

MidAmerica Region Chalice Lighters Ambassador Packet



Chalice Lighters Mission

To extend Unitarian Universalist principles and faith by promoting growth of our congregations by walking together in religious covenant expressed by a generosity of resources and spirit.

Chalice Lighters Vision

To provide grants for congregational growth initiatives that hold the greatest promise of success and potential for the strongest long term impact.



MidAmerica Region UUA

www.midamericauua.org

midamerica@uua.org

312-636-9724



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Evanston IL, 2014



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ambassador Role	4
Packet Purpose	4
New Ambassadors	4
Experienced Ambassadors	4
What Chalice Lighters Do	5
Who May Apply	5
How Grants are Awarded	5
How Chalice Lighters Contribute	5
Timelines	5
Overview	6
Plan CL Drives	6
Conduct CL Drives	6
Follow Up	7
Engage Support	8
Publicize	8
Ask	8
Sample Articles for a Kickoff	11
Sample Article 1	11
Sample Article 2	12
The Chalice Lighter Program Makes a Difference	12
Sample Article 3	13
Chalice Lighter Program: The Details	13
Sample Articles for Ongoing Promotion	14
Sample Article 4: Award Granted	14
Chalice Lighters Grant a Wish for (Church)	14
Sample Article 5: Welcome New Members	14
Welcome New Chalice Lighters	14
MidAmerica Region Chalice Lighters Committee 2013-14	16



INTRODUCTION

AMBASSADOR ROLE

You, as a Chalice Lighter Ambassador are the most important part of the Chalice Lighter program because you are the one who directly recruits others to join the Chalice Lighter community. Thank you! Ambassadors orchestrate the process that attracts new members; you serve as advocates for a program that expands Unitarian Universalism within our Region; you ask other members of your congregation to be Chalice Lighters

PACKET PURPOSE

This packet is intended to provide guidelines and ideas to new and experienced Chalice Lighter Ambassadors. The Chalice Lighter Committee shares the following procedures with you because we have seen them work.

WHAT AMBASSADORS SHOULD KNOW

NEW AMBASSADORS

If you are a new Chalice Lighter Ambassador, we encourage you to:

- Review this packet in detail
- Talk to your minister, lay leaders, or other knowledgeable people about the history of the Chalice Lighter program in your congregation;
- Go to the MidAmerica Chalice Lighter web site <http://www.midamericauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters> to educate yourself for call the Region office at (312) 636-9724.

EXPERIENCED AMBASSADORS

Even if you are an experienced Chalice Lighter Ambassador, we recommend that you review this packet in detail. The revisions made in the fall of 2013 provide new information and good ideas that you should know about. Check the web site <http://www.midamericauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters> frequently so you can stay current with what is happening.



HOW THE CHALICE LIGHTER PROGRAM WORKS

WHAT CHALICE LIGHTERS DO

Chalice Lighters support UU congregations throughout the MidAmerica Region which want to actively increase their membership. Chalice Lighters are individuals who commit to donating a specific amount of money three times a year to support a worthwhile congregational project.

WHO MAY APPLY

Any congregation in the MidAmerica Region that has well-thought-out plans for growth and has made a commitment to the Region and the UUA through dues or financial support is eligible to apply for a Chalice Lighter grant. Congregations submit an application for a Chalice Lighter award for projects that cannot be funded through their operating budget or capital campaigns. The project must be in one of the following categories:

1. Enlarging or improving their building space or buying property;
2. Increasing professional staff;
3. Implementing publicity or public outreach programs;
4. Starting new congregations

HOW GRANTS ARE AWARDED

An independent committee (the Chalice Lighter Committee) meets three times a year to decide, based on published guidelines, which of the congregations that have submitted applications for that Call will receive grants. After all contributions that are received for that Call are processed by the Region Office, a check for the amount requested or 95% of the total received, whichever is smaller, is sent to the recipient congregation; 5% is retained for administrative costs (chiefly printing and mailing the Chalice Lighter Call Letters). Thanks to the generosity of our Chalice Lighters, in excess of \$100,000 has been awarded in recent calls.

HOW CHALICE LIGHTERS CONTRIBUTE

Three times a year, Chalice Lighters receive a letter telling them which congregations have been chosen to receive grants. The letter includes a "call" for a contribution to be sent in an enclosed return envelope and information on donating online. The entire process is called "the Call."

Each Chalice Lighter writes a check or donates online for their pre-committed amount and returns it to the Region office. Donations can be made at the following suggested levels:

Believer	\$ 20
Builder	\$ 50
Benefactor	\$100
Beacon	\$250

TIMELINES

	Fall	Winter	Spring
Applications Due	August 15	November 15	February 15
Call Mailed	September 15	December 15	March 15
Call Ends	December 1	March 1	June 1



WHAT AMBASSADORS DO

OVERVIEW

The primary responsibility of the CL Ambassador is to plan and conduct Chalice Lighter Membership Drives for your congregation. Consult with your minister or service committee to pick one or two dates during the church year to hold a service that highlights the Chalice Lighter program

PLAN CL DRIVES

- For the date(s) chosen, request to put an article in your newsletter three months in a row. If you can't, try getting something in the Order of Service or your emailed announcements (examples are in Appendix B of this packet).
 - At least one month in advance, order stickers and/or request the loan of a tri-fold display from the Region office.
 - A printable brochure is available at http://midamericauua.org/resources/document-categories/doc_download/169-brochure-2013-rev-4 – print enough to hand out on your Chalice Lighter Sunday. If your congregation does not have access to a color printer, the Region office can mail a small quantity of printed brochures. Please request them at least a month in advance.
 - For the month you are having Chalice Lighter Sunday, ask your minister or the appropriate lay leader to write a newsletter article in support of the program. Give them examples from this packet.
 - The Sunday before and/or the Sunday of your Chalice Lighter Sunday, tell people about your commitment and why you are an ambassador (a testimonial). Consider adding an insert or mentioning it in the Order of Service.
 - The Sunday of your Drive, arrange for a Chalice Lighter brochure in each order of service.
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CONDUCT CL DRIVES

- During Coffee Hour, ask people to become Chalice Lighters. Answer any questions they have about the program.
 - Request that people fill out the brochure form (original or copies) and give to you or to fill in the online form. Be prepared to give them an extra copy to take home if they so request (to show a partner or for their records.)
 - If some people want time to decide whether to participate or the amount to give, take down their names, phone numbers and addresses; let them know the date by which to mail it to MidAmerica or complete the online form (before the next Call begins – see Timeline above). Follow up with them about a week before the deadline. Often, people want to participate but get busy or forget.
 - For those who have chosen to participate, add them to your list of Chalice Lighters. You will need three copies of this list:
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- One for your records as Ambassador;
 - One for your congregation's administrator so there is a record on site;
 - One for the Region office.
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FOLLOW UP

- Send or email your updated list of Chalice Lighters, as well as the complete sign-up forms from the brochure, to the Region office. Be sure to include the full name of your congregation, the city and state in which it located and your name and contact information.
- Contact the MidAmerica Chalice Lighter Committee or Region office with the results of your recruitment campaign. Tell us what worked and what didn't. You may have run into some roadblocks we can help you with, or used an idea which we can share with others.
- Submit an article in the church newsletter about new Chalice Lighters and the numbers of returning supporters.

Let the Region office know about your experience and ideas that have worked for you:

Phone: 312-636-9724
Email: midamerica@uua.org
Web Site: www.midamericauua.org
Address: MidAmerica Region, UUA
2355 Fairview Ave. #312
Roseville, MN 55113



PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

ENGAGE SUPPORT

- Work with your minister/worship committee to promote a Chalice Lighters Sunday.
- Enlist the support of your Board and other committee leaders to build enthusiasm for the Chalice Lighters Program and the purpose it serves.

PUBLICIZE

- For each call – Fall, Winter, and Spring – make a Sunday morning announcement and put an article or short notice in your newsletter and orders of service for two or three weeks in a row. This reminds people that the program is active and dynamic.
- Give a “pulpit editorial.” This is a 2-3 minute “Why I am a Chalice Lighter” speech. (Clear it with your minister first.) Have a clipboard and pen handy for coffee hour so people can sign up.
- Hang up the Chalice Lighter poster in a prominent place.
- The Region has promotional materials – brochures, posters and stickers/ribbons – that you can obtain for your drives. There is no charge for these materials and they may be ordered by calling or emailing the Region office.
- Place stickers/ribbons on the name tags of all Chalice Lighters – old and new.

Ask

Directly ask people to become Chalice Lighters. They will rarely come to you.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR AMBASSADORS

- According to market studies, people must hear or see something at least 7 times before they act. Therefore, repetition and presentation variation are important.
- On the day of your drive, wear something to identify yourself. Hats work well because they stand out in a crowd.
- Thank people for signing up. Recognize them in the newsletter. (This is **really** important based on surveys we have done.)
- Use previous successes to sell the program. Review the list of grants (Appendix C of this packet) and find some in your area that people can relate to. Emphasize how the program is growing. People like to be part of success!
- Insert a link to Chalice Lighters on your church’s web page: www.midamericaauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters



- Make it easy for people to sign up. During a drive, ask signers if they are listed correctly in the directory. If so, simply have them fill in their name and amount to donate on the form. You can fill in the remainder of the form later.
- Set a goal for yourself. Choose a percent of the congregation to sign up by a certain date.
- "Thank you" is very important! People want to be recognized for what they do.
- Celebrating success is important – get the word out.
- Get people's attention in a variety of ways. People need to see the message as well as hear it; think visually – use posters, and balloons or props for your announcements. Variety is good!
- Be enthusiastic. It will inspire others.
- Be creative. Have fun.

**The MidAmerica Region Chalice Lighters Committee
thanks you for all your work – YOU make a
difference.**



APPENDIX A: CHALICE LIGHTER AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

Each Chalice Lighter grant application will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

Mission/Vision/Purpose

- The project reflects UU values and the congregation's mission and vision. (Please include your congregation's mission and vision statements.)
- The project supports congregational growth and/or Unitarian Universalism.
- The project has broad congregational support and is integrated into the long-range plan.
- The budget and pledging reflect strong stewardship values, e.g. pattern of increased giving, fair compensation for staff).

Accountability

- All components of the application are complete and concise, and relevant documentation is attached.
- The goals of the project are clearly defined and achievable, and there is a plan for tracking success.
- The plan includes a means of reporting. Project results should be reported to Region at six months and twelve months.

Supporting Information

- The grant is for a specific project and not general budget relief.
- The congregation is working toward Fair Share and a high percentage of Chalice Lighters.¹
- The application includes the following fiscal information:
 - Current year's budget including previous year's annual fiscal report;
 - Budget projection for next year that show project sustainability.
- The application provides:
 - The name of the current Chalice Lighter Ambassador and the number of Chalice Lighters;
 - Information on Fair Share status on Annual Program Fund (APF).

Connections to the Greater Community

- Special consideration will be given to projects that promote inclusiveness, environmental issues, social justice, and accessibility.
- Special consideration will be given to projects that demonstrate learnings that can be shared with other congregations.
- Preference will be given to congregations that have not received a CL grant in the past three years.

¹ Preference will be given to congregations with a minimum of 20%.



APPENDIX B: SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

SAMPLE ARTICLES FOR A KICKOFF

Use an article like the following if your congregation is new to the Chalice Lighter program or has been dormant for several years. Notify your newsletter editor that you would like to run one article a month for three consecutive months in advance of a call.

SAMPLE ARTICLE 1

Join the Hundreds (a catchy headline is important)

Over 1200 Unitarian Universalists in the MidAmerica Region have joined forces to help their fellow congregations increase the presence of Unitarian Universalism in the Region through membership growth. They are called Chalice Lighters because they share the light of Unitarian Universalism to Ignite Dreams. The program is sponsored by the Region to raise money for congregations committed to membership growth. Approaching our 30th year, the Chalice Lighters program now raises \$15,000 to \$25,000 per call which provides grants to several congregations. Recent grants have ranged from \$3,000 to \$8,500. Imagine what a congregation committed to growth can do with that kind of money.

What do Chalice Lighters do?

They support congregations throughout the MidAmerica Region who want to actively increase membership by:

- Enlarging or improving their building space or buying property;
- Increasing professional staff;
- Implementing publicity or public outreach programs; or
- Starting new congregations

How do they do it?

Chalice Lighters commit themselves to give at one of the following levels:

Believer	\$ 20
Builder	\$ 50
Benefactor	\$100
Beacon \$	\$250

They donate three times a year (fall, winter, spring) to support three congregations with a mission and a plan to grow. The congregations are chosen by the Region's Chalice Lighter Committee through a grant application process. A congregation's financial commitment to growth, supported by a feasible plan, is the primary criteria for selection. Every congregation in the Region may apply.

Why do they do it?

Their donation, joined with hundreds of other donation, raise thousands of dollars each year, connecting them to something greater than themselves.

Contact (*Ambassador name*) to learn how you can become a Chalice Lighter.



The following month, take advantage of Regional publicity about Chalice Lighter grant recipients to write an article like the following.

SAMPLE ARTICLE 2

THE CHALICE LIGHTER PROGRAM MAKES A DIFFERENCE

The First Universalist Unitarian Church of Wausau, Wisconsin, dedicated their remodeled historic building with a new Religious Education wing in September, 2007. Much of their ambitious project, which brought accessibility to the beautiful old building, had been completed when they applied for a Chalice Lighters grant to complete the work on the new RE wing to serve their diverse community. Chalice Lighters provided the funds to further their vision.

Chalice Lighters is a way to put your faith in Unitarian Universalism into action. By volunteering to give a designated amount to a specific MidAmerica Region congregation for a specific growth project, just three (3) times a year, you demonstrate your commitment to your faith, values and way of life.

As a Chalice Lighter you support accessibility. You reach out to those who need Unitarian Universalism but can't find it because they have never heard of it. You turn visitors into members. You encourage gays, lesbians and transgender people to be a part of our church family. You make a difference.

Contact (ambassador's name) to join the Chalice Lighters program so you can put your faith in Unitarian Universalism in action across the MidAmerica Region.



Schedule an article such as this to run just before your scheduled Chalice Lighter Sunday.

SAMPLE ARTICLE 3

CHALICE LIGHTER PROGRAM: THE DETAILS

The Chalice Lighter program provides the means through which individual UU donors can feel connected to the larger vision of Unitarian Universalism and the growth of MidAmerica Region congregations.

How does it work?

Three times a year (fall, winter, and spring), Chalice Lighters receive a letter telling them which congregations have been chosen to receive grants. The letter includes a "call" for a contribution to be sent to the Region office. Contributions can be made at the following levels:

Believer	\$ 20
Builder	\$ 50
Benefactor	\$100
Beacon \$	\$250

How are grants awarded?

Any congregation in the MidAmerica that has well-thought-out plans for growth and has made a commitment to the Region and the UUA through dues or financial support is eligible. An independent committee decides, based on published guidelines, which applying congregations will receive grants. After all checks and online donations are processed by the Region office, a check is presented to the recipient congregations.

Thanks to the generosity of Chalice Lighters, in excess of \$100,000 has been awarded for recent calls.

Watch the MidAmerica Web site www.midamericauua.org/programs/chalice-lighters for updates on upcoming recipients of Chalice Lighters grants.

Chalice Lighters Ignite Dreams!



SAMPLE ARTICLES FOR ONGOING PROMOTION

SAMPLE ARTICLE 4: AWARD GRANTED

CHALICE LIGHTERS GRANT A WISH FOR (CHURCH)

For those of you who are Chalice Lighters, this is a reminder that the Winter Call will occur this month. The grants will go to the (church names, locations) for (projects). This would not be possible without your generous donations. A most sincere thank you to you all! To learn more about this program, which supports the growth and expansion of UUism in our Region, please contact (Ambassador Name) at (phone, email).

SAMPLE ARTICLE 5: WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Submit an article such as this after a Drive

WELCOME NEW CHALICE LIGHTERS

Last Sunday during our Drive, (##) new members joined the (###) existing members who are Chalice Lighters. Please congratulate the following for making this important commitment:

(List names of new members)

We should be extremely proud that over 20% of our congregation are Chalice Lighters, and as such help spread UU principles and faith in our Region. To learn more about this program, please contact (Ambassador name) at (phone, email) or go to www.MidAmerica-uaa.org.



APPENDIX C: RECENT CHALICE LIGHTER GRANTS

9/2011	\$7,350	UU Fellowship of Mankato, Minnesota to host a small congregation conference
7/2012	\$8,238	Shawnee Mission UU Church, Lenexa, Kansas to purchase a new building
7/2012	\$7,267	Michael Servetus Unitarian Society, Fridley, Minnesota to upgrade audio/visual capabilities
4/2013	\$6,679	UU Congregation of the Quad Cities, Davenport, Iowa to upgrade audio/visual capabilities
11/2013	\$8,500	The Tree of Life Unitarian Universalist Congregation of McHenry, Illinois, for support of renovations to their new building
11/2013	\$5,750	The Harmony Unitarian Universalist Church in Morrow, Ohio, for support of their new facility and improvements
11/2013	\$3,000	First Unitarian Church of Sioux City, Iowa for installation of a lift to make most of their building accessible to everyone
2/2014	\$8,000	UU Congregation of the Quad Cities in Davenport, Iowa to increase staff time to develop new programming
2/2014	\$7,500	The Lake Country UU Church of Hartland Wisconsin to bring facility into compliance with ADA Accessibility Guidelines



MIDAMERICA REGION CHALICE LIGHTERS COMMITTEE 2013-14

Rev. Peter Connolly, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Emily Jaycox, St. Louis, Missouri

Heidi Lackmann, Des Moines, Iowa

Karen McMillin, Oak Park, Illinois

Kathy Silver, Dexter, Michigan

with staff support from

Rev. Phillip Lund and Dori Davenport Thexton

