**Unitarian Church of Montpelier**

**Budget Guidance for Church Year 2017-18**

The Finance Committee has started the process of preparing a proposed budget for the 2017 – 18 Church year, which starts July 1, 2017.

In our governance structure, the budget is guided by our mission statement and the priorities of the Congregation as articulated by the Board and Executive Team.

As you all know, our Mission Statement is:

***We welcome all as we build a loving community to nurture each person’s spiritual journey, serve human need, and protect the earth, our home.***

The Finance Committee has in the past several years asked those who prepare budgets to explain why any additional funds that are being requested are needed and what is hoped to be accomplished with the funding. We have also asked people to let us know how they believe any additional funds requested will help meet the Church Mission.

As you know a UCM 5-Year Strategic Plan, including a compilation of outcomes, action steps, and indicators of success was adopted last spring. Since there is a new focus this year on the 5 year strategic plan, the Finance Committee also hopes to receive information in the budget process that will identify how Committee and Staff activities and proposed funds will advance the vision statements in the Plan. This will be helpful in the budget drive process to encourage generosity and also create an understanding of the way the budget advances the Mission and goals of the Congregation as articulated in the Strategic Plan. The Plan can be found on the Church Web site at: https://ucmvt.org/about/governing-board/

**Timeframes and Submission Guidance**

Here are the highlights of this year’s budget submission timeframes and guidelines, which are similar to those that have been sent out in the recent past:

* The due date for submission of budget information is **Friday** **January 27, 2017.**
* If you as a committee chair, staff member, program or task force leader **do not need any increase in the amount budgeted for the current year, it will not be necessary to submit a request.** If I do not hear from you by January 27, we will use your current budget amount for next year. If you are uncertain as to the amount budgeted for the current year, it can be found in the May 2016 Annual Report at: <https://ucmvt.org/about/governing-board/annual-reports/>

It you don’t need as much as you currently have budgeted, please let us know how much you need. We are always very grateful for any budget reductions, no matter how modest.
* If you are anticipating a need for an increase in funds you will need to submit something by January 27, 2017. Please include the following:
	1. Let us know how much money is needed (the total amount, not just the increase over this year);
	2. An explanation of why it is needed and what you hope to **accomplish**. If there are increases/reductions in more than one part of your budget, please provide an explanation for each area reflecting an increase or change; and
	3. To the extent you are able, let us know how you believe the funds you are asking for will further the Church Mission and specific objectives set out in the Strategic Plan.
* It is not necessary to send requests related to staff compensation increases, as these are addressed by the Finance Committee and Executive Team.

It is best to send your information to me via email at: pwallacebro@gmail.com

Please let me know if you have any questions, thanks for your help, and have a good Holiday Season!

Paul Wallace-Brodeur, Chair

Finance Committee