

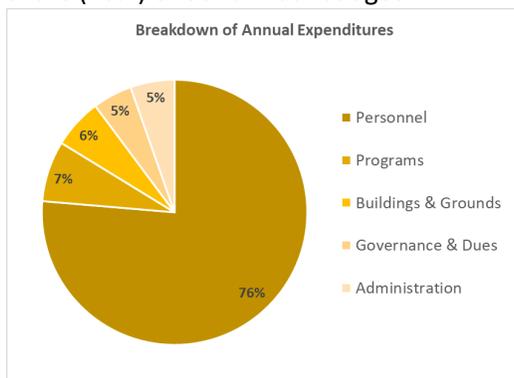
## Frequently Asked Pledging Questions

**What is a stewardship pledge?** Your pledge is a commitment to support First Parish and its mission.

**Why does First Parish ask us to make a pledge?** First Parish is a fully independent congregation and thus completely self-supporting. Every penny we receive supports our mission. We build our annual budget based on pledges, so your support is vital to our fiscal health.

**Who should pledge?** Every *Member* (someone who has signed the membership book) and *Friend* (someone who is not yet a member) is strongly encouraged to pledge. No pledge amount is too small; every dollar helps. Even if you are unable to pledge, please complete the card to help the stewardship team with follow-up calls.

**2022-23 by the Numbers** Pledges account for 53% of this year's projected income of \$387,000. The annual operating budget for First Parish is \$416,500. To close this year's revenue gap, we used our Contingency Fund of \$30,000. Personnel costs represent the lion's share (76%) of our annual budget.



**What does it mean to make a continuous or sustaining pledge?** We encourage members and

friends who care about the ongoing health of First Parish to make financial support for First Parish a regular, ongoing activity, with no expiration date. Our expenses, which include our program costs and minister and staff salaries are ongoing, too! Having a continuous pledge helps us keep things running smoothly and efficiently. All pledging and contributing members and friends of

First Parish will be contacted once each year to review their continuing pledge, but you don't need to do anything if there is no change to your pledge.

**How can I pay my pledge?** There are several options! The preferred method is through our website, [www.firstparishportland.org](http://www.firstparishportland.org) because it saves many staff and volunteer bookkeeping hours. Our website can accept one-time or recurring payments using a debit/credit card or checking account. You also can place a check in the offertory box during in-person services; mail a check to the church; or, sign up for automatic payments through your bank's bill pay. If you write a check, please write "pledge" in the memo line to help ensure it is applied toward your pledge rather than another fund. How frequently you pay is up to you – monthly, quarterly, or all at once.

**What if I need to change my pledge?** We know your circumstances might change, and your pledge can be changed at any time. If you have a financial hardship or if you leave First Parish, just contact the Finance Committee at [finance@firstparishportland.org](mailto:finance@firstparishportland.org) or the church office, 207-773-4757, to reduce or end your pledge. And if you get a salary increase or win the lottery, you can contact First Parish to increase your pledge!

**Can I donate stock, or from a Donor Advised Fund, or make a Qualified Charitable Distribution from my IRA?** Yes! Please check the box on your pledge card that you would like to make a gift in one of these ways. When the stewardship drive is over, we will send instructions on how to make your gift. Stock and mutual fund donations are processed through the UUA Stewardship & Development office. All other payment methods come direct to First Parish.

**How will I know how much I've paid toward my pledge?** Four times a year, the Finance Committee mails or emails a statement letting you know how much you've paid towards your pledge. You also can see your contribution history at any time when you login to the church directory. To get your directory login name/password, email our Membership Coordinator: [membership@firstparishportland.org](mailto:membership@firstparishportland.org).

