

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene

Five-Year Plan

**Developed by the
Strategic Planning Committee**

Summer 2008

DRAFT



Weaving the Dream

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.

Introduction

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.

One of the Strategic Planning Committee's charges 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 how we make that vision a reality. Responsible strategic planning calls for the five-year plan to be reviewed and extended each year, providing a continuous guide for our growth.

During 2006-2007 the committee, with input from many individuals and groups within the church, developed a five-year plan for the period 2007-2012. This plan was adopted nearly unanimously at a congregational meeting in early October 2007. The plan emphasizes areas that are new or changing, that need further focus, or are irregularly scheduled. It is not intended to provide detailed 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. The focus of the plan adopted in 2007 is on areas of future growth and development.

This congregation has made it clear that we want to become more involved with the broader community. To do this we must nourish attitudes and structures that will make this possible. This will involve substantial change in our programs and the infrastructure needed to support them.

In preparing this document the Strategic Planning committee has solicited comments from many individuals, groups and committees representing the breadth of the church's activities. These comments have been summarized, and are available on the church's website.

What the committee is presenting today is a revision of the plan adopted in 2007, extending it for an additional year to 2013. It is appropriate to begin with a review of how we have done during the past year. Have we met our goals? Have some of those goals changed? In short, how are we doing?

Revising Our Five-Year Plan

Mission/Vision

In some ways the most important part of our review is a serious examination of our Mission Statement and an evaluation of our vision for UUCE: Who are we, what are we called to do, and who are our neighbors?

The core of a congregation changes as new members join, bringing their own special talents, ideas, and backgrounds. In addition, members continue to grow as people. As a result the group as a whole may be transformed. 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 that our activities are in accordance with our mission. It has been more than three years since we snapped a picture of our dreams in the DreamCatcher sessions in which many of you participated. It is time to do 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. 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. An update exercise is also 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 “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.

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.

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. Continuing development of church lay leadership is also critical. Social Justice and Adult RE continue to be priorities this 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. This congregation needs to decide what the required skills sets are for the program staff based on our identified needs and desired direction. 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 over 400 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 more than 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 expanding the position of the Director of Music, 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 the development of strong lay leadership for the church. This needs to be a major focus over the next few years. 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 to expand our leadership pool. Our planning must create mechanisms to provide training for this vital leadership. Transformation of an expanded Nominating Committee into a center for leadership development is one option for meeting this objective.

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 also anticipate that construction can begin 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. The 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 of all of us. The financial challenges will be significant, but no more important than our greater personal involvement. 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 an average of 20 in each of the last eleven 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. In the meantime, we need to work to ensure that new members are welcomed and incorporated into our community.

Budget

The budget figure listed for 2008-2009 is actual, while 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. It does not include consideration of the impact of a capital campaign.

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.

It may seem that we cannot continue to pack more people into our current facility, 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.

Respectfully submitted to the Congregation by the Strategic Planning Committee:

Kay Crider
Larry Cummings
Elliot McIntire

Gretchen Miller
David Pebworth
Greta Sorenson

Diane Wooldridge