



Dear Colleagues,

The federal government started distributing CARES Act stimulus funds on April 9. I encourage you to invite members and friends of your congregation to donate a portion or all their stimulus check to a charity. Unexpected money can become unexpected generosity.

I'm providing a sample letter that can be adapted to fit the context and ministry of your local congregation. Email or mail a version of this letter to your congregation. I know I'm inundated with email right now, but my mailbox sits empty – a mailed letter may get more attention.

Importantly, the letter needs to come from someone who is themselves donating a portion or all the stimulus check. It needs to speak with the voice of "please join me in doing this." If you need the stimulus check for your household, then recruit a lay leader who can send this letter in their name.

Next, include 2-3 charitable places people can make donations that would appeal to your congregation. Because of the disproportionate effect of the coronavirus and the economic toll on communities of color, please include an organization or program addressing racism or the structural effects of racism.

Your congregation may want to create a "stimulus fund" to receive these gifts. Include addresses to mail checks and links for electronic giving for the 2-3 organizations you identify. Let me know if you want the Wisconsin Foundation UCC to help you set up online giving.

The stimulus checks may be crucially important to some of our households. But others will be able to make a gift of this unexpected money. Together, we engage in unexpected generosity.

Yours in Faith,  
Andrew Warner  
Wisconsin Conference UCC  
[awarner@wcucc.org](mailto:awarner@wcucc.org)



Dear [name of adults in household],

Starting last week, the federal government began sending out stimulus checks. The CARES Act provides \$1,200 per adult (\$500 per child). Higher-income households will receive less. This unexpected check made me think about how I want to use money.

I am not immediately concerned with meeting my basic needs or those of my family. So, I asked myself, "how could I use this money to make a real difference?"

Several needs in our community became apparent to me:

- I see the rising demand for our social service agencies at a time when they struggle to raise the necessary funds to do their work.
- Across the country, communities of color face both increased illness and mortality from the coronavirus and a more profound economic fallout from the recession. All of which shows the urgency of addressing racism.
- Our congregation, like many other UCC congregations, is entering an uncertain financial moment.

I realized I could make an impact with my stimulus check. I'm giving it away:

- some to [homeless shelter or food pantry the congregation partners with]
- some to [an organization working for racial justice]
- some to help our congregation.

I realize you may need to use the stimulus checks to meet basic household needs during this time. That comes first. But if you can, could you join me in giving away a portion or all your stimulus check?

Together, we can use unexpected money for unexpected generosity.

Yours in faith,

[name of pastor or leader]