



Unitarian Church of Montreal
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Unitarian Church of Montreal
Financial Commitment Campaign for the 2021 Budget
We Need Each Other!

October 25, 2020

- * Use this link to submit your form: <https://www.ucmtl.ca/2021-pledge-form>
- * Or use the attached form
- * Please complete and return it by November 15!

Dear UCM Family,

Thank you for being a part of the Unitarian Church of Montreal community. Your 2020 gifts came at a critical time, as we have been adapting our budget and operations during the pandemic.

We are reaching out to you now on the eve of our annual pledge campaign, asking you to pledge your support in 2021. These pledges allow our Board of Management to more accurately budget for the upcoming year, because they make up a large portion of our operational budget. Now, more than ever, your financial support is important to us as we navigate a time with so many unknowns. Help us to keep up our good work with friends and members of the Unitarian Church of Montreal, organizations in our city and the greater movement of UUs in the world.

This has been a difficult year!

We know that it has been a difficult time, and we anticipate these challenges to continue into 2021. The pandemic has hit many communities hard, including people in our UCM family. We've all had to make sacrifices and adaptations in this stressful time. We've been proud to help those in need within our own community, hold on to our staff, and increase our level of support and volunteering to the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal.

Our church building has been closed, but our virtual doors have been wide open.

Since the early days of the pandemic, we have prioritized the health and safety of our community and have followed public health guidelines carefully. The Board of Management recently struck two new task forces: one on health and safety, and one on making creative connections. We're working hard to ensure that we have opportunities to gather together, and that no one in our community is left behind.

We're still here for each other.

Rev. Diane has continued to provide steadfast leadership and heartfelt support in these trying times. The Caring Network has doubled their efforts – reaching over a hundred isolated individuals by phone and in person and with the delivery of care packages. The Board of Management initiated a computer exchange program to equip those who needed them. A UCM pen-pal project over the summer was also launched, and many groups have been meeting

online. Wednesday midday music, curated by Sandra Hunt, and the Phoenix Choir, led by Eleuthera Diconca-Lippert, have offered time for joyous reflection and expression.

Sundays hold us together.

Religious Explorations check-ins for UCM children and Sunday services open to all via Zoom have provided that weekly time of solace, comfort and even levity that we so desperately need in these times (remember the service where we all ended up dancing?). The virtual coffee hour allows us to make new friends and reconnect with others we care for. In these ways, we continue to live out our mission: welcoming and nurturing, inspiring and challenging, and taking action in the world.

And we're working hard behind the scenes.

We've been working to revamp our website, maintain our building and gardens, and connect with UUs around the world in the pandemic. Our newsletter, which is sent out weekly by email and also delivered once a month by mail to those who aren't online, keeps our community informed and supported.

Our physically distanced picnic in the park was the last time that many of us saw each other in person. We have been working on how we can coordinate other outdoor events once Montreal is no longer designated a red zone.

Here's how we've financially survived in 2020.

Special thanks to our administrator, Julie Golick, who researched our eligibility for federal grants. CEWS (the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy) filled some of the void left by the loss of church rental income after our building was closed. We are watching government announcements very carefully for other support measures available to the non-profit sector. We've been proud to keep all of our staff and contractors on in this time, providing income security to them and their families, and continuity of programming at the UCM.

If you can give, please do! If you can't, we're here to help.

We understand that you might be struggling with financial hardship, so please reach out to Rev. Diane if you need support through our emergency fund.

We plan to revisit pledges regularly over the coming year, to ensure that we can respond to any change in your capacity to give. If you cannot pledge at this time, please reach out to us when you can. Gifts of all sizes matter and do make a difference.

We wish everyone comfort and safe-keeping. Let us work together to ensure that our vibrant community stays engaged and connected in the year to come. Please complete your pledge form by November 15. You can find an online link at the beginning of this message, or you can complete and mail the attached form.

In solidarity and loving care,

Marlo Turner Ritchie, president
Barbara de Beaupré, stewardship