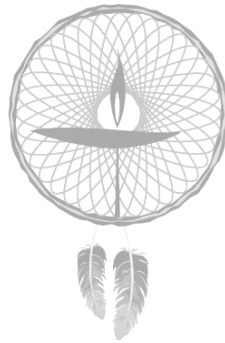


Five-Year Plan
Strategic Planning Committee

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene

October 7, 2007



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 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.

Much of the Strategic Planning Committee's work over the last three years has focused on the first of our charges: our options, particularly with regard to space. The DreamCatcher workshops in early 2005 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. This process culminated in May 2007 with an overwhelming vote of the congregation to seek a new location.

The second part of the committee's charge is to develop a five-year plan for the church's programs and activities. 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. Responsible strategic planning calls for it to be reviewed and extended each year, providing a continuous guide for our growth.

The Five-Year Plan presented here addresses areas that are new or changing, that need further focus, or are irregularly scheduled. It is not intended to be a line item by line item direction for every committee or program. Where those are established, working well, and already a part of our tradition, it is not necessary to list them. Listed here are areas of focus for development.

What was 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.

The accompanying chart starts with the current church year (in gray) and projects areas of change 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 accurately reflect who we are today and who we hope to be in the future? We need to continue this process of updating our mission and vision with our new settled minister, Rev. Steve Landale, and every three to five years thereafter

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. It is 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 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 expect to 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 projects. 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 continue to be priorities this year as they were last year. 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 our membership is active and doing great things. The past year has seen the emergence of CUUPS and Interweave, and the Care Committee's neighbor groups. We can expect other, as yet unidentified, programs and activities to develop.

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 propose increasing the position of the Director of Music from 0.5 FTE to 0.75 FTE, add a 0.5 FTE Volunteer Coordinator, 0.75 FTE Assistant Minister and begin planning for a Ministerial Internship position.

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 training for this vital leadership.

Facilities

As the result of the May 2007 vote to seek a new location for UUCE, a Building Project Oversight Committee has been created, with working groups focusing on building needs, site acquisition, and financing. Also during this coming year, we should develop a task force to look at how our current space can be best adapted to house us for the next few

years. We anticipate that a capital campaign will be launched during 2008-2009. We anticipate construction beginning in 2009-2010, facilitated by a construction oversight task force, and the capital campaign will continue. In 2010-2011 or soon thereafter, 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 will already be time to review the space use of the new facility, and to review the five-year expansion process we will be completing at that time.

Financial/Stewardship

Stewardship is more than just a financial contribution. Stewardship means taking care of the things we value and enabling them 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 to serve on committees, volunteer in the community, care for our physical facilities, and contribute our skills and energy to doing the work of the church.

Every organization approaching the century mark can look back on times of crisis and significant change. UUCE is certainly no exception. And the next few years are clearly going to be another period of transformation. Acquisition of a new site and 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. These financial challenges will be significant, but we have every confidence that UUCE will willingly step forward to meet them.

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 will likely result in even greater increases in membership.

Budget

The budget figure listed for 2006-2007 is actual, while that for 2007-2008 reflects current estimates. 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. However, it should be noted that a capital campaign may well have an impact on the

growth of the operating budget, which could limit our ability to expand or add to existing programs.

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. Average 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. By 2009-10, we project that total Sunday attendance will be approaching 400. A few Sundays have already reached that number, and we can expect those numbers to become common.

Completion of a new facility with additional space is likely to result in a noticeable increase in these totals.

Report respectfully submitted, October 7, 2007 to the Congregation by the Strategic Planning Committee:

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