

UUAA Vision 2020 Design Charrette Notes

March 8-9th, 2019

Agenda

Friday

- Welcome
- Go around- name, gender pronoun, hope for the process
- Purpose and Outcome
- One on One - name, favorite color, how long have you been involved in the church, favorite thing about the church and one thing you want changed
- Needs for Process to be inclusive and congregational involvement
- Congregational Assessment shifts and changes- one practice shift, one policy shift, one bylaw change, one decision making shift

Saturday

- Opening and welcome
- Group Agreement and Imagining
- Value discernment
- Congregational Assessment
- Lunch break
- Congregational Engagement - What has to be
- Process Design Ideation
- Key Questions
- Process Committee
- Evaluation
- Closing

Friday, March 8th

Needs for Process Question:

“What do you need for the visioning process to feel inclusive, and what do you & congregation need in order to get involved?” (+ others who agree)

1. Diverse list of tools to reach goals identified - data, visual +2
2. Building and broadening relationships with community +9
3. Process enjoyable - not dull and dry +12
4. Small leadership team +7

5. Privilege and depth over expediency +2
6. How do we engage people who are barely here +9
7. Connect this work with various groups in the congregation +4
8. 3 congregation wide meetings- evaluation, visioning, planning +2
9. Bring in speakers/leaders/inspiration from other congregations
10. Subgroups to get to know each other better +8
11. Final meetings to reflect on what's been gathered before final decision
12. 80% of congregation to participate +8
13. Why us? Why now? Why here? Vs someone/somewhere else +1
14. Lots of meetings +16
15. Task force with specific goals and communicate the finding and gather feedback +2
16. Small groups with people folks already know - not members yet - dinner/homes- flow and relationships +3
17. Include youth and kids +4
18. Throughout process, critical analysis around de-centering white supremacy +3
19. Create different ways for people to participate age, mobility +16
20. Monthly meetings son different dimensions of congregational life. Invite everyone to all. All congregants to come at least 4
21. Monthly meetings with focus on sub-groups with particular interests
22. Decision making: weighing re. Criteria and credible sources
23. Showing appreciation and acknowledgement of all participants +6
24. Publicly and visually depict overall map of process +10
25. Participation in process should not require presence in building
26. Transparency +5
27. Ability to find the future we can all agree on +6
28. Provide updates from pulpit, newsletter especially for those who can't be +6
29. Emphasis on respect and curiosity in process +5
30. Clear, strategic prioritized goals
31. Answer the questions: what can we do better than other congregations (uniquely our gifts) and what with others?
32. Diversity of thought
33. Inclusivity
34. Lighting chalice
35. Opened to compromise
36. Congregants decide destiny of congregation
37. Mechanisms to express dissent
38. Tools and individuals ambassadors for process
39. Conscious use of democratic practices to make decisions that are inclusive
40. Language that opens door to change
41. Avoid in inventing wheel, build on existing visions - statement 5 core values, current strategic plan and survey that search committee did
42. Help all participants feel that they are vital
43. Accessible - childcare, rides, food, etc.. work to remove participation barriers
44. Meetings not always the best way

45. Space for individually marginalized voices
46. People affected by process are all stakeholders- friends, members, staff, people in community
47. Spiritual context
48. Vision 2020

Congregational Assessment Questions, Part 1

“What one change in Practice would you like to see?”

1. Everyone in congregation feels they are part of the welcome ministry
2. Hold health of community superordinate to individual desires/goals
3. More speed in room reservation feedback
4. Congregation more involved in visioning on a regular basis
5. We would have more focused areas in which we are trying to make a difference in the world (instead of trying to do everything half-assed)
6. More of a church open later on sundays to be able to open up the sanctuary for larger community meetings while UUs still around. Encourage membership of people who attend
7. Regular conversations (circles) throughout the year with set themes or questions
8. Get more involvement in congregational meetings
9. Focus staff resources on supporting and enabling lay-led accomplishments
10. Centering the voices of those with less institutional/structural power. E.g., 75% of voices from pulpit are women, POC, queers
11. Children: sunday service meaningful engagement or them or perhaps leave sooner.
12. Daycare available for more participation by young parents in activities they want to engage in
13. Community outreach and partnering to build deep connections
14. We do not inundate leadership with personal vendetta-type issues and instead consider the whole community
15. Make sure members know what this is for. I.e. purpose and purpose so that they may think and contribute.
16. Summer chalice circles and family fun nights
17. Establish a way for groups such as SGD social justice chalice circles etc to formally and regularly communicate with one another
18. Really make people with cognitive differences feel welcome (families of people)
19. We will be better at appreciating difference
20. Sermons given by members of the congregation at least once a month
21. All groups/gathering/mtgs/ encourage to have chalice lightings, check ins, covenants, community
22. Being a more inclusive open and welcoming break down cliques/silos
23. Openness
24. more lay congregation participation in the services

25. I would like to see us work on social hour. It is too crowded and sometimes even hazardous. How can we improve?
26. more/better opportunities for communication between staff and congregants and viceversa to improve
27. More stress on multilingualism; able to say more rather than stress on what we “can’t” or “shouldn’t” say
28. Holding the interest of the **whole** community at the center of all work and conversations
29. Visitor greeting. Invite ALL visitors to stand up during service (no speaking, just visually recognized) * Visitors use colored coffee cups to identify them in social hour
30. Full participation in pastoral care
31. Regular exchange with other faith leaders/communities so “universalism” becomes more apparent
32. Adult spiritual growth is a priority for the whole congregation
33. Have the writers group present their writings once each year

“What one Policy Change would you like to see?”

1. Add a policy for right relations
2. Intentional dismantling of white supremacy and colonialism
3. End of year one policy change: building hours 8am-9pm a 7 days a week, 365 days
4. Policy governance in particular role of board. Board needs to listen and speak more for congregation
5. Fundraising made easier--high tech options. I.e., text, ipad at front door, virtual money transactions available during service
6. Policy shift: don’t know many UUAA policies :(youth more involved in worship
7. Much larger majority needed to pass things via vote (or consensus based decisions)
8. Connection with people
9. Congregation resolutions development policy
10. Statement about being intersectional and anti-racist organization
11. That we would have a decent set of them (policies) done
12. A policy/process for managing conflict respectfully and lovingly
13. Church open later on Sunday (past 5pm)
14. Become a freethinking friendly welcoming congregation with inclusive language
15. Allow room reservation space usage associated with a UUAA group
16. Managing budget at “program level” aligned with vision
17. Policy on how to bring/handle contentious topics with love and respect
18. Easier approval for capital campaign for e.g., RE
19. Dialogue consensus required on major issues
20. Have building open on Friday and more evening hours in the summer
21. Every congregant has participated in service project with a group
22. That we truly become covenantal as we declare every Sunday
23. To have afternoon services on Sunday
24. Congregational meetings happen at 11:30am
25. Church building would be open and available often specially weekends and summers

26. All building is strategic priority + vision based
27. Staff workload lighter and shared leadership. Sparkling new initiatives
28. We cannot act swiftly or without care on controversial topics
29. Expand pastoral care policy
30. Using democratic practice to make every community and sub community decisions involving congregants much more

“What one Bylaw Change would you like to see?”

1. Less ability to call Congregational Meetings - stricter requirements (e.g., More signatures)
2. Proxy vote addition so we're legally compliant as a non-profit
3. Make me read them
4. Consensus decision making
5. Election of Board / LDT: once a candidate is selected they should not be challenged in church election
6. Old ministers can't come back
7. Require more than one candidate per elected position to promote democracy
8. Change up % needed to call congreg. Mtg.
9. Consensus decision making / evaluate bylaws for white supremacy
10. That we would all know & care about Ken
11. Higher threshold for calling a special mtg. and/or higher % needed to pass something at a special meeting
12. How to call a special congregational meeting - increase %-age of people who need to sign petition
13. Need for required conversation circles (3-11) throughout the year among staff + congregants
14. More familiarity with bylaws?
15. Process for bringing resolutions to the congregation
16. Congregational education about our bylaws as part of becoming a member and activating volunteerism
17. Trustee term longer > 3 years
18. Board members are responsible to represent the members and know their issues
19. Need a bylaw about proxy voting
20. That newcomers actually know/care about bylaws
21. Make them easier to understand and search through
22. Allow absentee voting for congregational meetings
23. No proxy voting
24. Not have to have a special vote to allow new members to participate in Congregational meeting / vote
25. Higher quorum for Congregational meetings, requiring/expecting significant participation
26. The number needed to call special Congregational meeting

“What one Decision-Making Change would you like to see?”

- I'm unclear about Board decisions vs. Staff decisions, but I like that we have delegates on a board whom we can trust to make decisions.
- Pursuing input from all the way we pursue pledges from all (or better!)
- Ensure all newbies appreciate they are equals and appreciated and respected to “eveowrays”(could not read this word) consensus of larger part of body.
- Have trained facilitators who can mediate conflict within and between groups.
- More inclusive, deliberative, democratic.
- Allow for broad input, but then trust leaders to make decisions and to decide when congregational vote is needed.
- Real democracy with openness for arguing the merits of each position and without the dictatorship of the Board President or the Minister.
- Work toward consensus through conversation, ranked choice voting, and/or other means.
- Being more clear and transparent about how decisions are made.
- Present way
- What is one way we could make decisions - Listening discussing, voting (all attendees more than 1 year. Think we try hard.
- More decisions by consensus.
- Deeper and broader commitment to collaborative, consensus decision-making.
- Routine issues by designated authority. Deep issues by consensus.
- Done democratically in all programs and the congregation as a whole. Decisions are sorted by type of decision.
- Respectfully through courageous conversations, starting in small groups to large groups.
- Utilize AHP and assigned criteria.
- Whatever the method, it should be TRANSPARENT and all should be HEARD.
- More listening by all parties, respect for various perspectives, not either/or but both/and collaboration and consensus building.
- Through equity, where we recognize disparate levels of power and privilege in the Congregation, and give people who traditionally have see power a louder voice.
- Consensus vs current democratic vote.
- Don't have such small quorum for voting.
- Broaden the number of congregants engaged in decision making by teaching democratic practices and congregant activism as a value.
- Less burden on staff and ministers somehow. They do a terrific job, but need a break it seems. So don't know how that would look exactly.
- Broader involvement in voting (not just the retired folks like me who come to meetings).
- Try to follow more of a consensus model.
- Modified consensus process (modified to prevent stonewalling).
- Broaden input in decisions affecting large groups.
- More tolerance of views of others. Less UU smugness.
- More stakeholders involved and newer members actively included.
- Congregational votes. If required, hold more frequent voting meetings (quarterly?) throughout the year.
- Will of the majority (as expressed through genuine participation) is honored.
- Have a group (elected?) handle (give input) for decisions.

- I'm not clear on how we do it now. Figure out how to maximize informed debate and allow room for all voices.

Saturday, March 9th

Group Agreements

- **Speak up**
- **Slow down**
- **Move up, move up**
- **Don't yuck my yum - universalism, pluralist and many paths**
- **One mic**
- **Show up**
- Shared focus effort towards common goal
- Respect and open-mindedness
- Communication - direct
- empathy
- love
- trust
- Frankness and honesty
- Financial generosity and generosity
- Acknowledgement that white supremacy is real and needs to be dismantled
- kindness
- Culture is friendly and welcoming
- Willingness to listen to one another and non judgemental
- Congregants all aboard
- Patience for listening, understanding and learning
- Vulnerability
- Humility
- Interconnectedness with nature and each other
- Learn from but not stuck in the past
- Low ego and let go of need to be right
- Community interdependence over entitlement and individualis

Value Discernment--How can our Core Values be more specifically expressed?

Values most important to lift up right now - (number of others with whom this resonated)

- Cherishing our diversity in all ways that diversity comes (race, gender, isms) (culture)- 11
- Everyone deserves access to education, food, water, legal rights, housing in order to live their fullest lives (social justice and environmental action)- 7
- Responsible for a regenerative and symbiotic relationship with the environment. Environmental justice is social justice (social justice and environmental action) and commitment to care for the land and building we have and the environment and natural world in general with sustainability (stewardship) - 7
- Center voices of the marginalized in all church processes and daily work (social justice and environmental action)- 6

- Outreach and partnerships with our wider community (culture)- 6
- Openness - Universalism!, diversity of thoughts, challenge and appreciation (spiritual life)- 6
- Grow and Learn - nature, grow, learn, search, questioning, understanding (spiritual life)- 5
- Commitment to care for the institution, its policies and practices (stewardship) - 6
- Welcoming, affirming, and including every individual (community)- 11

Values not as important to lift up right now

- Valuing and encouraging participation of all people within our community (culture)
- Fostering relationships, honoring, support leadership (community) - 1
- Value community and relationship over individualism (community)- 2
- Commitment to care for an all encompassing welcome through the lifespan (stewardship) - 1
- Ground ourselves , renewal, decompression, inspiration, reflection, quiet (spiritual life)- 1

Congregational Assessment Questions, Part 2

“What are the emerging issues facing the congregation?” (number of others who agreed)

1. Small pockets over certain issues; could prevent community building; embrace small groups. (17)
2. “Protecting” old groups and welcoming newcomers (6)
3. Asylum (2)
4. Overcoming stigmas about others learning to be more accepting, OPEN TO DIVERSITY (9)
5. More alignment and collaboration among social justice groups (5)
6. Learning about our growth as a big congregation (2)
7. Learning about/providing pastoral care (6)
8. Learning/strategy to include new generations (5)
9. Need intergenerational connections (4)
10. Need policies & covenant about “right relations”; reminding people how to be together; knowing how to fold people back in (12)
11. Learn to reach decisions by consensus rather than voting (6)
12. Staffing (not fully staffed for our needs) and right compensation (7)
13. Fundraising to be able to do what we want (the new generations have different levels of wealth) (7)
14. Possibly new spaces or restructuring current use of building and grounds (3)
15. Building a sense of ownership of building and grounds (Building and Grounds Committee is defunct (3)
16. Different expectations about giving/communal contributions of the new generations (3)

17. Lack a structure for the various leaders of groups to come together (collaboration) and share their goals/resources/work/challenges/etc. (2)
18. Lack of common understanding of pluralism and how it's enacted (connected with #13 and #1 in this list) (3)
19. Lack a process to deal with conflict and violation of covenant (connected with #1 and #10 in this list) (6)
20. Sustainability, appealing to new generations (connected with #13 and #16 in this list) (1)
21. Isolation of BoT from rest of congregation/lack accountability (1)
22. Emerging issues related to new technologies/media
23. Fear of change, of things not being as they used to be (6)
24. No activities for teens at Friday Fun Night
25. Bridging between 9:30 and 11:30 service attendees (1)
26. Effect of theological language: can be off-putting to atheists (example of #1)

“What are the emerging issues facing the Ann Arbor and greater Ann Arbor community?”
(number of others who agreed)

- Devaluing, underfunding education (3)
- Homelessness (3)
- Opioid addiction (3)
- Town vs gown
- Isolated communities that aren't talking to each other (4)
- Growing needs and large population of special needs (1)
- Increasing taxes (2)
- Senior housing
- Affordable housing (6)
- Cost of land
- Inequality (economic) (6)
- Gerrymandering (2)
- Gentrification (5)
- sprawl
- Disappearing green space (3)
- Eliminate change (3)
- Environmental poisoning (3)
- Air and water quality - dioxane (2)
- Elitism (3)
- Changing family structure
- Over scheduling, over businesses (2)
- Bubble-effect- what's happening elsewhere in MI (4)
- Transportation (lack of) (5)
- Polarization (politics, class)
- Urban as rural (3)
- Growing and integrating activism (2)
- AA possible, joining intentional age friendly, elites
- Recognize value of communities outside AA (1)
- Restorative justice
- Meeting space for groups
- Deteriorating infrastructure
- Washington Equity Office
- Police Oversight
- Emerging active intolerance (5)
- Isolation, lack of connection and individual (3)
- Segregation (3)
- Future growth of AA
- Change in leadership of major SJ group93s
- College, student, faculty, mental health (3)
- Youth mental health (4)
- Teen depression and suicide (3)

<u>“Who participates in the life of the congregation?”</u>	Additional checks
Ancestors	2
Asylum and guests	2
Attendees	
Board of Trustees	
Choirs: Bells, Sparks, Singers	
Civic leaders, bodies, systems	
Clergy in training	
Coffee hour people	
Committed non-members	
Committed visitors	1
Community members	1
Elders	1
Facebook friends (global)	
Families	2
Family members who don't attend	1
Friends	
Homebound folks	
Humanists	
Ignite/20s/30s	1
Interfaith partners	2
Invited speakers	
Kids	2
Kids who are here but not UU-identifying	1
Lay leaders	1
LGBTQAA+	
Lodi Township	1
Me	
Members	7

Middle-school aged youth	
Ministries: teams and groups	
Nature	1
Neighbors	
Non-ministerial staff and UUAA employees	2
Other UU congregations	
Our shadows, deeply implicit and unconscious bias	1
People with Alzheimer's and their caretakers	
People with disabilities	
People with diverse bodies	1
People with diverse lives and expansive needs	3
People with diverse lives and expansive needs	3
Queer people	
Remote/web participants	
Renters: CDC, Secular Jewish group	
Sanctuary guests	
Sharing the collection partners	2
Social Justice groups internal	
Staff musicians	
Staff, professional ministerial	
Star stuff	
Support groups: memory care, AA groups	1
Surrounding beings and spirits	1
Teens	
UUA: Lisa Presley, Elandria Williams, MMM on UUA Board, Keith Kron	1
Vendors, chosen & monopolies	
Visiting speakers	2
Visitors	2
Volunteers	
Washtenaw Congregational Sanctuary	

White people

World

You

Young adult beyond YRUU age but not full members

“What are the challenges facing the congregation?” (+others who agreed)

- Enough resources to support new initiatives +4
(staffing, compensation, supporting UUA fair share, etc.)
- Lack of sufficient processes and policies (some out of date) 1
- Planned Growth and Change +3
(what kind, how much, who decides)
- Passion for the individual causes/ interests +5
- Invisible Disability
(lack of Accessibility to Sunday Service, Planning meetings, lay input)
- Board of Trustees isolated from congregation
- Having a governance structure and process that allows + 1
needed changes (Being open)
- Creating an inclusive language +6
between theological and humanistic
- Unable to manage dynamic tension +5
(Let go of the idea that discomfort is lethal and
that we all have to agree all the time)
- Not clear how to face and address our white privilege +4
- Not feeling like a unified community
(people perceive UUs as non-Christian so they don't come)
- Education of our history +3
- Leadership Recruitment and Training +1
- Offering spiritual resources in a variety of formats to be
accessible to more (Like social media outreach)
- How to include newer generations as we have +3
generational turn over
- Sunday Service Planning isolated from lay input
- Rural location
- How to deal with divisive issues
(like Justice in the Middle East or renting to a charter + 4
school or using religious language)
- Communication +3
(People don't always hear what they need to hear.
Are we effectively sending messages? Does it reach
youth and millennials? Does it reach people uncomfortable
with computers?)

“What are the opportunities presented to the congregation?” (others who agreed)

- People of talent can be leveraged
- Flexibility of creed can make us be a community of all who need one (5)
- Democratic process
- Connect with other communities for justification (8)
- Many activities including choir (3)
- Infrastructure to build new groups (2)
- Opportunity to grow through involvement and leadership (3)
- Many small successful communities/ministries (2)
- Many dedicated teachers (3)
- Demonstrate how to be a large, theologically diverse community (3)
- Large facility flexible and amenable to many activities (5)
- Strengthen accessibility and inclusion
- We have a lot of music talent (2)
- Build upon principles and sources, core values (2)
- Creative, good hearted, engaged and passionate members (2)
- New minister brings a new perspective (7)
- Influence in the denomination (1)
- Well funded/resourced community (3)
- Beautiful grounds (4)
- Communicate/promote involvement online/new media
- A chance not to do business as usual (5)
- Good reputation in the community (2)
- Recruiting/attracting new members in a transitional community (6)
- Build something better
- SGD has unusual strength including CoA and OWL (11)

What are UUAA's strengths?

Strength	Additional checks
AIM Team (Accessibility & Inclusion Ministry)	3
Attractive to "nones"	3
Caring community	5
Climate Change Awareness	4
Commitment to social justice action	14
Committed to being liberal institution	2
Enthusiastic membership	9
Financial capability of members is high	5
First Friday Fun Night	3

Forums and Q&A discussion	3
Great visitor welcome	2
Hardworking and talented staff	13
Highly skilled members	5
Inclusion (room for improvement)	4
Inclusive choir	3
Independently governed	2
Intergenerational	3
Land as an asset	6
Large and growing (plus and minus)	2
Location in Ann Arbor is an asset	3
Many young people	4
Men's fellowship	6
Ministry teams	10
Music program (ministry)	12
New Minister	4
Presence in UUA movement	10
Progressive	3
Sound financial management	8
Spiritual Growth and Development	11
Thoughtful about doing Vision work	6
UU values	3
Website informed and updated	2
Welcoming congregation	7
Welcoming high school group	2
Whole Building	2
Wild lands	6
Women's Group	1
Wonderful sanctuary space	8

Congregational Engagement - How do we engage the congregation in this visioning process?

1. Define 100% and track to 80%
2. Overall clear communication Plan
3. Vision 2020 or 2020 Vision laid out clearly in front of people
4. Recruit ambassadors and facilitators (60?) people

5. Ambassador and Facilitator toolkit/roadmap/template with interview questions and process
6. Facilitate conversations with every activity group, class, small group and different times/days of the week/places
7. Hyper communicate roadmap, updates, and get information in many different ways

Large gatherings	Visit homes
Small gathering	Social media
One-on-one outreach to less involved individual who likely might not attend meetings or church	Phone - call or text every member
Web	Zoom
Email	Table in social hall
Bulletin board - flyers	Dinner and lunch visits
Surveys	Pie and conversations
Mail	Service - flash surveys and small group conversations
Frequent reminder from pulpit	Social hour -flash surveys and small group conversations

8. Meet in diverse group (mix up the member) and with established groups
9. "Jury Duty" Invitation- example you have been selected to participate at 6 pm on Tuesday
10. Engage Cassie and Mark on how to engage SGD/youth
11. Tracking which group and individuals have participated (and how/and if need more/what?), When and what kind
12. Create sociogram (who's friends with who) to figure out how to contact people
13. Set up vision games in classroom wing and invite families to participate (food?)
14. Puppet show! (Communication skit, during service, SGD kids)
15. Process Analysis all way through

"What do I need from myself to engage in this process?"

1. More connection to others in leadership to achieve shared vision to work together. Phil Tuchinsky
2. Radical acceptance of who each person is as they are. Ed Lynn
3. Compromise where it is possible, and conviction where it is necessary. Cristy Cardinal
4. Deep listening. Els
5. Time and an open mind. Mark Doman
6. Time—being able to enjoy the process to think and act. Vilma Mesa
7. Risk—less self-judgment—openness. Carli
8. Work tirelessly in every way possible to achieve the cultural change and become freethinker friendly. No name
9. Space for discernment; speaking and working from the soul source; living and breathing and singing and loving. Carrie

10. To connect with as many people as I can. Reach out and get to know others more deeply. Ginny Preuss
11. Happiness—No name
12. Ability to trust others. Shirley Smith
13. Taking risks; engaging with joy. Erik Stalhandske
14. Rock and roll music. Zach
15. Courage. Tom Reischl
16. Slow down, breathe, exercise, and invite others to help hold the complexity. Rev. Manish
17. Vulnerability. Rick Witten.
18. Courage. Time. Money. Open mind. Lucia Heinold
19. Reaching out. Connie McGuire
20. Creativity. Joan Burleigh
21. Commitment and belief that we can do it. Laura Bollettino.
22. More disciplined habits of curiosity and perceiving (less impulse to judge, and seeking ego approval) Kate Hutchens
23. I need to be kind, caring, compassionate, and centered in my heart and head. Jeannine
24. Assume positive intent. Hayley Boyse
25. Openness, trust in the (process?), engagement. Terry Madden
26. A more open heart and forgiveness. Glenn
27. A truly open heart. Lissa Oliver
28. Time, energy. Ronda Hemingway
29. Inner strength to listen deeply and hear the heartfelt opinions and differences as valuable Beth Hospadaruk
30. Patience/tolerance of those who are not willing to change or be different. Colleen Crowley
31. Awareness/focus on my place in this. No Name
32. Let go of guilt. Angelina
33. Courage to speak my truth. Actually, to fully understand my truth. Janet Calloway
34. Shared resources. Sean Reed
35. I need to be better at assuming good intentions. Pat Herbst
36. A willingness to stay in it even when it gets hard. Cassandra