

## **Lydia Maria Child Fund**

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

*Q: What is the Lydia Maria Child Fund?*

A: First Parish in Wayland is creating the Lydia Maria Child Fund (LMCF) to support action for change, guided by the First Parish Covenant and Unitarian Universalist Principles.

*Q: How will the LMCF be funded?*

A: In fiscal year 2017-18, First Parish will level-fund the operating budget; stewardship pledges at the 2016-2017 level will fuel our operating budget. Pledged amounts in excess of last year's pledges will go toward LMCF. All of these additional pledges will be doubled, thanks to a match grant by an anonymous donor, up to a total matching gift of \$100,000.

*Q: Can I decrease my pledge for church operations to pledge to LMCF?*

A: The existing operations of the church must be covered before we begin an expansion of activities. The Parish and Finance Committee have carefully managed income and expenses for 2017-2018, creating a special opening to use additional pledges to start this program. Anyone can sign the statement of support for the new program, but we can't rob Peter to pay Paul as they say.

*Q: Do I have to pay a LMCF pledge all in one year?*

A: To kick start this new program with confidence, we want to collect the payments as soon as possible. If you want to pay your LMCF pledge over more than one year, please note that on your pledge form.

*Q: Who will decide how LMCF will be used?*

A: A new committee will manage the LMCF. The committee will include the Minister, one member of the Parish Committee, and group of three to five members of the congregation at large, annually chosen by the Parish Committee. The committee will have broad discretion to select activities among different causes and determine the amount spent each year. The committee will make a submission to the Annual Report.

*Q: Will LMCF have restrictions in terms of what it will support?*

A: LMCF will support a wide range of causes across the seven UU Principles. Funds should support activism activities involving First Parish members. The LMCF will not be used for "checkbook activism" (donations will not be redistributed to other organizations). Funding is to support new activities not currently funded by the church, though an existing program could apply for funding to significantly expand its work. LMCF may be used to cover additional staff hours to manage and promote activism activities. Funds may NOT be used for partisan activities (i.e., support for a particular political candidate or party).

*Q: Are there guidelines for the use of LMCF?*

A: While the committee will have broad latitude in funding decisions, preference will be given to activities that provide the largest impact in support of the UU Principles; for activities open to the entire First Parish congregation; for projects involving the most members; for activities open to members of the greater Wayland Community and other area UU churches; and for local activities (within 3 hours driving range).

*Q: Who can propose activities to receive support from LMCF?*

A: Any First Parish Member or Youth may submit requests for the committee's consideration. Applicants are encouraged to work together in groups on joint submissions. We hope activism will be a source of collaboration and working toward common goals.

Q: Over what time period will LMCF operate?

A: The initial funds are expected to kick start three to five years of activities. After this seed fund is spent, the Parish Committee may elect to continue this program as part of the normal annual budget process.

Q: What will happen to the LMCF funds if the church does not sustain activism activities?

A: As with any new program, there may be some growing pains as we learn how to effectively enable activism. If the Parish Committee ultimately decides that LMCF funds cannot be used effectively, they will distribute the remaining LMCF to one or more charities outside First Parish that support activism aligned with UU Principles. Examples might include ACLU, NAACP, or PFLAG.

Q: Who was Lydia Maria Child?

A: LMCF is named in memory of Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880), a 19<sup>th</sup> century abolitionist and advocate for women's and Native Americans' rights. Child lived in Wayland for much of her life and attended First Parish in Wayland. She was a prolific author, perhaps the best-known woman writer in America in her time.

Q: What did Lydia Maria Child say about activism?

A: Lydia Maria Child understood the importance of taking a public stand for human rights, justice and equality. She willingly paid a price for her outspoken views. On speaking out against the prohibition of marriage between persons of different races, she said:

*I am perfectly aware of the gross ridicule to which I may subject myself by alluding to this particular; but I have lived too long, and observed too much, to be disturbed by the world's mockery.*

She fought for greater equality between men and women:

*The nearer society approaches to divine order, the less separation will there be in the characters, duties, and pursuits of men and women. Women will not become less gentle and graceful, but men will become more so. Women will not neglect the care and education of their children, but men will find themselves ennobled and refined by sharing those duties with them; and will receive, in return, co-operation and sympathy in the discharge of various other duties, now deemed inappropriate to women. The more women become rational companions, partners in business and in thought, as well as in affection and amusement, the more highly will men appreciate home.*

She wrote one of the first major abolitionist texts, *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, in which she argued that African Americans should be full members of American society, and lamented their treatment as slaves:

*We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling on them forever, because they are prostrate.*

She didn't describe efforts to improve life and opportunity for all people as activism. She used another word:

*The cure for all the ills and wrongs, the cares, the sorrows, and the crimes of humanity, all lie in the one word 'love.' It is the divine vitality that everywhere produces and restores life.*

**Lydia Maria Child lived her values. Her example is our heritage. May it also be our legacy.**