



March 30, 2022

Growing Tomorrow, Together

This has been a year like no other in the history of UCV, navigating the uncertainty of virtual community during a period of ministerial transition. The resiliency of this community is evident in how well we are emerging from the challenges of the pandemic, bucking the trend of decline in most religious communities. UCV is a welcoming beacon of faith and hope that is full of energy and promise. Many new members and friends have found their way to the Vancouver Unitarians through our online services over the past couple of years, and the dedicated engagement of long-term members has kept the spirit and tradition of this community strong.

We have learned and continue to learn much about producing quality online and multi-platform worship and other programming. New and re-framed staff positions — Life Span Faith Development, Membership Outreach and Congregational Administration — are supporting and strengthening our UCV programs, services, and community. Together, we are building a solid, sustainable platform that is creative and responsive to the evolving needs of our community. UCV's staff have been invaluable this past year, and they are also a significant investment that has increased our operating costs, that requires increased giving from members and friends.

We are bravely moving ahead with the goals of this interim ministry time, embracing changes in governance, operations, and leadership. We are reviewing UCV history and examining our own systems and behaviours to address factors that contribute to oppressions within our own community in order to become more inclusive.

All of this has helped lay the foundation for a new future for the Vancouver Unitarians, filled with hope and energy. As we reopen and expand to meet new opportunities, that future is now.

This coming year, UCV will be searching for its next settled minister, who will begin in the summer of 2023. This search will be costly and time-consuming, and is a critically important next step in the life of UCV.

This final year of transition is a time to invest in creating a robust and fertile organization, prepared to begin a new partnership with your next minister. This is an opportunity to share your own vision for this community and be an integral part of this new beginning, this next chapter in the rich history of this congregation.

I am proud of what UCV has accomplished, and honoured to be with you as your interim minister during this time. I am deeply committed to Unitarian Universalism and to UCV, knowing in my Soul that the promise and practice of our faith tradition makes a difference in the world. My own practice for giving is to tithe 10% of my gross income over the year, divided between the congregation I am serving and other charities.

In 2021, I gave more than \$4000 to UCV. I am privileged to be able to give in ways that meet my values, as I believe we all are. We all have different levels and ways of giving. I know some cannot donate financially as I do, and I know that some can and do give more.

When you choose to give UCV, you are making a powerful statement about your values and an invaluable contribution to this community.

I see how you all care so deeply for UCV and the real-life impact that UCV has on individuals and the larger world community. I am asking you, if it is possible, to pledge or increase your existing pledge by 10% or as much as you are able to this year. With your generosity, you contribute to the fertile ground needed to grow the seeds of change into a beautiful and healthy garden.

With faith and a generous spirit,



Rev. Lara Cowtan

Interim Minister