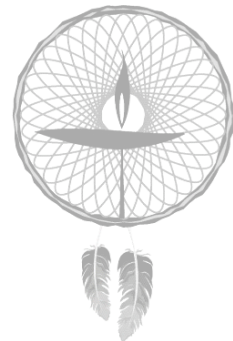


Draft Five-Year Plan
Strategic Planning Committee

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene

February 25, 2007



Making the Dream a Reality

***We, the Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, are a
compassionate, welcoming community that promotes
spiritual growth, ethical living, and social justice in
our church and in the world.***

Preamble

We are, indeed, a compassionate, welcoming community, but we are also a very rapidly growing community with an increasing involvement in the world around us. Both of these factors make it inevitable that we must recognize and direct the changes that are taking place in UUCE. As we mature from a small, generally inward looking pastoral church to a program church with an active involvement outside ourselves, we must look closely at what our goals are, how we govern ourselves, and how we relate to the larger world.

The Strategic Planning Committee was established as a committee of the congregation in December 2004 to investigate the current status of the programs and facilities of the church, to explore the potential of various options as we move toward the future, and to generate a five-year plan for achieving our goals. It is important to note that, unlike other committees, Strategic Planning reports directly to the congregation rather than to the board. We are YOUR committee, and working together we can shape our future.

Much of our work over the last two years has focused on the first of our charges: our options, particularly with regard to space. To that end, the committee conducted a series of DreamCatcher workshops in early 2005 to find out what UUCE is doing, and what we should be doing, in fulfillment of our principles. These sessions were extremely informative, and made it clear that greatly expanded physical facilities were needed. To help the congregation choose how to best invest its resources, an architectural firm was asked to evaluate the feasibility of various approaches to providing the needed space. In May of this year we will vote on which of these approaches best suits our needs: remodeling and expanding our current facilities, razing our current building and putting up a larger structure, or relocating to another site.

The second part of the committee's charge was to develop a five-year plan for the church's programs and activities. A very preliminary version was presented in early 2006. This report is the next step in that process. We are advised by the UUA that, as we mature as a church, our emphasis will shift from personal growth toward greater service to the larger community. This will involve careful re-examination of every aspect of the church, from our vision to the nuts and bolts of how we make that vision a reality. Over the next several months, with your help, we will refine this document, and act to adopt it during the fall of 2007. . Responsible strategic planning calls for it to be reviewed and extended each year, providing a continuous guide for our growth.

The accompanying chart starts with the current church year (in gray) and projects our activities over the next five years. We begin by carefully considering our mission and our vision for the church: who are we, what are we called to do, and who are our neighbors? Is our current vision statement adequate? Does it, and the results of the now two-year-old DreamCatcher process accurately reflect who we are today and who we hope to be in the future? We have begun this process during the current year, and have been ably assisted

in this process by our interim ministers. We will continue this process next year with our new settled minister. The five-year plan envisions doing this again in another three to five years.

What seems clear from your input during the DreamCatcher meetings is that we want to become more and more involved with the broader community, and we must nourish the attitudes and structures that will make this possible. This will involve substantial change in our programs and the infrastructure needed to support them. These are outlined on the chart, and discussed in greater detail in the sections below.

Mission/Vision

The core of a congregation changes as new members join, bringing their own special talents, ideas, backgrounds. Individual members of a congregation grow as people, and as a result, there is group transformation as well. Change is inevitable, and exciting. It is important that as we undergo personal and group transformation, we examine who we are as a congregation, as determined by our values and our dreams. It is important so that our activities are in accordance with our mission. It has been more than two years since we snapped a picture of our dreams in the DreamCatcher sessions in which many of you participated. By next year (2007-08), it will be time to do some more self-examination, and doing it with our settled minister will help us all to be in healthy dialogue, and to learn from and about each other.

In the next year, 2008-09, the logical extension of that congregational self-examination is the exercise of updating our mission statement. The UUA and PNWD suggest that a congregation's mission statement should be updated at least every 3-5 years. It has been more than 5 years since we last agreed on the current mission statement. Therefore another update exercise is scheduled in 2011-2012.

As the UUCE congregation continues to mature, we will find that our focus will move from looking inward to the joy of giving to the larger community. One of the ways we reach out to others is through focused Social Action project. Adult RE. Another is through Adult RE. Another is learning to learn – both from those much like us, and from those with different values. All of this is part of what we call “program maturity” – finding what we as a congregation are called upon to do or be in the world. We will be engaged in this process more and more.

To this end, we must consider our neighbors – here in Eugene, and all over the planet. We believe that we will express our calling by expanding our relationship to, and increasing our engagement with, the broader community. This is where we will make a difference.

Programs

This section of the draft five-year plan is less detailed than most others. A review of the list of committees and formal and informal interest and affiliation groups shows that members and friends of UUCE are involved in hundreds of activities. We will someday have a formal listing of programs that are officially offered by or affiliated with the church, but this five-year plan is not an attempt to create such a program.

Nor have we tried to outline what programs the church will initiate in the next five years. We know that there will be many new programs: some will take root and become treasured traditions, others will arise for a season of need and no longer. But it would be presumptuously impossible to try to predict what programs we collectively will start. Instead, we have tried to include some programs that we believe are growing and changing at this time, particularly those that appear likely to require expansion of staff and facilities and are clearly aligned with our stated mission.

Social Justice and Adult RE are board priorities this year as they were last year. Recognizing that the board is our elected leadership, we have included them as likely areas of program growth. Our Music Ministry has been in a period of rapid growth, and this could be a propitious time to look at the music program to articulate a vision for what the program is and could be for this church. Although not included in the chart, we are aware that membership is active and doing great things. The library, the kitchen, endowment, the livening of CUUPS and Interweave, and more and more, are all great activities happening here and now.

In recognition of this, the five year planning process provides an opportunity for us as a community to consider our values and needs, to consider what we can do with present staffing and facilities, and to set some priorities for use of increased staff and space. We invite your thoughtful comments and suggestions.

Program Staff

UUCE is clearly poised for continued growth. To provide the level of programming desired by most congregations the UUA recommendations are for 1.5 FTE program staff members for each 100 active adults. Each congregation needs to decide what the required skills sets are for the program staff, based on the identified needs and desired directions as expressed by the congregation. As one example, members of this congregation have expressed an interest in having this church take a greater role in addressing the social concerns of the Eugene/Springfield community. Currently an FTE program staff of 2.5 is serving our membership of 366 adults and many children, and we anticipate that our membership will continue to grow. Even at current membership levels a more appropriate number would be the equivalent of 5.0 FTE program staff. We have increasing numbers of member volunteers, but we need additional paid staff to help our church become a more meaningful presence, both in the lives of our members and in our community. Over the course of the next five years we are proposing that we increase the position of the

Director of Music from 0.5 FTE to 0.75 FTE, add a 0.75 FTE Assistant Minister and offer a Ministerial Internship position, beginning in 2011-12.

Lay leadership

Our future depends on steady growth in lay leadership. Newer members will move into leadership positions and our present leaders will learn new skills and take on new responsibilities. As programs grow, even with increased professional staff, we will see increased need that we step up as leaders. There will be many opportunities for increased lay involvement over the next few years. Our planning must create mechanisms to provide this vital leadership.

Facilities

The congregation will vote in May to remain on the present site or to purchase a larger property. In preparation for that decision, an architectural firm recently completed a feasibility assessment of UUCE's current property, and provided cost estimates for renovating our building and for building new; we have learned of the availability and pricing of other, larger parcels of land, as well as ways in which we may build in cooperation with a larger development. Whatever the decision, 2007-2008 will be the time to prepare for a capital campaign, detail our building needs, and conduct a search for a design team. In addition, if the vote in May is to purchase a larger property, a Property Search Task Force will be immediately activated, together with an Angel Investor group to secure a property for the congregation's approval in this fast-moving market. If, on the other hand, the May vote is to stay on our present site, 2007-2008 will also be the time to apply for a Conditional Use Permit. Also during this coming year, a task force will look at how our current space can be best adapted to house us for another couple of years. Another task force will research our financial resources, and work with a consultant to prepare for a Capital Campaign. In 2008-2009, building plans will be finalized, and the Capital Campaign launched. We anticipate construction beginning in 2009-2010, facilitated by a Construction Oversight Task Force, and the Capital Campaign will continue. In 2010-2011, we hope to find ourselves celebrating completion of, and moving into, our larger church building, and beginning to pay down our new mortgage. The following year (2011-2012) will already be time to review the space use of the new or expanded facility, and to review the five-year expansion process we will be completing at that time.

Financial/Stewardship

Every organization approaching the century mark can look back on times of crisis and significant change. UUCE is certainly no exception. But the next few years are clearly going to be another period of transformation. There will be a period of adjustment as we

and our new settled minister learn to work together to meet our goals. Our rapid growth dictates that we must provide physical facilities that will accommodate our needs, and more importantly, we will make the transition from a comparatively small, pastoral church, with an emphasis on personal growth, to a program church that is more involved with the greater community. Creation of new facilities will require a capital campaign of significant scope. This higher level of commitment and involvement found in a program church will also require a higher level of stewardship. The programs we envision require additional staffing, and greater involvement on all of our parts. We have every confidence that UUCE will willingly step forward to meet these financial challenges.

But stewardship is more than just a financial contribution. We can readily focus our seventh principle of respect for the interdependent web of all existence on not only the earth, but also on our community and religious institutions. Stewardship means taking care of something we value and enabling it to grow. It calls us to take responsibility and to make a contribution of our time, talent, and treasure. Beyond our financial support, stewardship calls for us serve on committees, volunteer in the community, care for our physical facilities: to contribute our skills and energy to doing the work of the church.

Membership

In the recent past UUCE has added between 25 and 30 new members in both fall and spring of each year. While we have also lost members through moving or leaving the church for other reasons, our total membership has increased by around 20 in each of the last few years, and we believe there is no reason to expect that this will change in the near future. If anything, we believe the membership estimates for the next five years are conservative. Completion of a new, larger sanctuary period will likely result in even greater increases in membership in the final year of this five-year plan.

Budget

The budget listed for 2006-2007 is our actual budget for the current year. Time constraints did not permit us to break out the portion of the budget that is required by the staffing levels alone in this draft. By our meeting in May, we plan to have for you the staffing budget total, as well as more precise total budget numbers. Totals for later years are estimates based on expected continued growth in membership, probable additional staffing, and an increase in member support as we expand our involvement in the larger community, both locally and in the world.

Reminder

It is important to keep in mind that what you have before you is a very preliminary draft. Over the next several months this must be shaped by our common efforts to create a

roadmap to guide us through an important transition time for this congregation. If we are successful, we will have created an effective community bringing positive change to our community and ourselves.

Report respectfully submitted, February 25, 2007 to the Congregation by the Strategic Planning Committee:

Linda Anson
Larry Cummings
Betty Hosokawa
Elliot McIntire
Gretchen Miller
Bonnie Phipps (ex officio)
Diane Wooldridge

Notes

Membership

The numbers here represent individuals who have signed the book, not pledging units.

Attendance

These numbers include the number attending both services added together plus the adults helping downstairs in the RE program. These are based on the average number of adults in attendance at both services over 10 different weeks in fall of 2006. Some were choir Sundays, some were not. To this is added 30 adults who work downstairs in the RE program while the Sunday service is being conducted. The figure for number of children is based on one Sunday's count. Weekly attendance was 278 adults plus 70 children for a total of 348.

It may seem that we cannot continue to pack more people in over the years, but the proposed increment is actually very conservative. In 2009-10, we project attendance of 320 Adults and 80 Children for a total of 400. Lest this seem an impossible number to squeeze into our building, consider November 5, 2006, when 297 Adults attended services while 30 Adults worked in the RE program, which was attended by 71 Children. That's a total of 398! The place was packed. We ran out of chairs, standing room only!

The larger increase in 2011-2012 is based on the theory "if you build it, they will come." With the ability to accommodate more people, we will fill the empty seats.