

Building Our Future

Please take a moment to reflect on these UUSIC mission and goals statements and then read on to prepare for engaging in a serious conversation with the Board about our future.

UUSIC MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS:

MISSION: We are a caring, inclusive community, celebrating a liberal tradition that nurtures social justice, stewardship of the earth and our lifelong journeys of mind and spirit.

MISSION GOALS (as adopted on May 20, 2007 and published in the 2009-10 Annual Report):

1. We provide intergenerational worship services to educate, inspire, celebrate, and nurture our Unitarian Universalist community.
2. We provide lifespan religious education to support the intellectual and spiritual growth of our children, members, friends and the wider community.
3. We practice shared ministry and build caring, supportive relationships within a diverse congregation.
4. We take action to create an environmentally sustainable culture, both within our congregation and in the wider community, through education and advocacy.
5. We work for social justice on behalf of those who are oppressed or in need, through education, direct service, financial support, and advocacy .
6. We provide facilities that meet the needs of our congregation and advance our principles and our mission.
7. We promote our principles and programs in the wider community and welcome those with whom our principles resonate.

DECISION:

The Board will be developing a plan for meeting Goal 6. Previous long-range planning discussions about facilities have compared the advantages and disadvantages of the current site and building with a new site and building, but no decisive action has been taken.

The Ministerial Search Committee found that our failure to address our building issues was perceived by ministerial candidates, the Ministerial Search Representative, and the Transitions Office as a detriment to recruiting a new minister. The Board has contracted with the interim minister, Benjamin Maucere, to lead the congregation in making a decision about the facilities issue during the third year of his interim ministry.

As a community it is time to determine what kind of facilities will meet the future needs of our congregation, advance our principles and fulfill our mission.

HISTORY:

- In the 90s a discussion began about the future of the congregation, its growth and mission, and what facilities might be needed. The vision process that ensued included many congregational and committee meetings and a formal exploration of the costs of renovating the current building and of building a new building elsewhere.
- In a 2002 congregational vote, a substantial majority (65%) of the 167 members who voted were in favor of investigating further the purchase of land and building a new building, and 35% voted in favor of investigating further the renovation of the current building. (For complete background information about the Vision Team as well as their process and reports, visit: http://www.uusic.org/AboutUs/OurUUSICCommunity/BuildingDiscussion/building_discussion.htm.)

- Since 2004, virtually no action has been taken on the building issue, although the problems of the current facility persist, including lack of proper accessibility for people with impaired mobility, limited RE classroom space, inefficient and wasteful use of energy to heat and cool the building, and no room for us to grow.

PROCESS:

The process the Board envisions for making this decision is outlined below. This schedule reflects the Board's desire to conduct a timely process that maintains integrity and fully engages the congregation and may be adjusted as needed.

1. **Board survey.** Board members will survey congregational members to determine:
 - what members know about the history of the issue
 - what values, purposes and aspirations inform member's vision of an appropriate UUSIC facility for the next 15-20 years
 - what their current recommendation about the facilities would be
 - what information is needed for a vote on a recommendation in early 2011
2. **Vision, and future facility forums.** Two open meetings will be held in November to discuss various site and facility options and which one would be in the best interests of the mission and UUSIC community for future generations.
3. **Congregational vote in early 2011.** Based on information gathered from the survey and forums, the Board will develop a recommendation on future facilities and present it for a congregational vote. Depending on the outcome of the vote, the Board will be empowered to proceed with feasibility studies and to allocate necessary funds for these studies. The goal is to present a feasibility report to the congregation in late spring through open meetings, the newsletter, e-mail, and the website.
4. **Second congregational vote.** A congregational vote will be held on the recommended course of action that emerges from the feasibility studies.

SURVEY:

As mentioned above, the Board's first step in this process is to conduct a survey. Board members will be contacting a cross-section of UUSIC members, including selected leaders and a random sample of the congregation at large, to respond to the following questions:

1. **What activities are you involved with now? (e.g., Sunday services, RE, Social justice; Membership Committee, etc.)**
2. **Were you involved in the previous Vision process (discussions and 2002 vote)? If so, how did you feel about the process and the outcome?**
3. **In thinking about our mission as a congregation, in your opinion what is the role of a site or facility in fulfilling our mission over the next 15-20 years?**
4. **In your view, what are the benefits and challenges of the current building in fulfilling our mission as you look forward to the next 15-20 years?**
5. **In your view, what would be the benefits and challenges of a different building in fulfilling our mission as you look forward to the next 15-20 years?**
6. **What questions would you want to have answered to make a well-informed decision?**
7. **What issues should the Board address in developing a recommendation about our facility?**

Thank you for engaging in this important discussion with us. We look forward to your input!