**Unitarian Church of Montpelier**

**Budget Guidance for Church Year 2023-2024**

As we kick off a new annual budget cycle, this document will provide guidance for the proposed 2023 – 24 Church year budget, which starts July 1, 2023.

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.

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’s responsibility is to ensure both that the budget is a vehicle for achieving our mission and that the church operates in a fiscally sustainable manner. To achieve these dual objectives, those who prepare budgets are requested to provide explanations for any additional funds being requested and how the funding will help better serve the Church Mission and values.

A UCM 5-Year Strategic Plan, including a compilation of outcomes, action steps, and indicators of success was adopted in the February of 2016. There is an ongoing focus on the strategic plan, and the Finance Committee will use information provided in the budget process to ensure Committee and Staff activities and proposed funds will advance the vision statements in the Plan. This will help in the budget process to encourage generosity and 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/governing-board/>.

**Timeframes and Submission Guidance**

Here are this year’s key budget submission timeframes and guidelines, which are similar to prior years:

* The due date for submission of budget information is **Friday** **January 20, 2023**.
* If you as a committee chair, staff member, program or task force leader **do not require any increase or change in the amount budgeted for the current year, it will not be necessary to submit a request.** If we do not hear from you by January 20, 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 2022 Annual Report at: <https://ucmvt.org/annual-reports/>. If you can meet your needs with less than 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 a request by **January 20, 2022**. Please include the following:

* 1. Let us know how much money is requested (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. Please describe 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: **scottphess@gmail.com**

Please let me know if you have any questions, thanks for your help, and Happy New Year!

Scott Hess, Chair

Finance Committee