



Our Minister asks us to engage our imaginations...

“Our services, programs, religious education, caregiving, fellowship events, small groups, rites of passage touch people's lives in ways that bring about positive change. Imagine for a moment that we built upon these assets to become more: more loving, more open, more accessible, more relevant, more challenging, more supportive, more beautiful, more dedicated, more compassionate...Imagine how many lives would be changed by being a part of a vibrant Unitarian Universalist community. That is the kind of church I want to serve. We must be the change that we wish to see. Join me.”

Rev. Amy Bowden Freedman, October 15th, 2006



Year of Decision

First Focus Discussion – Common Themes

Question #1:

Why do you come to Channing Memorial Church?

- **Spirituality / Inspiration**
- **Community / Caring / Fellowship**
- **Action / Outreach**
- **Sacred Space / Music**
- **Diversity of Beliefs / Shared Values**
- **Growth and Learning**



Year of Decision

First Focus Discussion – Common Themes

Question #2:

Property and Ministry are inter-related and integral parts of who we are as a Church. In your opinion, what percentage of our time and resources (energy and money) would you like to see invested in these two areas?

- **We (the Congregation) need more information. The leadership needs to educate the Congregation about property and program costs.**
- **There is diversity of opinion in our Congregation on the proportion of time and resources that need to be invested in our property and ministry. There was a recognition that the proportion changes over time.**
- **There was not a broad consensus on whether or why people value our Sanctuary or other property. Common opinions expressed include:**
 - ***“We have a responsibility to maintain the property.”***
 - ***“What goes on in buildings is much more important than buildings, and that minimal resources should be spent on buildings.”***
 - ***“Our buildings are historic and iconic.”***
 - ***“Our Sanctuary is a magic place – a place of sanctuary for us.”***



Year of Decision

First Focus Discussion – Common Themes

Question #3:

If Channing Memorial Church suddenly found itself with all of the money it needed, what would you like to see us do?

- **Expand programs and provide the resources (including staff) to support and sustain them**
- **Repair, maintain, and sustain our Sanctuary**
- **Expand local and world community outreach**
- **Increase our visibility in and communication with the community (spreading the good word)**
- **Improve and add useable space with adequate parking**



Year of Decision

First Focus Discussion – Common Themes

Question #4:

In areas other than property, do you believe Channing Memorial Church needs to make some changes? If so, in what areas and why? What is most important? How important is it that we make each of these changes?

- Expand our human resource (staff, volunteer participation, membership) base and make better use of it**
- Improve the functioning of our shared ministry, including leadership development, to attract new members and make best use of all individual talents**
- Improve lifespan religious education**
- Improve our connection with the local and wider world**



Numerical Growth

Factors related to numerical growth include:

- 1. Sunday worship attendance**
- 2. RE enrollment (adult and children's)**
- 3. Size of budget and number of activities**
- 4. Growth in numbers of active members**



Organic Growth

- **Growth of the Congregation as a functioning community and an institution that can engage with other institutions in society. Requires healthy organizational structures such as:**
 - 1. Policies, processes, practices and programs.**
 - 2. Recruiting and succession-planning practices for leaders.**
 - 3. Evaluation mechanisms for programs, volunteers, and paid staff.**
 - 4. Practices that deal with conflict openly and honestly.**



Maturation Growth

Maturation growth is growth in members':

- 1. Maturity of faith**
- 2. Depth of spiritual roots**
- 3. Breadth of religious imagination**





Incarnational Growth

The ability to take the meanings and values of Unitarian Universalism and make them real in the world outside the Congregation. A Congregation must be able to build itself into a religious community in which people can deepen their spiritual life, be challenged to live out their faith, and engage in the larger community to make the world more loving and just.



Committees Brainstormed 3 Scenarios

For 2016

- **“Return to a decade ago” scenario:**
 - 50 – 70 active members / families.
 - 50 – 60 “pledge units” providing approximately \$50K annually.
 - No long term funding source – other than annual fund drive and rental income – established to sustain properties.
- **“No change” scenario:**
 - Approximately 180 active members / families.
 - 110 “pledge units” providing approximately \$140K annually.
 - \$400K - \$700K capital campaign completed. Not sufficient for steeple repair.
 - No long term funding source – other than annual fund drive and rental income – established to sustain properties.
- **Growth scenario:**
 - 300+ active members / families providing \$300K in pledges annually.
 - \$1M - \$1.5M capital campaign completed – steeple repaired all buildings restored and in good state of repair. Endowment fund grown to sustain buildings into future.



Common Themes from Committees

Our shared ministry is strong and vital but . . .

- ***Current growth trend is not sustainable.***
 - **We cannot keep growing in ministry, programs, outreach without increasing our base of resources.**
 - ***Volunteers / staff overtaxed meeting demands of growing programs.***
 - ***Minister increasingly distracted by administration and problem solving – we don't make the fullest use of her talents.***
 - **We cannot repair and sustain our buildings without increasing our base of resources.**
 - ***Our financial commitment does not meet our needs.***
- ***Numerical and Organic growth could be positive.***
 - **More staff, more efficient processes, more resources.**
 - ***People won't work less but they will work more efficiently.***
 - ***Property challenges won't go away but they will be manageable.***



Position of the Governing Board

- Channing has come a long way in the last 10 years.
 - *With settled minister we have enriched our shared ministry.*
 - *We have increased commitment of time and resources.*
 - *We have begun to grapple with long-standing property challenges.*
- **Congregation wants grow in ministry, programs, outreach.**
- To sustain / expand programs & meet property challenges, more resources are required.
- **Growth has potential to change intimacy and bonds of fellowship that many of us treasure.**
- Therefore, our vision must embody a clear statement of the level of commitment we are willing to make to meet our growing needs / desires and solve our property challenges while fully expressing the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism and sustaining an environment of intimacy and fellowship that so many of us treasure.



Envisioning the Future

- ***What can the future look like?***
 - ***Brainstorming*** encourages creative alternatives to a problem.
 - ***Brainstorming*** helps answer questions like:
 - ***What are the implications of the alternatives available to us?***
 - ***What core competencies do we need to keep or acquire to succeed in the future?***
 - ***What key partnerships must we maintain and create to realize our vision?***