



## The Congregational Church of Middlebury, UCC

30 North Pleasant Street, Middlebury, VT 05753   midducc.org   office@midducc.org

October, 2025

Dear Church,

Since returning to church from a three-month sabbatical, I have been swept up by the energy in this place. There is a glorious hum on Sunday mornings when we gather for worship. There are new and renewed levels of engagement in every area of our congregational life. There is something happening here! I thank God for that—I thank God for you.

The work of a church is work shared. And I give thanks for the gifts you bring to our Boards, Committees, and Teams; the loving attention you give to our children in the Nursery, Church School classrooms, and rooms of youth; the inspired music you make on Sunday mornings; the care you show one another; and, the hands you lend to our neighbors in the wider community. I am also grateful for your financial commitments that support our shared ministry.

When a congregation like ours, with about 400 members, sets a stewardship goal of \$510,000, the importance of each pledge comes into clearer view. 93% of our church's annual budget comes from us, the members and friends of MiddUCC. So, it is not campaign-speak to say "every pledge matters." The only way we will reach our goal is by each of us giving as we are able.

The funds we raise together will contribute to our worship life, our educational programming, and our outreach. Our pledges will also enable us to be good stewards of our historic church building and its addition.

This year's Stewardship booklet tells this story in beautiful and helpful ways. I am grateful for the Stewardship Team's excellent work in recent months. Frankly, to return from sabbatical and to find the following pages near completion was not only a gift to me but a reflection of the Team's talent and the congregation's vitality.

I invite you to peruse the following pages and prayerfully consider your pledge. The 2026 Budget reflects a 3% increase from the current year, so whether you are pledging for the first time or continuing your financial support of our church, please know how much I appreciate your contributions. And, of course, if you are unable to make a pledge at this time, I want to thank you in advance for bringing your heart and mind and time to the ministries we share.

Thank you for every gift you bring to our congregation's extravagant welcome, spiritual nurture, and loving service.

Peace,

Pastor Andy