

Individual Fundraising for Staff Gifts

At Foothills Unitarian, we are committed to expressing appreciation for our staff in ways that are aligned with our values of equity, transparency, and shared responsibility. All staff members are compensated fairly for their time and talent, in alignment with our compensation philosophy and UUA salary guidelines.

To maintain clarity and integrity in our fundraising practices, **individual fundraising efforts—such as collecting cash or gifts from participants—for staff members are not permitted without prior approval** from the Executive Team or Board of Trustees.

Why This Matters:

- **Confusing Funding Narratives:** Informal gift collections may imply that staff compensation is dependent on individual generosity rather than on the church's structured and intentional funding through pledges and the operating budget.
- **Undermining Stewardship:** In some programs—such as the music ministry—we've seen participants who do not contribute to the church's general fund but are willing to give to staff-specific gift efforts. This creates an alternate giving channel that draws resources away from the shared stewardship that sustains the entire ministry.
- **Equity and Fairness:** Allowing informal collections for some staff roles and not others introduces inequity and can unintentionally create divisions or perceptions of favoritism.
- **Commitment to Fair Compensation:** Our staffing model is built on ensuring all employees are paid fairly for their work. When participants supplement staff pay through informal gifts, it can unintentionally signal that staff are underpaid or reliant on outside generosity, undermining our commitment to equity and professionalism.

Appropriate Ways to Show Appreciation:

- Personal notes, cards, or words of thanks are always welcome and meaningful.
- Celebrations organized by participants (without monetary collection) may be appropriate, with staff recognition as part of the program.
- In special circumstances—such as milestone anniversaries or significant personal events—**the Board of Trustees may authorize a formal staff appreciation campaign**, coordinated by the Executive Team to ensure alignment with overall stewardship and communication goals.