

First Parish in Concord - Standing Committee
7.5% Social Action Funding - Comparison Chart
Prepared in Preparation for a Congregational Vote on June 10, 2018

Current 7.5% Policy: *First Parish shall provide 7.5% of the annual pledge receipts in a fiscal year for Social Action grants, activities and support, as approved at the June 9, 1996 annual meeting.*

Standing Committee Recommended Policy: *Annual budgeting will reflect the importance of the pillars of our ministry: music, pastoral care, religious education, social action and worship. Budgeting priorities will align with the First Parish in Concord Mission Statement.*

Mission Statement: *First Parish is a welcoming Unitarian Universalist congregation that seeks ways to deepen spiritually, build community, and make a positive difference in the worlds*

SOCIAL ACTION FUNDING

CURRENT MODEL	PROPOSED MODEL
Supports FP mission statement to “make a positive difference in the world.”	Supports FP mission statement to “make a positive difference in the world.”
Coordinator is now hired and supervised by Senior Minister.	Coordinator is now hired and supervised by Senior Minister.
<p>7.5% of <i>annual pledges*</i> is set aside for social action.</p> <p><small>*Some parishioners give yearly <i>gifts</i> to FP, rather than pledges. These gifts go exclusively to the church and are not counted toward 7.5% allocation.</small></p>	<p>Social action spending is funded from within FP yearly budget, similar to other pillars of pastoral care, worship, music and religious education. SAC Coordinator has a budget used to support a wide range of FP social action activities.</p>
<p>3.37% of 7.5% allocated each year pays for salary of Social Action Coordinator* (Zach Roe). Additional costs associated with coordinator’s benefits are paid from regular church budget.</p> <p><small>*The Social Action Council (SAC) decided in 2006 to use a portion of the 7.5% to fund a part-time administrative position, with the hope that salary would be absorbed within the regular church budget within 4 years. The church only had sufficient funds to absorb that position for a few years.</small></p>	<p>Both coordinator’s salary AND benefits are paid out of the regular church budget.</p>
<p>By tradition, <i>most</i> of remaining 4.13%* of the social action 7.5% is distributed yearly <i>exclusively</i> through grants (ranging from \$250-15,000) to several dozen non-profit groups.</p> <p>Grant applications, which must be sponsored by an FP member, are submitted to and awarded by a Grants Committee (based on publicly available criteria), under SAC direction.</p> <p><small>*7.5 minus 3.37 for salary</small></p>	<p>Social action funds are used to support a range of social action activities, which may encompass some or all of the following: grants, matching funds, all-Parish social action events, transportation to social action events, microfinance loans, and other social action interests identified by groups within the congregation.</p>

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<p>Many worthwhile organizations have benefited from grants including OpenTable, Common Cathedral, Jericho Road, UUSC, UUUM, UUCSJ. Many smaller grants support non-profits lacking strong funding.</p>	<p>Worthwhile organizations, large and small, continue to receive support from First Parish, though not necessarily in the form of regular, annual grants.</p>
<p>SAC has maintained a reserve fund (accumulated unspent funds from yearly 7.5% allocation) to support emergency relief efforts (like hurricanes and floods).</p>	<p>When emergencies occur, FP solicits parishioners directly for donations to support relief efforts. No reserve fund is maintained.</p>
<p>By tradition, spending decisions fall to SAC, which follows the guiding principle that all 7.5% funds (<i>except</i> Coordinator’s salary) must be spent <i>outside the church</i>, rather than supporting parishioner activities.</p>	<p>Spending decisions fall to Social Action Coordinator and Senior Minister, based on input from SAC Board and parishioners.*</p> <p>*The Senior Minister and Coordinator are currently in discussion with members of the SAC Board about a SAC-proposed <i>Flexible Hybrid Model for SAC Giving</i>.</p>
<p>By tradition, SAC is not accountable to any staff member for its spending decisions.</p>	<p>Coordinator is accountable to Senior Minister for spending decisions.</p>
<p>7.5% allocation represents only a portion of the <i>total</i> money FP gives each year toward social action causes. Other programs like our partner church program and Funderberg Scholars raise funds separately. For example, in 2015, the SAC Board estimated total social action spending at First Parish at \$181,316, of which \$66,000 came from 7.5%, part of which was used for Coordinator’s salary. (SAC Report 2015)</p>	<p>Depending on pledges, the expectation is that <i>total</i> FP support for social action remains at the same level or increases.</p>