Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is: New Ideas in Stewardship
Held January 29th at the UU Church of Akron, OH

Notes from the afternoon small group focusing on "The Ask"
Leaders: Rev. Chris Neilson & Rev. Renee Ruchotzke

General Comments about Asking for Money

- You are the agent of something bigger than yourself.
- You need to personally believe in the mission of the congregation
- Make your own stewardship-level pledge first
- Consider: What is the center from which you are making the ask?
    - Your own character
    - Your relationship with the other person and the congregation
    - As part of your covenantal relationship
    - Out of Stewardship and Fiduciary Responsibility
    - Your own authenticity
    - Transparency of leadership
- Start the conversation with your own personal "witness" about the mission
- You are inviting the other persons to be a part of something bigger than themselves
- If the person you are asking says "no," it is not a rejection of you personally
- Annual Pledge as a percentage of income
- One-to-One ask is not done every year
- Listen deeply to person you are asking
    - Note any concerns they might have
    - Follow through – pass on concerns to appropriate parties

Nuts and Bolts:

- Important to send monthly statements
- We need ways to share ideas for pledge campaign themes
- We need some pledge form samples / masters

Capital Campaigns:

- What kinds of projects will inspire future giving?
- How do we help to reduce anxiety about them?
    - Transparency!
    - Connect projects to mission
    - Pay attention to capacity-building that needs to accompany projects
        - Staff
        - Structure
        - Space
- Need one-to-one ask for capital gifts
- Ask for a specific gift
- It might be helpful to have small and manageable projects

Tips on how to get the word out:

- Ministers preach about stewardship more than once a year
- Throw a social event that includes a “pitch”
- Throw a “lead giver” event that includes the congregation’s leadership & minister
    - You can assume this group already has a high level of commitment
    - This group tends to be less anxious
    - Do include a fiduciary check-in to assure them their financial gifts are being used wisely
- Throw a “Speed Pledging” event using Appreciative Inquiry questions
- Different Generations respond differently:
    - WWII Generation
        - give out of duty
        - respond to providing a legacy
        - afternoon events (luncheons) work best
        - talk to this group about planned giving (wills)
    - Baby Boomers
        - Weekday evening events
        - Need to know where their money is going
    - GenXer’s
        - Give in order to “contribute” to mission
        - Make it an “evening out” with babysitting
        - Share examples of their peers who are engaged
        - Foster family & community connections
    - College/Twenties
        - Be careful not to “play” them – they want authenticity
        - They want to be treated with respect as adults
        - Are you serving them with programming?