

From the pulpit two Sundays ago, I spoke about the unique way that Unitarian Universalist congregations hold a vast theological diversity; UUs range from atheists to Buddhist practitioners to Christians to Jews and so many more. We have some other atypical qualities as well. Another way that we diverge from other religious groups is the independence and structure and funding of our congregations. We have, along with some other protestant groups, what is known as congregational polity.

What congregational polity means is that we determine our own bylaws and our own future. We self-govern and self-regulate. We choose our own ministers, our budget, the future of our communities. No central authority makes decisions for us or finances our operations. But this independence also means we self-fund. And as you know by now, we are in that time of year when we ask for your commitment to ensure that we can responsibly plan for the upcoming congregational year.

I have been reflecting a lot on the last 18 months of our partnership. The overwhelming feeling with which I come into this pledge season is GRATITUDE. USR is a healthy congregation, full of people deeply committed—financially, personally, and in so very many ways. Ours is a community that cares for each other, that tries its best to look to its own future and to the future of our shared liberal faith. We are a people trying hard to live our mission to transform ourselves and the world. We are growing and learning and full of opportunity because we start from a grounding that is healthy, committed and confident.

Not every congregation is healthy and vibrant in the ways that USR is. I am grateful for this place and for all of you. I feel lucky to be able to serve you and to serve with you. Thank you for the gift of a home in which to do my best ministerial work.

Along with my gratitude, I find in this season that I have a strong sense of the possibilities that are open to us as together we recommit ourselves to the work of USR. We can build on USR's history and accomplish great things together. I hope you'll join us in pledging your commitment to USR this spring.