



Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

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*A spiritual
community striving
to make the world a
better place*

February 2010

Dear Members and Friends,

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We are closer now to the spring equinox than the winter solstice. Water trickles from beneath rapidly disappearing piles of snow and ice, and the late winter world pulses with energy and possibility. The energy outside reminds me of the revitalized strength within this spiritual community. It's especially poignant because for many, this past year has been an experience of digging deep and soul searching.

I've been inspired as I've witnessed congregation members who have actively listened with respect to divergent opinions, clearly stated their own, and focused on the greater good. As a result of your high level of engagement this year, all signs indicate that the vitality at the heart of this spiritual community is strong and rising. ERUUF is moving forward.

And when you know where you want to end up, it's easier to figure out how to get there. ERUUF's Ends Statements clearly spell out the difference that the fellowship's members intend to make within this community and the larger world. ERUUF's second End states, "*The people of ERUUF create and sustain a community of care, mutual respect, inclusiveness and love.*" It's abundantly evident that ERUUFians are energized, enthused, and eager to embrace new programs. This winter, Wednesday Connections, a six-week session of evening programs, has been attended by more than 100 adults and children. The Care Team is currently renewing outreach to elders, and the Social and Economic Justice Council is organizing an "in-reach" to discover which issues the people of ERUUF want to take action on together. This is just a small sample of some of the good things happening here.

In order to continue in these ways, a priority for this year's stewardship campaign is to raise funds in support of all this positive activity and more. Of course there are costs such as materials and campus maintenance. There is also the cost of affording ministers and staff to provide the inspiration, leadership and practical assistance that will support and help sustain this life changing, life enhancing activity.

Large congregations can expect to spend about 66% of their budget on personnel in order to achieve excellent programs. ERUUF currently spends a bit less than 60% on all personnel. The fellowship also has a long standing commitment to fair compensation, guidelines established by the UUA to help congregations and religious professionals achieve respectful working relationships with one another. As the congregation searches for a religious educator and prepares to search for settled ministers, this is the right time to reinvest in personnel and strengthen programs.

A second priority of this year's stewardship campaign is moving toward fair share support for larger organizations that help "*the people of ERUUF to live out their values in the world,*" ERUUF's third End. Durham CAN is a highly successful community organizing coalition that brings about much needed change for people in Durham who would otherwise have no voice. Similarly, the UUA has taken steps to make sure that our liberal religious voice is heard where it matters, and is currently reaching out to people who would join us if they only knew about us.

The UUA asks congregations to contribute in order to fund their research and development for congregational programs, and advocacy and public witness in our name. Currently, ERUUF contributes just a bit more than 1/3 of fair share. In the current cultural climate, it's more important than ever that religious liberal voices are heard in places where decisions are made, and that we put our faith into action in tangible ways that make a difference in communities. Moving in the direction of a fair share contribution to the UUA, even if it takes a couple stages to get there, and funding Durham CAN in ERUUF's budget are significant ways to do this.

Here at ERUUF the spirit of love is strong and growing. This time of transition that for some began with loss, sadness and uncertainty appears to be blossoming with new life. Everywhere I see a dynamic connection between faith and action, between love and service that's positive and rising. Collectively, our lives have been blessed with abundant resources. The choice of what to do with these resources is in our hands.

I am confident that money contributed here will be a significant investment in the future, one that will continue the work of transforming the hearts and minds of this fellowship's members and friends and also have a positive impact in the larger world. Please join me in making a generous financial commitment to this community that is seeking to ever more deeply engage in the shared ministry of spirit, service, justice and love.

In faith,

Rev. Deborah Cayer