



# ACTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

12 Concord Rd. Acton, MA 01720

## Acton Congregational Church's Annual Appeal for the 2025 Budget

*"Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action" – 1 John 3:18*

Dear Members and Friends,

For most of us, our lives are crowded with worries and stress as we juggle the responsibilities and joys of family and the ever-changing world of work. Our fellowship community, Acton Congregational Church, creates warm and open places where we can find inspiration, celebration, solace, comfort, friendship, love, and a deepened faith. ACC has risen to the challenge of national changes in spirituality and commitment to religious institutions. As a progressive and generous congregation, it has undertaken to live God's love both within its own pews and beyond in the surrounding community.

### **Our Challenges**

Like our lives outside the Church, there are tangible costs to creating this community of kindness, friendship, and support. Creating thoughtful and beautiful worship services, planning and providing supportive youth and adult programs, offering a rich and robust music ministry, being a good community citizen through charitable giving, and providing a means for regular fellowship opportunities, all come at an ever-increasing monetary investment as our Church, like you, feels the ups and downs of the economy and an increase in everyday costs. ACC relies on congregational gifts to support services, programs, staff, and facility maintenance and upkeep.

### **Why We Need Your Support**

Like everything in our Church, we are stronger when we all lend our support and participate in our spiritual community together. Even modest contributions can help us meet our financial needs. As our membership evolves, we have an even greater need for new donations from first-time donors and generous pledge increases from our kind, consistent supporters.

Despite the careful stewardship and frugal spending of your Trustees and a level-funding of 2025 programs, the accumulated effects of inflation, estimated to have increased by 22% since 2020, are taking its toll on Church funds. The Trustees have carefully determined a 2025 Stewardship campaign goal of \$485,000, a 5% increase over our projected 2024 income. Their goal includes the Local Ministries and Missions and Outreach portions of ACC's budget. Even with this ambitious target, adjustments will need to be made in operating expenses and a portion of our reserve funds will need to be expended.

In addition, many Churches fund their activities through large endowments. Acton Congregational Church has always funded its activities through pledges by our members. Together, we create, engage, and invest in the life of our Church, shaping it through our participation in both service and support.

### **Our Annual Appeal**

We are kicking off our annual appeal to fund our 2025 commitments a little early this year. We hope to complete our Stewardship campaign by November 17, 2024. We undertake a pledge drive each year, so that the Trustees may better understand our financial situation for the coming year. Making and fulfilling an annual pledge for our Church allows us to more accurately plan for our offerings and provide a realistic budget for your consideration at the Annual Meeting in January.

Please prayerfully consider making a pledge this year that is an amount that is right for you and consider growing your pledge each giving year. While not everyone can make this commitment, some individuals set a goal of giving 10% of their annual income. Every contribution is meaningful and helpful, so give as you see appropriate and consider the impact that your faith community has on your life. Whether you are a first-time pledger or have been contributing for years, please refer to the FAQ's included in this packet for deeper insights on Christian generosity, as well as practical information on pledging.

### **How to Make Your 2025 Stewardship Commitment**

The options for submitting your 2025 Pledge Card include:

- Drop it in the Pledge Card Box on the Opportunity Table at the back of the Sanctuary or bring it with you, to add to the collection plate any time before November 17, 2024.
- Mail it to: Acton Congregational Church, 12 Concord Road, Acton MA 01720, Care of 2025 Annual Appeal.
- Take a picture of your completed Pledge Card and email it to [finance@actonc.org](mailto:finance@actonc.org).
- Use one of our many methods of digital donation by visiting our website at [actonc.org](http://actonc.org).

Donations of stocks and equities are also welcome. Please contact the Church Office for further guidance on how to contribute investments.

We encourage everyone who is making a financial commitment to consider electronic giving. Signup is done on our website at [www.actonc.org](http://www.actonc.org). Click on "Donations," then "Online Giving." So that the church may record your pledge, please fill out the enclosed pledge card even when giving electronically. If you would like assistance, please contact the Church office.

### **What's Happening Next**

We are excited to announce that our annual appeal will include a special service dedicated to Christian Stewardship on October 20, 2024. This year, our Stewardship Sunday Service will be paired with a celebratory harvest dinner that evening. Please plan to join us on October 20<sup>th</sup> to support our annual fund!

### **The Impact You Make**

When you support our church financially, dollars become ministry and through ministry we know that God changes lives. The enclosed brochure explains our budget by bringing it to life with stories of our faith in action and God's love at work.

With heartfelt thanks,



Janette Blackburn, Church Moderator



Tom Gillispie, Vice Moderator



Rev. Paulo Franca, Senior Minister

Enclosed: Pledge Card