



FIRST UU
SAN ANTONIO

**Together,
For Tomorrow**



**Capital Campaign
View Book**

Chalice Lighting

If you have a chalice,
please do light it as
you enter this
conversation and the
discernment about
your gift.



Our story, our future

Sometimes history feels so far away, as if the stories we hear and tell about life a century ago, or more, are not real. As if these people of history did not also go to school, make dinner, make friends, confront illness, deal with loss, rush to meetings, pay their bills, work to forgive, and try to be better.

That is, until the day comes when you realize: I am a part of history. I am the one who will make choices that decades, or centuries, later other people will read about, and try to remember that I am real, too.

We are all a part of a great story.

We are the dreams of the Rev. Nicolai Schultz, circuit-riding minister of the 1890s who stirred up trouble and promise in hopes of liberal religion in Texas.

We are the hope for all the children who will be born in the 2050s who will still need a community where they can know they always belong no matter what. As we sit across from one another and share in these important conversations, let us remember that we are the people of history called to tend to the bright flame of our faith in our time.

Let us center ourselves in both the power and the responsibility of this moment and listen deeply to the bigger “why” that arises in us - the ways that we are each uniquely called to be a part of building Together, For Tomorrow in our time, and for the generations to come.



Our Mission

The Mission of the First UU of San Antonio is to:

Invite all into caring community

Inspire spiritual growth

Involve everyone in working for a peaceful, just and free world

Our Values

At First UU of San Antonio, we value:

- Loving **ACCEPTANCE** of one another
- The transcendent experience of **WONDER & AWE**
- Working for **JUSTICE** in the world
- **FREEDOM** of belief informed by reason
- Life-long **LEARNING and GROWTH**
- Connection to a caring **COMMUNITY**

Our Vision for Our Congregation in the World

At First UU Church of San Antonio:

- We stretch ourselves and encourage each other to new intellectual and spiritual heights. We care for each other in times of joy and sorrow.
- We love and accept children and youth for who they are. We nurture and stimulate them to grow into their fullest potential.
- We welcome visitors and seekers with radical hospitality. We connect with them to create relationships of caring, transformation and spiritual growth.
- We are a force for love and justice in the greater San Antonio community. We proactively engage others to work for the common good.
- We support and challenge fellow congregations in the UUA. We strive to live our UU principles and values with excellence.

From Our Minister

First UU Church San Antonio promotes a free religious faith. This intention is what truly sets us apart from all other religious groups. As Unitarian Universalists, we are free to pursue our own truth, with no creed, no hierarchy, no scripture — nothing more authoritative than our own conscience. We are a people of conscience. We are a people of commitment to each other and to our church.



Rev Mark Skrabacz

As a result, our congregation and our ministries are growing in deep and amazing ways both inside and outside our walls. Whether we are gathering our community together in worship and service, in connection and affirmation, or in celebration and consolation — our campus provides us a safe and harmonious space to do all these things and more.

In commitment to our Mission, our Values and our Vision, I am pleased to say that it is now more important than ever to care for our church campus and ensure that it provides a home for our free faith for the foreseeable future.

You will find in these pages our rich history. It is a story of our caring outreach, and our vision of a future that we will co-create to manifest lasting values and enduring love in this world.

You will also find in these pages a once-in-a-generation opportunity — to invest in First UU in a way that says our programs, our ministries and our people are the **best investment** any of us can make for ourselves and for our world.

We are each called now to give in a way that matches how much this work we do together matters to us. We can make the vision for our enhanced campus a reality. The Capital Campaign gives us the chance to serve the wider world by creating a Church that achieves our goal — **Together, For Tomorrow.**

In grateful service,

Rev. Mark Skrabacz



From Our Board

Beloved Community,

The Board of the First UU Church of San Antonio has created a Capital Campaign committee to help us move our congregation into the future. Your interests and ideas have inspired us to raise the capital that will allow us to improve our campus and install technology that will enhance our ministry and our reach into the community.

The campaign was kickstarted with a generous gift of \$300,000 from Charles and Virginia Bowden that was used to pay off the mortgage on our sanctuary. As a result of that gift, we are able to hire a second minister and have begun the search process to find the best candidate for our church.

Your wishes for improving our campus include:

- Upgrading our infrastructure so we are confident in our cooling and heating systems;
- Remodeling and enlarging the kitchen, including the installation of a dishwasher;
- Updating our 1960s vintage religious education buildings including energy efficient windows, doors, lighting, and bathrooms;
- Improving our outdoor space with better drainage, new fencing, new playground equipment, landscaping, and resurfacing and restriping the parking lot;
- Adding new technology will allow us to make our services and activities available to people inside the sanctuary and across the city, state, and world.

We used a 2018 Capital Funding Plan, commissioned by the Board at that time, for some of the baseline estimates included in our campaign. The report also recommended that we create and sustain a \$250,000 reserve fund that will allow us to maintain our campus with life cycle maintenance and repairs.

To accomplish all of this, our goal is to raise \$2.3 million. Our needs are great, but so are our members and friends. Together, with an eye on our future, we believe our congregation can do what it takes to make these dreams come true.

In community,

First UU Board of Trustees



From the Campaign Committee

*First UU lives its Mission to **Invite** all into a caring community, **Inspire** spiritual growth, and **Involve** everyone in working for a peaceful, just and free world, and seeks to continue to be a force for love and justice within our own beloved UU community as well as in the greater San Antonio Community.*

The pursuit of this goal holds many opportunities and challenges for us.

As part of a process to examine future opportunities and challenges, the First UU Board of Trustees in 2019 impaneled a committee to provide the Board with a plan that could help guide the Church to conduct a capital campaign in order to pursue future goals. That task was completed in the spring of 2020 in the form of a presentation to the Board and a written report.

The planning committee approached its task by reviewing the First UU's history of giving. The committee sought specific input through discussions with individual members of the Church Staff, input from Church members through a series of focus group discussions, and input from chairs of the Stewardship and Finance Committees. This information was combined with outside expert evaluations of our Church's needs found in the 2016 Next Steps Report and the 2018 Association Reserves Report to create a roadmap for moving forward. The conclusion of the capital campaign committee report was that First UU was able, willing, and ready to conduct a capital campaign that targeted specific needs as indicated in the report.

The subsequent timing of efforts to move ahead with a capital campaign were impacted by two very significant events. The first was the global COVID pandemic which has tested everyone's resolve and resiliency over the past year, a year in which First UU members and leadership demonstrated their commitment and creativity in sustaining our beloved community. The second significant event was the recent wonderful financial gift by Charles and Virginia Bowden for the future of First UU. This gift calls First UU to now look to our future and to move the mission of First UU ahead. It also serves as an anchor gift with which First UU can make a very significant step toward making our goals a reality through a capital campaign. Let us join together, work together, and share our time, talent and treasure to successfully take the next steps toward the future by joining in the First UU capital campaign of 2022!

Our History



November 25, 1945 – “Chaplain N.W. Lovely speaking at an informal meeting of the new First Unitarian Church of San Antonio, Texas, on the patio of the old Cos House where the church was organized last April. Mr. Lovely who is on terminal leave from the Army accepted a call to the San Antonio church that morning.” *San Antonio Express* clipping, November 29, 1945

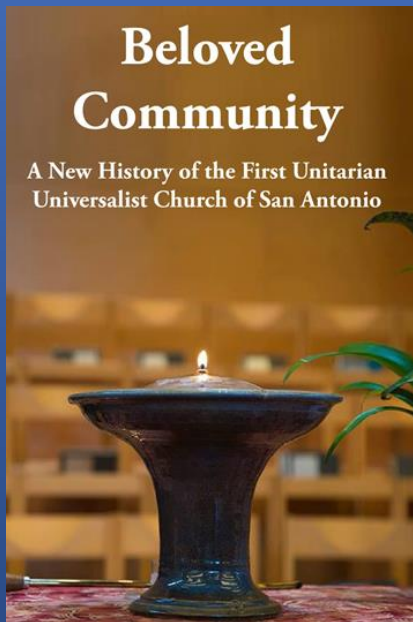
Progressive Pioneers



Photos, undated, circa 1946-47, of the First Unitarian Church of San Antonio's first permanent location at 217 Pershing Avenue. Source: UU Archives.

Beloved Community

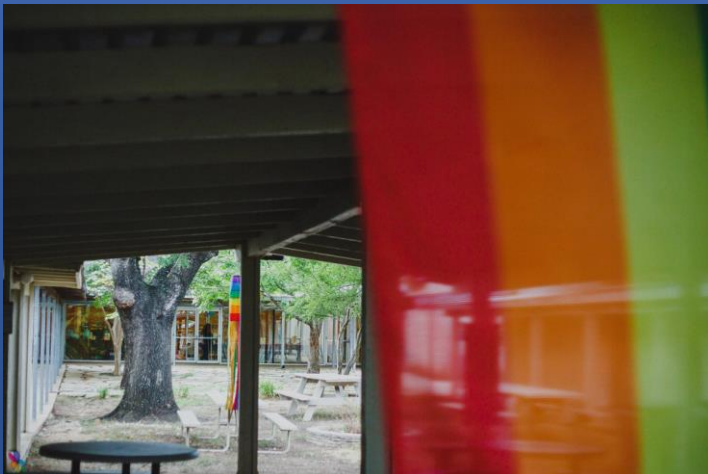
A New History of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio



Groundbreaking ceremony, April 1961. On left, Reverend Philip Schug with shovel; on right, Woody McGill, Louise Powell, and General Alden Waitt.

Our Ministries

LOVE IS OUR SACRAMENT,
SERVICE IS OUR PRAYER



Our Case

Together, For Tomorrow



It has been more than two decades since we moved into what many of us still consider the “new” sanctuary. Completing that building was the culmination of years of planning, capital contributions, and the willingness of a bank to give us a mortgage! First UU in these last 20 years has dramatically expanded its reach, with more members and friends, a bolder vision, and a wider and deeper impact in San Antonio than ever before. Before COVID, we were packing our campus with people – a wonderful problem to have! Our RE classes overflowed with children, we could barely fit everyone into the Fellowship Hall for FUUnd lunches, and numbers were rising so much on Sundays we talked of second services to make a more welcoming space for the steady stream of newcomers drawn to our beloved community. Once upon a time, the church was quiet between Sundays; but, before COVID, there was rarely a day without multiple gatherings - small groups, classes, meetings, service and justice projects for our community, conferences, music, and more.

Not only have we been growing in numbers, we have also been growing in the depth of our vision and our understanding of our place in our wider community. We have become known as a leading voice and presence on behalf of the marginalized and toward a more inclusive and just San Antonio - and beyond.

And yet, in the same two decades, our 1960’s era buildings, even our “new” sanctuary, have seen decline due to deferred maintenance and lack of modernization and energy efficiency efforts. Our campus kitchen no longer meets our needs, and our technology is patched together to “make it work”. We have learned during COVID that technologies can expand our reach and make our church more accessible.

The time is long overdue for us to enhance our campus and make it as bold and generous as our mission and vision. Charles and Virginia Bowden’s recent gift has retired our mortgage years early, freeing up money to expand our staff and make the addition of a second minister. Their open-hearted largesse has laid the foundation for us to undertake the task of creating a greater future for First UU! Even without new construction, we can accomplish improvements that will make our buildings more welcoming and energy efficient for the next two decades! Our renewed courtyard is a recent example of what we can achieve through a combination of imagination, planning and money – and we can do the same with the existing buildings on our campus. And, instead of resigning ourselves to a campus that limits the reach of our ministry, our collective vision and commitment can create a campus that expands our ability to live into our boldest and most generous imaginings!



It is time to build Together, For Tomorrow.



Our Vision is Bold but Targeted

- Our mortgage is paid off allowing us to expand Staff and hire a Second Minister
- Our buildings need Repairs/Remodeling and Energy Efficient Upgrades
- We need continuous Technology Upgrades
- Kitchen Renovation
- We need Capital Reserves for life-cycle replacements

Beyond the Campaign

- Seed satellite or new congregations
- New Construction/Expansion

What is a Pledge?

Your pledge is your promise to make a lasting financial gift to support our ministries and programs. *When you make your annual pledge, you tell us how much you will be contributing during our church fiscal year, June 1 through May 31.* Generally, we ask that you make your pledge annually because we make a new budget every year, and we need a sense of the money that will be available to support our programs and ministries.

Making a pledge is a part of the covenant that we share as a religious community, and it is the most tangible way that we are the church. Our generosity is what makes everything that we do together possible.

During this capital campaign, we ask all members and friends to continue or increase their current annual pledge through *the end of May 2025*. DO NOT decrement your annual pledge to give to the Capital Campaign. If you are not currently pledging to the church, we ask that this be your first step in this campaign. We ask all members to be on a path of giving 5% of your income per year.

How is a Capital Campaign different from an Annual Pledge Drive?

A Capital Campaign has certain features distinguishing it from annual giving:

- It is in response to a matter of SIGNIFICANT need, and therefore takes place ONLY when necessary.
- It invests its return in PERMANENT PROPERTIES.
- It seeks much LARGER AMOUNTS of money than a planned budget can meet.
- It schedules payments over a LONGER PERIOD of time: allowing donors to select a giving plan convenient for them.
- It requires a PLANNED and INSPIRATIONAL effort, often involving gifts of annuities, real estate, stocks, trusts, life insurance, IRAs, securities or other assets. Through it, many individuals come to realize the joy of deepening their faith and commitment to change in this world.

We believe in equal commitment in our giving, not equal giving

Capital Campaign Giving Guide

Campaign Gift Amount	3 Years		
	Annually 3 payments of:	Quarterly 12 payments of:	Monthly 36 payments of:
\$250,000	\$83,333	\$20,833	\$6,945
\$100,000	\$33,333	\$8,333	\$2,778
\$75,000	\$25,000	\$6,333	\$2,083
\$60,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	\$1667
\$50,000	\$16,667	\$4,167	\$1,389
\$40,000	\$13,333	\$3,333	\$1,111
\$30,000	\$10,000	\$2,500	\$833
\$25,000	\$8333	\$2083	\$695
\$15,000	\$5000	\$1,250	\$417
\$10,000	\$3334	\$834	\$278
\$7,500	\$2,500	\$625	\$209
\$5000	\$1667	\$417	\$139
\$2500	\$834	\$209	\$70
\$1000	\$333	\$84	\$28
\$500	\$167	\$42	\$14

How Much Should I Give?

There will be as many scenarios as we have members! But here are some key things to consider:

- Please do not contribute to the Capital Campaign by lowering your current operational budget “pledge”! We must maintain our annual operational budget to keep paying for items that keep the church going. Capital Campaign “commitments” are above and beyond a person’s annual pledge.
- Remember that Capital Campaign commitments can be spread out over 36 months.
- In most church Capital Campaigns, the usual commitment is between 1 and 4 times the amount of a person’s pledge.
- There are members in every congregation who can give large, “lead” or “anchor” gifts in the tens of thousands of dollars. We are lucky to have these generous people in our congregation, but 80% of the congregation cannot give in this way. That doesn’t mean everyone will be “stretching” a bit with their commitment. See the typical scenarios below:

Congregant Family A makes a standard \$1200/year stewardship pledge which they pay \$100/month by automatic withdrawal from their family checking account. They have decided to make a Capital Campaign Commitment of 2X their pledge or \$2400, and spread the payments out over 36 months, and have the payment taken every month like their pledge. Starting in January 2023, a total of \$167 will go to the church.

Pledge for the Operational Budget - $\$1200/12 = \$100/\text{month}$

Capital Campaign Commitment - $\$2400/36 = \$67/\text{month}$

Total gift to the church per month would be \$167/month

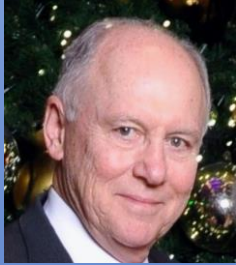
Congregant Family B is also pledging \$100 per month to the church, but after discussing their finances decided to also make a \$100 per month commitment to the Capital Campaign. Beginning January 2023, a total of \$200 will go to the church to cover both their pledge and Capital Campaign Commitment.

Congregant Family C makes a \$600 annual pledge and normally writes one lump sum check at the beginning of the year. They want to increase their pledge amount next year to \$700. After talking, the family, which is relatively new to the church, believes they can commit to a \$5000 CC commitment and spread that out over 36 months. They will continue to make their pledge payment in a lump sum at the beginning of the year but will make monthly CC payments - $\$5000/36 = \$139/\text{month}$.

Your Capital Campaign Team



Dorothy Wallace



David Ringer



Tina Solis



Carolyn Skrabacz



Troy Peters



April Chase



Alan Chase

Your Capital Campaign Team is eager to hear from you!

We are eager to speak with you and meet with you to answer your questions and talk about your potential gift. Contact us by phone, email, or schedule an in-person visit.

capitalcampaign@uusat.org



Closing Reflection



Gratitude.

It's a simple word, but it means so much.

We are grateful for our members and staff, who are the reason our church continues to be a Beacon on the Hill.

We are grateful for the dedicated volunteers who do much of the work of the church. We are grateful for those who gift us with their talents.

And we are grateful for those whose annual pledges and other donations fund the work of First UU San Antonio.

In the same way that our combined efforts change lives in our church and our community, our capital campaign will combine our contributions to make a far greater impact than each of us could make alone. Our collective generosity will help us meet the needs of our church in ways that will resonate for decades to come.

Our capital campaign will use our collective power and wisdom to shape the future of our church. And this is your opportunity to have a hand in that future.

Thank you for answering the call and being a part of building Together, for Tomorrow!