

**Building the Future – A Five Year Plan
2009 - 2013
Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento**

Our Vision: We are a Unitarian Universalist congregation that provides safe sanctuary, friendship and support throughout our lives: a place to be who you are. We welcome children, youth and adults. We encourage spiritual growth and intellectual stimulation. We foster ethical values and moral behavior. We offer Sunday services and celebrations with inspiration and music. We support a beautiful, accessible, earth friendly campus. As a force for social justice, we reach out to make the world a better place.

Our Mission: We come together to deepen our lives and be a force for healing in the world.

Our Values: We value the goodness in every person, the openness and curiosity that illuminate that goodness and the love and courage that sustain us.

Our Covenant: We, an intergenerational community, travel together with open minds, open hearts, and helping hands. We value justice, compassion, integrity and acceptance. We seek spiritual growth, intellectual stimulation, caring and laughter. To these ends we pledge our time, talents and support.

Building the Future – A Five Year Plan is intended to be a living document that will guide congregational decisions and actions over the next five years. In addition to goals, the plan includes objectives, action plans and timelines. The plan builds on the successes of our 2004 Long-Range Plan and integrates the results of our 2008 Searching for the Future weekend and the subsequent work by our Vision into Action group. It is expected that the UUSS Board of Trustees will review the plan annually during their late summer retreat and will seek discussion and approval of revisions and updates at the annual October congregational meeting.

Goals

1. *Develop, approve and begin to implement an environmentally friendly master plan for UUSS property, including all buildings and grounds*
Congregational consensus in our 2004 World Café conversations and our spring 2008 Searching for the Future workshop was that we remain at our current site and commit to moving forward with a building and grounds development plan for the campus.
2. *Deepen our ministry to children and families*
Recognizing the changing demographics and schedules of families, we will provide religious education classes, intergenerational worship services, and other opportunities for families to build community, promote religious exploration, and find spiritual support for themselves as families.
3. *Strengthen our connection with and support of new and existing members*
Data from recent UUSS visitors shows that they view us as welcoming and friendly. Our New Member Orientation sessions are well attended, with approximately 80% of participants now joining the congregation. Our greatest loss of members is during the first few years, after we have made a mutual commitment to one another.

Objectives, Action Plans and Timelines

In order to make this a living document, each goal has a set of objectives with linked actions plans and timelines. These are listed below.

Goal 1: *Develop, approve and begin to implement an environmentally friendly master plan for UUSS property, including all buildings and grounds*

Objective 1: Develop a strategy for creating a UUSS master plan

Action 1: The Board of Trustees will appoint a Building and Grounds Planning task force that reports to the Board and is charged with developing a strategy for creating a building and grounds master plan. The UUSS Campus Development Criteria, approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2009, will be incorporated into the strategy. Task force appointees should include one or more members of VIA and their campus development task force, members of the Board of Trustees building and grounds task force, and at least one member of the Committee for a Green Sanctuary. Timeline: Appoint task force by March 1, 2009.

Action 2: The Building and Grounds Planning task force will share its progress regularly with the Board of Trustees and the congregation. The strategy will be approved by the Board and the congregation by October 2009.

Objective 2: Create the UUSS building and grounds master plan

Action 1: The Building and Grounds Planning task force will use the approved strategy to develop a master plan for our building and grounds. The task force will sunset when the recommendations are approved by the Board and by the congregation – tentatively by May 2010.

Objective 3: Begin to implement the master plan

Action 1: A Building the Future – Building and Grounds group will be appointed by the Board to oversee, coordinate and facilitate implementation. The group will report to the Board of Trustees. Members will include one or more representatives from the task force, at least one member of the Committee for a Green Sanctuary, and a Board of Trustees liaison. Timeline: Appoint the group by June 2010.

Action 2: The Building the Future – Building and Grounds group will appoint a working group for each of the key elements of the master plan. Each working group will be charged with implementing its assigned element. Appointments to each group will include a member of the Building the Future – Building and Grounds group. The working groups will report to that oversight group. Timeline: Appoint working groups by July 2010.

Action 3: The Building the Future – Building and Grounds group and the working groups will share progress with UUSS members on a regular basis and the Board liaison will report regularly to the Board of Trustees.

Action 4: At least annually, the Board of Trustees will review progress on implementing the master plan and will determine whether modifications or other actions are required to move the plan forward most effectively.

Goal 2: *Deepen our ministry to children and families*

Objective 1: In the religious education program, create experiences and activities to promote community building and religious exploration in groups of all ages as much as in groups of specific ages.

Action 1: The Program Council, Religious Education Committee, ministers, and staff will evaluate and solicit feedback from stakeholders on the children's and youth's RE program's success based on attendance and adequacy in meeting the needs of the children and their families. Complete by January 2010.

Action 2: The Program Council, Religious Education Committee, ministers, and staff will research and explore alternative RE program models. March 2009 through May 2010 and ongoing.

Action 3: The Board of Trustees will appoint by July 1, 2009 a Building the Future – Family/Intergenerational group to assist and support the Program Council, the RE Committee, the Religious Services Committee, ministers, and staff in deepening our ministry to children and families. The group will report to the Board of Trustees. Members will include one or more representatives from the RE Committee, one or more representatives from the Religious Services Committee, and a Board of Trustees liaison.

Action 4: If appropriate and based on research, the Program Council, Religious Education Committee, ministers, and staff shall adjust the RE program to an alternative model and after at least one church year, evaluate this new model. September 2010 through September 2011.

Objective 2: Provide frequent worship services intentionally designed for all ages so that families can experience high quality worship together.

Action 1: The Program Council, Religious Services Committee, ministers, and staff will evaluate and solicit feedback on all ages worship services based on attendance and adequacy in meeting the needs of families. July 2009 through September 2010.

Action 2: The Building the Future – Family/Intergenerational oversight group will support the work and ensure coordination on achieving this objective and make progress reports to the Board of Trustees.

Action 3: The Program Council, Religious Services Committee, ministers, and staff will research and explore worship components that appeal to different ways of experiencing and expressing spirituality. September 2009 through May 2010.

Action 4: Ministers, worship leaders, and Religious Services Committee will institute new worship components and evaluate their effectiveness in increasing the quality of all ages worship services. September 2010 through 2011.

Objective 3: Solicit and create opportunities for church families to find deep connections with one another and with the greater church community.

Action 1: The Building the Future - Family/Intergenerational oversight group will support and help coordinate the actions needed to achieve this objective and make progress reports to the Board of Trustees.

Action 2: The Program Council, ministers, and staff will evaluate and solicit feedback about small group offerings based on attendance and adequacy in meeting the needs of families. October 2009 through May 2010 will serve as a period to try out some things.

Action 3: The Program Council, ministers, and staff will plan and track number of, type of, and attendance at all ages events from May 2009 through May 2010, to provide a year of baseline data.

Action 4: The Program Council, ministers, and staff will evaluate the need to expand the number or change the types of all-ages activities and small groups as well as evaluating the staffing needs. March 2010 through March 2011 will provide data for the 2012 budget making process.

Goal 3: *Strengthen our connection with and support of new and existing members*

Objective 1: Systematically collect and analyze information on why members leave our congregation or become inactive as well as baseline data from new and existing members on their sense of support and connection at UUSS.

Action 1: The Board of Trustees, in consultation with the ministers, staff, Personnel Committee and Membership Committee, will hire a part-time Membership Coordinator effective fall 2009.

Action 2: A Building the Future – Connections group will be appointed by the Board to assist and support the Membership Coordinator in strengthening our connection with new and existing members. The group will report to the Board of Trustees. Members will include one or more representatives from the Membership Committee and a Board of Trustees liaison.

Action 3: The Membership Coordinator, with the support of the Connections group, the ministers and the Board, will develop and implement a systematic plan for gathering data on why members leave or become inactive as well as baseline data on why existing members feel supported by and connected with UUSS.

Action 4: Based on the analysis of information collected, the Coordinator will research strategies to strengthen connections with members.

Objective 2: Engage members in implementing strategies to strengthen our support of and connections with members.

Action 1: The Membership Coordinator will share results and recommendations with the Board of Trustees, the Program Council, the Membership Committee, ministers and staff by December 2009.

Action 2: The Coordinator will modify the plan, if needed, and present it to the Board of Trustees for approval at its January 2010 meeting.

Action 3: If needed, working groups may be appointed by the Connections oversight group to implement specific elements of the plan, under the direction of the Membership Coordinator.

Action 4: The Membership Coordinator will oversee implementation of the plan and modifications as necessary based on ongoing analysis of results.