

President's Report 2006-2007

The 2006-7 church year was one of continued growth. Membership increased by nearly 12%. Average attendance at Sunday service increased by 50%, although previous year attendance numbers were impacted by the Coming of Age program being held at the same time as services. This reduced adult attendance by nearly 20%.

Comparing 2007 to 2006 the number of pledges increased by 25% and the pledge amount increased by 11%. In the past year we have lost a significant number of our larger donors through death or change of residence. The Finance committee is working to encourage other donors to raise their level of support and new pledgers to make a generous commitment.

In October, we made the choice to officially seek a permanent "home of our own". Though still inadequate, the Land & Building fund increased by about 27%. We continue to search for an affordable property option. The potential interfaith cooperative ventures were rejected by the Land & Building committee for inadequate lot size in the case of the South County Jewish Collaborative and questions about potential conflict with diocesan polity in the case of Holy Spirit Episcopal Church. We are heartened that real estate prices are finally starting to fall. More effort will continue on what is our top priority. More capital is needed for the Land & Building fund and members are encouraged to donate whenever possible.

The UUCSC Board set four Goals for 2006-7: Press Forward on a Home of our Own, create the child and youth portion of a Safe Congregations policy, develop a Sabbatical Plan and develop a Financial Plan. This was an ambitious plan to accomplish with an all-volunteer staff. Progress on the facility goal is detailed in the paragraph above. The child and youth segment of the Safe Congregations policy was adopted in early 2007. We owe a substantial debt of appreciation to Debby Hedison and Charlie Donnelly for the extensive work they did creating the policy. We now have one of the exemplary Safe Congregation policies in the UUA.

The progress toward the other two goals has been limited. We began to fund a budget category to save money for Betty's eventual sabbatical and are exploring a preliminary effort by some UUA churches in our area to set up a cooperative sabbatical network. We have two more years before Betty becomes eligible to take a sabbatical so there is still time.

President's Report 2006-2007

Most of our plan for the Financial Plan had rested on our application to be a pilot congregation for a new UUA stewardship program called Forward Through the Ages. Its initial selection deadline was October 30 but the deadline was extended twice and the selections were announced early in April. Unfortunately we were not selected as one of the seven congregations. The budgeting and financial projection effort to complete the application has had the benefit of forming a foundation on which to build a financial plan.

We struggled throughout the year with vacancies in some very key positions: Clerk, Chair of Facilities committee and Chair of the RE committee. In a church that does not employ office professionals or a sexton, this has been a very difficult situation.

On the positive side I cannot adequately thank and praise all the members who have volunteered and put in tons of effort in promoting the mission of the congregation. Sometimes we fail to acknowledge efforts when things run so smoothly. I appreciate, and we have been blessed, by the efforts of those who publish the newsletter, run the web site, prepare the Sunday service bulletin & Order of Worship, maintain the database and administer the email account.

The chairs of the committees and their members have done a fabulous job serving the congregation. People have stepped forward to conduct fundraising that was needed to close our deficit. We have been in covenant with one another. And last, but certainly not least, we have been blessed to have Betty as our spiritual guru. It is almost impossible to believe that she is actually a "rookie" minister. She seems to have the talent and experience of a long time veteran minister.

This is my final report to you as President. I don't think we could have chosen a better potential successor than Kathy. She has been an exemplary Vice President and she serves purely out of her love for the congregation. We are in good hands with her and Betty to guide us through the next phase of growth. I leave office with a sense of optimism for our future. I thank all of you for allowing me to serve the congregation these past three years. I have been blessed by your support and your advice.