

*Unitarian Universalist Congregational
Finance and Stewardship Resources*

**The Reverend Ian Evison, Director of Congregational Services
Central Midwest District of our Unitarian Universalist Association.**

The Reverend Kenneth Gordon Hurto, District Executive

Reverend Evison has been our “go to” guy in recent months on matters concerning the impact of the national recession on our congregations’ financial well being. Here, Ian outlines a variety of resources for our leaders to draw upon during these challenging times.

One of the most frequently asked question of late has been how to find online good resources to help Unitarian Universalist congregations with issues regarding finances. The bad news is that we have not yet gather a collection of what it best and most helpful for congregations on the subject. This is a rather odd thing given how hot a topic this is at the moment. I understand that Laurel Amabile, of the Unitarian Universalist Association Annual Program Fund is attempting to make a project of this and it will be a great service to us all when she completes this. While we wait for this, here below are my favorites (Note: my focus is online resources. For a good selection of what Unitarian Universalists are reading in paper on the subject visit our Unitarian Universalist Association bookstore, <http://www.uuabookstore.org/>):

The closest thing we have at the moment to a thoughtful collection of online materials for Unitarian Universalist congregations on money issues is the one maintained by **Wayne Clark**, our Unitarian Universalist Association Director of Congregational Stewardship Services, <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/congregationalstewardship/index.shtml>. This listing includes a group of resources by various authors that Wayne has been collecting, *Giving During Tough Economic Times*. While this is available various places, Wayne has been revising this and I recommend this spot as the place to go to most reliably go for the most current version, http://www.uua.org/documents/congservices/stewardship/tough_economy_giving.pdf. Wayne says that he is planning to post an updated version of some of these documents in the next week. Wayne’s own book is our current Unitarian Universalist “bible” on congregational stewardship: *Beyond Fundraising: A Complete Guide to Congregational Stewardship*. This is, alas, not available online but you can peruse it online thanks to google books, <http://books.google.com/books?id=5KNMdcTUyEC&dq=Clark+%22A+Complete+Guide+to+Congregational+Stewardship>

Serving Unitarian Universalists to Create Joyful Congregations Covenanting in Love & Faith
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1901 East Robinson Street; Suite 18 · Orlando, Florida 32803 · 407.894.2119 · http://www.floridadistrict.org/%22&printsec=frontcover&source=bn&hl=en&ei=boUHSovdGp2uMezusZgG&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4.

Laurel Amabile, Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association Annual Program Fund, has gathered a nice well-edited collection of materials to assist congregations with their own fundraising and also including resources about money and life, some focused on financial education for children and young adults, <http://www.uua.org/giving/annualprogram/119273.shtml>. Laurel has begun to sponsor online seminars for congregational leaders on stewardship and money. Transcripts of the online discussion are found at www.uua.org/giving/qa. Another resource, the *APF Quarterly*, features material about the Annual Program Fund and also features a wide range of content for congregational stewardship and fundraising, including tips, best practices, and resources for annual stewardship teams, religious educators, ministers, and lay leaders, www.uua.org/giving/annualprogram/51886.shtml.

At www.uua.org, the more or less **official entryway to Unitarian Universalist Association resources on the subject** is through the three topics of “*canvassing*,” “*fundraising*,” “*giving and generosity*” within the “*handpicked resources*” section, <http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/55644.shtml>. Right now these are a rather odd mix of congregational resources and material about the UUA’s own efforts to raise money. They are not presented with much sense of priority. Nobody has made any wise judgments about what might be most helpful to congregations. However, be diligent. If you scroll down on these lists, especially in the “articles” section there are a lot of good materials especially articles from the back issues of *Interconnections*, our excellent Unitarian Universalist Association resource publication.

For a more direct entrée into **Don Skinner’s collection of articles on financial issues** for congregations one needs to go to his listing in the archived, old Unitarian Universalist Association website, <http://archive.uua.org/interconnections/money/>. The tragedy here is that this list is no longer being kept up to date but this is overall our most substantial body of online material specifically aimed at helping UU congregations with money issues. Don Skinner says that he aims to be “relentlessly useful” and he is.

We have a good collection of **worship materials**. For this see, <http://www.uua.org/spirituallife/worshipweb/collections/troubledeconomy/index.shtml>. For those who might want to preach on the subject, your best bet is probably to search the internet for recent Unitarian Universalist sermons. Most of the best known Unitarian Universalist ministers post their sermons weekly. I personally believe that this current economic crisis is likely to lead us into some fundamental rethinking concerning our faith orientation and what it means to be a community of faith. For some very Unitarian Universalistfriendly materials on this my favorite spot is, Krista Tippet’s NRP collection, *Repossessing Virtue: Wise Voices on the Economic Crisis*, <http://speakingoffaith.publicradio.org/first-person/repossessing-virtue>.

A favorite Unitarian Universalist guru at the moment on the subject of money is **Mike Durall**, author of a number of books and consultant to many Unitarian Universalist congregations. His own website is www.vitalcongregations.com. (Good URL, huh?). Unfortunately, this does not contain many—or any—online resources. However, Mike has rather specialized in writing hardhitting consulting reports for congregations.

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Some congregations have had the courage to put these online and they give a flavor of his approach. See, for example, www.uunashua.org/gov/interim-rpt.pdf. I also got news last week that Ohio Meadville District had Mike as its keynote speaker at their district assembly and have placed a podcast of that online, <http://www.ohiomeadville.org/resources/omdpodcasts.html>. I believe we are on the verge of an explosion in the quantity and quality of online UU audio and video resources and this is a first hint of what is emerging.

Another Unitarian Universalist guru on congregations and money is **Dan Hotchkiss**, a Unitarian Universalist and a Senior Consultant at the Alban Institute. He very helpfully keeps up-to-date a list of his writings, including links to online versions of articles wherever they exist, <http://danhotchkiss.com/>.

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Ian S. Evison, Director of Congregational Services, Central Midwest District of the UUA. Thanks to all to contributed to creating this interim listing of online UU resources on finance and stewardship. May 12, 2009.

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