

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **We just had a Capital Campaign a few years ago; what gives?**

The last Reopening Readiness mini-Capital Campaign for \$275K in 2021 was to meet emergency needs such as an elevator repair, replacement of 4 HVAC machines, and repairing the women's bathroom, required to reopen the church grounds and building after being closed due to the pandemic. The 2023 campaign is more comprehensive and designed to allow us to carry out our congregation's newly-adopted vision and mission.

### **Why this Capital Campaign?**

After an intensive process of discernment, our congregation has just this year approved new mission, vision and covenant statements. We now need the resources to bring these statements to life, including building improvements to help us grow community, and facility modifications to reduce our environmental footprint. Since we have not had a Capital Campaign related to the grounds and facilities since adding substantially to the building size and configuration in the mid 1990's, we are also overdue on some maintenance items, modernization, flexibility and curb appeal.

### **Do we really need over \$2.4M worth of repairs?**

No, only a portion is related to deferred maintenance. The other areas of importance are related to our recently adopted congregational mission, ie. Building Intergenerational Community, Spiritual Growth Enhancement, Social and Racial Justice, Ecological Justice and serving as a UU Pillar Congregation in the Local Community.

### **Why is the amount needed to change the RE area and the church office so expensive?**

It is not just "rearranging" rooms; it includes moving the children's bathroom to a safer, more accessible location, adding a shower, adding a staff meeting room to the first floor, converting the storage room off the Fireside Room to another classroom, and the repurposing of the underused vestibule area near the current front door. These improvements will help us grow our congregation by meeting the needs of more and more young families, as well as maintain our ability to rent our space for day care during the week.

### **What's an example of "deferred maintenance"?**

The outside stucco walls have never been power washed to remove mold, or painted. It is expensive to do on a three-story building.

### **What is an example of improving "curb appeal"?**

Beyond cleaning and painting the outside stucco, our sign messaging is two 4X4 posts holding a 4X8 sheet of plywood with a banner tacked to it on a very busy street. We need to attract attention on busy Fannin Street with a modern digital sign that is easily programmable for messaging and includes a lot more detail on our programs and services. The Southmore side grounds are unappealing visually. Our entry gates to the front courtyard are rusting and need repainting. Improving these items helps signal a thriving congregation.

**I care most about Ecological Justice; what does the Capital Campaign cover in that area?**

Lowering our carbon footprint as a facility is well on its way due to a State PACE supported loan (more efficient HVAC; solar panels; thermally improved windows; LED lighting: etc.) The Capital Campaign includes paying off this loan early to save a large amount of money related to interest.

**Why is such a large sum of money needed now?**

Only a portion of the funds are related to maintenance of our church home. Other areas needing capital assistance are: a longer term parking solution, an appropriately sized building reserve fund, paying off the church's endowment loan, replacing very worn furniture, installing new playground equipment and shade for the children, etc.

**Do I need to continue my annual stewardship pledge while I am paying my capital campaign pledge?**

Our first priority is support for the operations and programs of the church. Capital gifts are in addition to the annual budget drive. This is what will allow our programs to fully blossom and to keep ours a welcoming congregation. Please prioritize your annual giving if you cannot give more than your annual pledge. Any assistance you can provide is appreciated and keep in mind that your commitment to the Capital Campaign can be paid in installments over three years.

**How do I consider a gift to the capital campaign?**

We are asking congregants to consider a transformational gift that will make it possible for our spiritual home to meet its vision for the future. A transformational gift can happen at all levels of giving and relates to your own financial circumstances. There are a range of gifts needed - **see the Gifts Table**. Please pledge and make a stretch gift that will be a legacy to what our congregation means to us and what we hope it will mean for future generations to come.

**What are the ways I can pay my pledge to the capital campaign?**

You can pay monthly, quarterly or yearly over 3 years, in a variety of ways. The church accepts gifts of stocks/securities, gifts made from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and you may be able to direct your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to the church and not have that count toward income, if the amount goes directly from your IRA to the church. If stock is given, the shares should be gifted to the church, and not sold prior to the gift, in order for capital gains taxes to be avoided by the donor.

**When do I have to decide on my pledge for the capital campaign?**

While the campaign pledge period is three years, the actual campaign to secure pledges is starting this fall and will wrap at the end of 2023. It is our goal to have all signed pledges in the church office by November 15.

**I have preferences as to the prioritization of projects paid for by the Capital Campaign funds. How do I make that known?**

Fill out the survey! The Board of Directors will be using that data, among other input, to prioritize and make decisions about the most critical projects.

Also, you are welcome to ask direct questions by email to [stewardship@firstuu.org](mailto:stewardship@firstuu.org)