Additionally, our ministers are finalizing a plan to support the Green Bay UU Fellowship in some additional ministry for the

coming year to offset their loss of Rev. Jim Coakley as their ¼-time minister. We will generate some income from that arrangement, but not enough to offset this significant deficit. The budget the Governing Board and X Team are proposing will still project approximately a \$25,000 deficit, with the goal of eliminating the deficit by the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

For some of you, these cuts may feel sudden or shocking. We hope that you will take time to acknowledge and process the emotions that they bring up, and we are offering opportunities to both share any feedback with congregational leaders and ask practical questions about the proposed budget, as well as other agenda items for the annual meeting.

We also know that we need to take a deeper and longer look at our congregation's staffing model, and that we need more time and input from the wider congregation to make that process work well. The X Team and Governing Board will launch a staffing alignment process early this fall, so please be on the lookout for opportunities to offer input on the future of our staffing model. We look forward to sharing results and plans for what's next in early 2026.

These cuts, while painful to propose, are the most faithful and strategic path forward we could find. These changes balance our financial realities with our ability to live our mission in the world and ensure that we can continue to thrive as a congregation long into the future.

With gratitude for your partnership in this ministry,

Your Fellowship X Team:

Rev. Christina Leone-Tracy, Co-Minister

Rev. Hannah Roberts Villnave, Co-Minister

Phyllis Schmitt, Director of Finance & Operations

### **Join us for more conversation...**

#### **For Parents, RE volunteers, and teens:**

- In-person: Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> from 11:30 am-12:30 pm at the Fellowship (**childcare provided with RSVP**)
- Virtual: Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup> from 5:00-6:00 pm on Zoom ([HERE](#))
- **RSVP for either by [CLICKING HERE](#) or calling the Fellowship office at 920-731-0849**

#### **For Everyone:**

- Annual Meeting Pre-Meeting-In person & on Zoom ([HERE](#)) on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 6:00 -7:30 pm
- Email [fvuufboard@fvuuf.org](mailto:fvuufboard@fvuuf.org) to ask questions to the Governing Board directly