

First Unitarian Universalist Church Columbus, Ohio	Policies and Procedures
Chapter: VI. Justice Action Ministry	Source: Justice Action Ministry
Title: JAM Budget Policy	
Original Approved by Board of Trustees; Revision Approved by Coordinating Team	Original Approval Date: 08/26/09 Revision Approval Date: 06/28/17
Original Effective Date: 08/26/09; Effective Date of Most Recent Revision: 06/28/17	Date of Last Review: 06-28-17

I. Background and Purpose

In 1996, the church established, by congregational vote, a monthly “second collection” to support social justice outreach activities, including both activist and direct service work. In 2012, again by congregational vote, the church replaced the second collection, with a defined amount (2% of collected pledges) to be contributed directly from the church budget each year.

Beginning in fiscal year 2017, the Board agreed to establish a Share-the-Plate program, in which all Sunday service collections are to be divided evenly between the church and social justice projects, the latter to be chosen each year by congregational vote at the annual meeting. Money collected through the Share-the-Plate program is not part of the JAM budget, but is given directly to the organizations chosen by congregational vote (see the Share-the-Plate Policy). JAM may, however, decide that a contribution made through the Share-the-Plate program suffices to fulfill the amount JAM otherwise budgeted for a cash-only contribution to the recipient, thus making additional funds available to JAM for other projects.

Supported projects and activities may include large and far-reaching local projects chosen by congregational vote (e.g., B.R.E.A.D.), national and international organizations with historical and ongoing ties to UUA and its Principles and Purposes (e.g., UUSC), and other projects, both systemic and direct service, supported locally by JAM and sustained by the volunteer efforts of members and friends of this church (e.g., Faith Mission and YWCA Shelter dinners, Clintonville-Beechwold Community Resource Center, NARAL, RESULTS, and several others).

II. Method

1. In the annual operating budget plan, two percent of the estimated amount of collectible pledges will be budgeted for JAM's activities.
2. Contributions to the Share-the Plate Collection are to be counted in accordance with the policies established for the regular Sunday offering. One-half of each collection is to be sent monthly to a specified organization, with the exception of the July and August collections, which will be combined. Organizations that are to receive Share-the-Plate contributions are chosen annually by congregational vote. (See Share-the-Plate Policy).
3. Revenues from JAM programs and activities (for example, Fair Trade coffee sales), are to be identified as JAM program-related revenues with a related expense line under JAM. Direct donations to specific JAM projects (e.g., Feed My Sheep) are understood to be a passthrough contribution to the project. Direct donations to JAM generally are added to the JAM restricted fund in accordance with the intent of the donor. The exact manner of implementation of this method is left to the discretion of the Director of Administration.

III. JAM Internal Procedures

1. JAM disburses funds as follows:
 - (a) Payment of dues for congregationally endorsed organizations (for example, B.R.E.A.D and IACO).
 - (b) Support of a wide range of ongoing projects approved by JAM that engage significant volunteer participation within the congregation. These activities typically serve a variety of purposes, including direct service, social activism, and education about social justice issues; they may be local, national, or global in scope.
 - (c) Support of new projects proposed by members or friends of the Church that embody the Principles and Purposes of UUA and First UU and that engage or have the clear potential to engage the interest, support, and participation of the congregation.
 - (d) Support for occasional, periodic, or one-time activities or events that are likely to generate interest in social justice issues or provide important information about them.

(e) Provision of emergency funds for unanticipated needs within or outside the Church community (e.g., disaster relief, legal defense funds).

2. JAM provides an annual report to the congregation detailing the collection and disbursement of funds.

3. The JAM Team Leader must ensure each month that the projected allocation of funds does not exceed the projected income from the 2% allocation of collected pledges and the share-the-plate collection. Projections are made on the basis of a comparison with the collections of previous years.

4. If revenue from pledge collections and the shared-plate collection begins to decrease over several months (as determined by comparison with previous years), support of various projects, as determined by JAM, must be decreased. However, commitments to Board-endorsed or congregationally endorsed projects must be the first funding priority. These are limited to B.R.E.A.D. and the line-item contribution to UUSC, which is a part of the larger church budget, but this rule would apply to any church-wide projects endorsed by the Board or by congregational vote in the future. Share-the-Plate contributions are intended to supplement (not replace) the 2% collected pledge allocation; JAM may reduce its monetary contribution to an organization in accordance with the amount collected specifically for that organization through Share-the-Plate, but Share-the-Plate donations go directly to the organizations selected by congregational vote. (See Share-the-Plate Policy.)

5. If sufficient funds are available and projected to continue, JAM may increase support of ongoing projects and may consider support of additional proposals submitted to it for consideration. Proposal forms may be found [on the website](#) in Word or PDF format or in the workroom in paper form. A sample blank form is included with the “JAM Project Funding Policy.”

6. JAM is expected to respond to social justice issues that may arise after JAM has concluded its program funding decisions for the fiscal year, subject to availability of funds (including the JAM restricted fund).