

Dear Unity Church Member / Friend:

We are sitting around the dining room table on a sultry August evening. Outside, a storm brews. We are safe and absorbed, as usual, in lively discussion:

How many canvassers do we need to reach about 700 families?

How do we reach those members and church school families who are currently not pledging?

How do we respectfully address those whose financial circumstances may constrain their giving this year?

How do we expand the base of our pledges, so that we don't continue to rely on a few families to provide the bulk of pledge dollars?

And so it goes. We grapple with the statistics and logistics of the upcoming canvass.

Barbara Hubbard crunches numbers, we talk about strategies, the timeline, and so forth. It doesn't take long, though, for us to get to the heart of why we are here:

How do we make financial support of our beloved church truly matter to everyone? How can we persuade all who participate in the life of the church to give as they are able? How do we communicate that supporting Unity and the work of the church must not be the luxury of the few? And how do we more effectively advocate for face-to-face talks with one another about our shared love for the church?

Each year, the Pledge Drive takes on a new theme. This year it comes from a popular UU anthem, *From This House to the World*. "From this house, to the world, we will go hand in hand. The way of peace, the way of freedom, the way of hope." It is a spirited melody with a message that resonates particularly well with those of us at Unity. Our church home is the "house" in which we both support and challenge one another to live out our values in the larger universe. While it is a place of spiritual comfort, a wellspring of ideas and a source of joy, it is also a place that asks us to take action together, to use our collective

energy and gifts to reach beyond the church walls.

As Pledge Team members we are constantly asking ourselves what it is that allows this church to be such an inspirational and fertile place. We talk about our staff and marvel at the talented individuals who are dedicated to this place, proven by the length of their tenures and quality of the work that they undertake with so much love. We want a budget that reflects our commitment to compensating our staff fairly.

Your Pledge Team sits at the table discussing all of this with passion, honesty and concern. We crack joke, eat delicious food, and share stories of our lives and families. It does not escape us that this is a wonderful metaphor for Unity: the dining table in our church “house,” a continuing source of strength and love, where everything can be talked about, where our hearts and spirits and bodies are replenished. **We are full of hope for the year and we invite you all to sit at this ever-expanding table and share this meal that replenishes and sustains us.**

In faith,

Your 2011 Pledge Team:



Lia Rivamonte



Chris Crosby-Schmidt



Dan Huelster