

Year of Decision – What We Have Learned Thus Far
As of March 1st, 2007

I. Ministry.

A. We know what the Congregation values about Channing.

1. Being part of a loving, caring community.
2. Spirituality.
3. Respect for a diversity of beliefs.
4. The freedom to believe.
5. Fellowship.
6. Service to others.

Source: Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Details.html

B. We know why people come to Channing.

1. Spirituality / Inspiration.
2. Community / Caring / Fellowship.
3. Action / Outreach.
4. Sacred Space / Music.
5. Diversity of beliefs / Shared values.
6. Growth and learning.

Source: Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html

C. We know that the Congregation values our Minister and all she brings to our shared ministry.

Sources:
Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html
Worship and Spirituality talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Worship/talking_points.html
Governing Board talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Gov_Board/talking_points.html

D. We know that the Congregation and our Minister value the programs offered at Channing and would like to see them expanded.

Sources:
Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html
Rev. Amy Freedman's Sermon on Vision and Change,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1015_sermon.html
Social Justice Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Social_Justice/talking_points.html
Worship and Spirituality talking points,

http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Worship/talking_points.html
Small Group Ministry talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/SGM/talking_points.html
Religious Education Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/RE/talking_points.html
Music / Choir talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Music/talking_points.html

- E. We know that the Congregation and our Minister want Channing's presence and activity in the wider world (outreach) to grow.

Sources:
Rev. Amy Freedman's Sermon on Vision and Change,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1015_sermon.html
Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html
Social Justice Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Social_Justice/talking_points.html

- F. We know that the Governing Board and leaders of key committees feel that they do not have the time or resources to sustain programs and outreach at their current level let alone to provide for the growth the Congregation desires. More resources such as additional staff, better governance and leadership development, more pledges, and perhaps more active members are required.

Sources:
Governing Board talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Gov_Board/talking_points.html
Worship and Spirituality talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Worship/talking_points.html
Religious Education Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/RE/talking_points.html
Results of Focus Discussion #2,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Focus_2_Raw.pdf

- G. We know that some are concerned that our community will experience a loss of intimacy if we get too big too fast.

Sources:
Governing Board talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Gov_Board/talking_points.html

II. Property.

- A. We know that the issue of repair, upkeep, and maintenance of our property and then what to do with it / how to use it dominates other discussions.
1. We know that most people value our Sanctuary as a sacred space and / or as a memorial and historic building that should be preserved.

Source: Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html

2. We know that the question of maintaining our space and its utilization appears to be a key issue within the Congregation.
 - a. Some find the challenge of maintaining all of our buildings, including the Sanctuary daunting and are unsure how we could afford or how we would go about repairing and sustaining our buildings.

Source: Results of Focus Discussion #2,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Focus_2_Raw.pdf

- b. Some have advocated divesting ourselves of some of our space to raise funds to redevelop remaining space for Congregation use.

Source: Presidents' Task Force Report,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Channing_Presidents'_Task_Force_Report_v2.pdf

- c. A number of committees have indicated the desire or need for more space to sustain and enrich growing programs.

Sources:
Fellowship Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Fellowship/talking_points.html
Religious Education Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/RE/talking_points.html
Social Justice Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Social_Justice/talking_points.html

- d. Many believe that we devote too much of our time and / or resources to property issues.

Sources:
Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html
Results of Focus Discussion #2,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Focus_2_Raw.pdf

- B. We know the extent of our property repair challenges and the projected costs of repair.

Sources:
On-site / Insight Capital Needs Assessment,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Channing_Capital_Needs_Assessment_Text.pdf
Stained Glass Condition Survey
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Stained_Glass_Condition_Survey-Feb_06.pdf
2004 Steeple Condition Assessment,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Structures_North_Steeple_Assesment-2004.pdf

- C. We know that there is outside support (to some degree) to repair and sustain our Sanctuary as evidenced by the \$272,000 in grants we received this year. We also know that we could be eligible for more grants especially if we demonstrate commitment to sustaining our Sanctuary (although to what extent is unknown).

Sources:
Finance Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Finance/talking_points.html
Property Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Projections_Upon_Moving_Forward.html

D. We know that many different possibilities exist for our property and space, such as those identified in the Presidents' Task Force report as well as many creative ideas voiced in our Focus Discussions.

Sources:
Results of Focus Discussion #1,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/2006_1109_Discuss_1_Summary_Slides.html
Results of Focus Discussion #2,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Focus_2_Raw.pdf
Presidents' Task Force Report,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Channing_Presidents'_Task_Force_Report_v2.pdf

E. We know that addressing our property challenges is financially feasible but will require a long-term commitment of time, energy, and financial resources (a combination of the Congregation's and the larger community's).

1. Per the On-site / Insight Capital Needs Assessment, a strategy implemented over 20 years would likely be required.
2. Financing would likely come from some combination of loans (repaid over the 20-year period) or selling of assets, a capital campaign drive, and outside grants.
3. Some means of managing the implementation strategy would be needed; perhaps by establishing a separate foundation as Touro Synagogue has done.

Sources:
Finance Committee talking points,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Finance/talking_points.html
On-site / Insight Capital Needs Plan
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Capital_Needs_Assessment_Detailed_20-Year_Plan.pdf
Presidents' Task Force Report,
http://www.channingchurch.org/YOD/Property/Channing_Presidents'_Task_Force_Report_v2.pdf

Year of Decision – Questions We Need to Answer to Craft Our Vision

- I. **Ministry.** Given the Congregation's expressed desire to expand our programs, expand our community outreach and sustain our shared ministry into the future,
 - A. Should we commit to increase the number of staff, the hours of our staff, and / or the pay of our staff (to ensure consistency with UUA guidelines) to assist in managing growing programs, and empower the Governing Board to develop and implement a strategy to meet this commitment in a measured fashion over a number of years? Why or why not?
 - B. Should we commit to increase the amount of space available to the Congregation in some way, and empower the Governing Board to develop a strategy for more efficient space utilization using the best recommendations available? Why or why not?
 - C. Should we commit to increase the resource base of our community by increasing the number of members and / or pledges to pay for I.A and I.B, and empower the Governing Board to develop and implement a strategy to meet this commitment in a measured fashion over a number of years? Why or why not?
- II. **Property.** Given that our property challenges are significant but that there are feasible solutions that will require time and resources,
 - A. Should we commit to remain at our current site in Newport, RI and to restore our Sanctuary (including the steeple) as our spiritual home?
 - B. If the answer to II.A is yes, should we empower the Governing Board to develop a plan to restore our Sanctuary and develop our remaining property in such a way that it provides the Congregation with sufficient program space while leveraging the value of our property assets to assist in securing needed capital?
 - C. If the answer to II.B is yes, do we, as a Congregation, commit to implementing this plan as a community over a period of up to 20 years?
 - D. If the answer to II.A or II.B is no, what do you recommend?"