

Strategic Action Plan

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church

Fort Worth, Texas

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Abstract

The enclosed strategic action plan for Westside Unitarian Universalist Church presents our vision, mission, values, internal assessment, objectives, goals, strategies for goal attainment, and plans that execute those strategies within the scope of the next five years.

- Mission – Westside UU Church makes a positive difference in the lives of our members, our families, and the world at large through supportive relationships, religious exploration, and social action.
- Vision – Westside UU Church will grow and become a more influential liberal religious presence through active service in our community and the world at large.
- Values – (a) The inherent worth and dignity of every person; (b) Justice, equity and compassion in human relations; (c) Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations; (d) A free and responsible search for truth and meaning; (e) The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large; (f) The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all; (g) Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats –
 - Strengths
 - A dedicated and talented church community
 - Quality of minister – inspirational, professional, and compassionate
 - Effective programs and activities designed for congregational needs, including a well structured religious education program
 - Effective communications – web site, weekly web postings, newsletter, new visitor follow up
 - Financial strength and stability
 - Effective church government

- Weaknesses
 - Small congregation size with a mature population, too few persons below the age of 18, and member burnout
 - Transience – lack of a permanent home in which to establish an identity, energy spent searching, and resources consumed
 - Limited organized community service
 - Limited visibility and outreach
 - Limited financial base – potential loss of major donors
- Opportunities
 - Availability of 901 Page Ave, including rental income, at a cost current membership can afford
 - Possible opportunities with other properties that may become available
 - Increase minister to $\frac{3}{4}$ time
 - Financing from NTAUUS and other cash flow opportunities, i.e. NTAUUS grants, Chalice Lighter grants, matching grants, endowments
 - Membership growth – Fort Worth population growth
 - Program improvement
 - Partner with a “breakthrough” congregation for sharing of best practices
- Threats
 - Constant change in location signals instability to the community

- Potential of any move or property purchase to splinter congregation
- Unknown risks and expenses of property ownership
- Objectives – Westside Unitarian Universalist Church seeks to grow, become a more influential liberal religious presence, and increase our service to our community and the world at large.
- Goals
 - Growth
 - Establish permanent home – creates a platform for growth and stability
 - Membership growth – reach 125 members by 2010
 - Financial growth – increase stability, investment, and giving
 - Liberal Religious Presence
 - Increase number of, effectiveness, and participation in programs
 - Increase visibility in the community
 - Increase Community Service
 - Refine existing community service programs
 - Identify and adopt new community service programs
 - Generate congregation-wide support of community service programs
- Strategies and Plans of Execution
 - Acquire 901 Page Avenue

- Plan: Board of directors & finance committee crafting purchase proposal for 12/3/06 presentation to congregation – gives WUU a permanent home
- Increase minister to $\frac{3}{4}$ time
 - Plan: Committee of Ministry and Board of Directors negotiate an increase to $\frac{3}{4}$ time with Reverend Dr. Russell Elleven – promotes increased attendance and growth goals; present increase proposal to congregation by 5/07 for approval and 7/07 implementation
 - Plan: Board of Directors and Committee of Ministry solicit NTAUUS grants to underwrite cost increase, phased out over three years; Congregation phases in responsibility for future year costs and sustains by a combination of increased contributions from members, rental income from Montessori, and, if necessary, reduced operating costs; submit by 5/07 for 7/07 implementation
- Partner with community social, education, and action groups
 - Plan: WUU increase participation with liberal community groups that share similar ideals – Board of Directors & Social Justice Committee identify/enable liaisons in 2007 – 2008 (suggested timeframe)
- Add part time administrative staff
 - Plan: Board of Directors add position costs to fiscal 2007 – 2008 budget; Justification - position is value added - adds a single point

of contact for church administrative needs, presents a “consistent face” to the public, goes to improving church organization

- Plan: Board of Directors solicits NTAUUS grants to underwrite cost increase, phased out over three years; Congregation phases in responsibility for future year costs and sustains by a combination of increased contributions from members, rental income from Montessori, and, if necessary, reduced operating costs; submit by 5/07 for 7/07
- Membership growth – reach 125 members by 2010
 - Plan: Capitalize on Fort Worth population growth. According to the latest U.S. Census population statistics, the City of Fort Worth’s July 2005 population was 604,538, an addition of 72,419 persons since April 2000. This represents a 13.6% increase, making it one of the fastest growing cities in the U. S. over that five year period. The city has continued to add jobs and population since 2005, with no end in sight.
 - Achieve 8% net growth each year starting in 2007 to achieve goal of 125 members in 2010: 100 in 2007, 108 in 2008, 117 in 2009, 125 in 2010
- Aggressive marketing campaign promoting growth of WUU
 - Plan: (a) If purchased, hold a grand opening celebration of WUU’s new home – solicit article in religious sections of local newspapers & on UUA web site – 2007; (b) Increased print advertising in

- religious sections of local newspapers; (c) Enhanced signage at 901 Page Avenue – upon permit approval by city; (d) Put location photo and directions on the home page of our Web site – 2007; (e) Get included on the Chamber of Commerce places of worship web site list – 2007 (suggested timeframes)
- Mine the immediate neighborhoods for new members
 - Plan: Distribute flyers throughout immediate neighborhood informing about our presence and purpose – Membership Committee in 2007 (suggested timeframe)
 - Plan: Participate in neighborhood functions
 - Explore and welcome proven UUA growth strategies
 - Plan: Worship committee, Committee for Ministry, and Board of Directors research and implement actions that promote congregational growth as recommended by UUA and DBLE, starting in 2007 – 2008 (suggested timeframe)
 - Financial growth – increase stability, investment, and giving
 - Plan: Finance Committee and Board of Directors develop plan for increased financial stability through (a) goal to raise the median pledge unit contribution to \$900; (b) explore secure, higher growth cash investment tools; (c) create endowment fund for long term growth; (d) promote financial support for part time administrative position, religious education director increase to ½ time, and minister increase to ¾ time

- NTAUUS grant for building improvement
 - Plan: Board of Directors annually submit for grant money available through NTAUUS & target for building improvements that enhance/improve the worship experience at WUU
- Short term fund raiser to complete the required down payment
 - Plan: Finance committee conduct fund raiser for needed down payment starting mid-December continuing through January 2007
- Complete Welcoming Congregation certification by June 2007
- Resume Adult Religious Education program
 - Plan: Board of Directors establish an Adult R.E. committee and resume program by 2nd quarter 2007 (suggested timeframe)
- College student outreach
 - Plan: Partner with TCU student organizations to create a liberal religious presence on the campus – Membership Committee in 2007 – 2008 (suggested timeframe)
- Create a high school age youth group
 - Plan: Director of Religious Education to create a high school age youth group that promotes UU principles – Religious Education Committee form in 2007 – 2008 (suggested timeframe)
- Revitalize “Doug’s Ministry” for welcoming visitors
 - Plan: Membership Committee to implement in 2007 (suggested timeframe)

- Explore formation of covenant groups – helps serve specific member needs and integrate new members within WUU in 2007 – 2008 (suggested timeframe)
- Create a congregational health ministry and committee
 - Plan: In 2007 – 2008 (suggested timeframe), invite Harris Methodist Fort Worth Hospital to present their Faith Community Nursing program