

SUMMARY VERSION
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Los Gatos
Long Range Plan
For
Fiscal Years 2008 to 2012

Introduction

This is a summary version of the UUFLG Long Range Plan for 2008-2012. The full, detailed plan includes additional background information as well as detailed implementation tasks with task assignments.

The Long Range Plan was prepared by a five person committee using information gathered in a congregation survey and conduct of a series of group discussion meetings. The plan headings are derived from three declarations from the UUFLG Mission Statement with Growth added as a fourth area. The four plan headings are addressed individually beginning on the following page.

The bylaws of the UUFLG assign responsibility for “facilitation and leadership of long range planning” to the UUFLG Vice-President. The Long Range Planning Committee will remain active to assist the Vice-President in monitoring progress and any needed revisions to the plan.

Major Themes by Category by Year:

Category	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Place	Reduce Debt & Plan for Expansion	Intellectual & Ethical Concentration	Major Fund Raising	Construction or Building Expansion	Intern Minister
Spirituality	Religious Ed for Children & Adults and Music	Improved Music and Choir & Part-time Music Director	Additional Spirituality Programs	Community Lecture Series on UU Values	Support Program for Single Parents
Growth	Awareness Campaign	Improve “Comeback” Rate	Improve Integration of New Members	Funding for Growth	Continued Membership Growth
Community	Community Support Committee Formed	Indigenous (to UUFLG) Community Support Activities	Community Support Expansion	Expand Awareness	Major Outreach Program Started
Long Range Planning	Long Range Plan Approved	Long Range Plan Audit	Long Range Plan Update	Long Range Plan Audit	Long Range Plan Update

PLACE (AND PROGRAMS)

Goal: Provide a place where people are inspired to think about and discuss values, ethics and the meaning of their lives

Situation:

The Fellowship purchased our wonderful building in 1988, and in 1992 had special fund raising to expand the building to meet our immediate need for classroom and meeting space. Over the years there have been several projects to improve the facility. The West Room was remodeled in 2000, and in 2006 the kitchen was upgraded. The attractive landscaping has been a constant work in progress and now has automatic watering. The most recent work (2006) has been replacement of all of the gutters on the roof. Also completed was a remodel of our foyer (2006-07). While the building has been adequate for our needs we need to be thinking about the future and how having a settled minister and growth is changing our needs. The plan addresses “place” in the physical sense as well as a “community” sense.

One of the pertinent items that came out in our October 2006 survey is that our members, by a very significant majority, do not want to consider moving from our current location. The plan is based upon improving our existing facilities instead of moving to a new facility/location.

Objective P-1: Provide for the expansion and improvement of our facility over time to continue to support the requirements of a growing and changing Fellowship.

Strategy:

The strategy is to incrementally improve our physical facility and programs that facilitate community as we grow in numbers and as our requirements change.

Objective P-2: Enhance the overall Fellowship satisfaction via intellectual and ethically oriented events and programs.

Strategy:

Provide a wide array of interesting programs and events that appeal to our intellectual, ethical and UU values and to our sense of community.

Objective P-3: Prepare our Fellowship to be able to hire an Intern (not Interim!) minister to assist the Settled Minister and our RE program.

Strategy:

Now that we have a Settled Minister we have a future opportunity to employ an Intern Minister. This would both provide a service as well as enhance the Fellowship reputation within the UU community. The process is not clearly understood but our neighbor UU community in Sunnyvale has done this over the past several years.

SPIRITUALITY

Goal: Stimulate spiritual growth in children and adults through exposure to a wide variety of religious thought and experience

Situation:

Spirituality differs from person to person: some feel spiritual while attending a mass or ritual in a grand cathedral while others feel spiritual on a canoe trip in the wilderness or looking at the Milky Way. Some enjoy the spiritual feeling of worshipping in a group setting. For others spirituality is an intense internal experience. Our Fellowship's members and friends have an incredibly diverse set of religious beliefs (see our 2006 Membership Survey for details).

Since 2000 we have had five part time "Directors of Religious Education" or DREs. Most of them were selected by a search committee, approved by a membership vote, given a contract and yet none of them served our Fellowship for more than one year, due to a number of reasons including DREs moving away from our area. It should be noted that while each DRE was competent, none of them were qualified UUA DREs, one was not a Unitarian Universalist, and none of them provided adult religious education. The members of the DRE search committees found a lack of qualified DREs within a reasonable commute distance from our Fellowship.

Having competent people running our Religious Education program for children is vitally important to our Fellowship. The recent member survey showed that there is also a strong desire on the part of members for adult religious education. This need has not been adequately addressed for perhaps the past 10 or so years.

Objective S-1: Provide a quality religious education program for children and adults.

Strategy:

During the Fellowship year 2006-07 we decided to not search for another part time DRE. Instead the board approved funding for two paid RE teachers. In the 2007-08 budget year we decided to hire a DRE with pay equivalent to a ¼ time fully qualified DRE. Over the next several years, as growth of the children's RE program continues, we will support our DRE to become better trained. When this happens we will increase the hours and expect the DRE to also handle the planning and coordination of our adult religious education.

Objective S-2: Provide a high quality music program for our Sunday Service

Strategy:

For many years we have been able to get along with voluntary pianists to support our Sunday Services. The volunteer music program has been very good but it will be necessary to hire paid staff to handle the growth in the music program. This will be done as funds are available and as skilled personnel can be found.

Objective S-3: Provide a mid-week meditation service

Strategy:

This will initially be an experiment to see if this is a viable program. Many churches and Fellowships have a midweek service and such services are often meditation oriented.

Objective S-4: Provide a community lecture series addressing subjects compatible with our UU values and programs.

Strategy:

The intent here is to establish a coherent set of lectures on subjects of interest to our members and to invite speakers to provide the lectures. We would also to invite, via advertising, members of our surrounding towns and communities. The expectation is that a charge will be made for the series. The actual lectures will be held in the evenings and a series might last for 6 or 8 weeks. Potential series subject matter could be: Religions of the World, Civil Rights in the 21st Century, A History of Religious Activism, Social Action Issues, etc.

Objective S-5: Provide a support program for single parents that gives them validation and the tools to be the spiritual guide for their children (this program can also be open to others).

Strategy:

Provide a safe and friendly support environment for single parents. If we are able to help these people we will have done a great service to this select group and at the same time expose them to our UU community.

GROWTH

Goal: Anticipate requirements and support UUFLG growth and implement methods and processes to facilitate and accommodate that growth.

Situation:

After a year with our settled Minister, the UUFLG anticipates a period of increasing growth. There was a slight increase in members during 2006 and 2007. A larger membership means increased personnel as well as financial resources. Increased resources are needed to expand and enhance service to both our internal and external communities. To effectively welcome new members and provide benefit for them and the Fellowship community, the new members must be integrated into Fellowship activities and operations. The area of growth has two items of concern: 1) to facilitate and encourage growth and, 2) to integrate new members. Based on the congregation survey results, the Fellowship plans to remain in its current location and will self-limit growth to that which can be accommodated by physical expansion at the current site.

Objective G-1: Attract new Fellowship members

Strategy:

In order to attract new members, we plan to develop and implement advertising and outreach programs to increase community awareness of UU in general and the UUFLG specifically. Advertising and community awareness efforts should not be restricted to print ads in the local newspaper but to embrace all reasonable means of attracting positive attention to UU and the UUFLG. Forms of advertising might include (but not be limited to):

- Participation in community activities and events
- Participate in Social Action activities
- Contribute to “New-Comer” realtor information packets
- Distribution of UUFLG brochure / “flyer”
- Posting of UUFLG events “flyers”
- Local newspaper articles about guest speaker(s)
- Establish a strategy for use of the Internet to attract new prospective members
- PBS auction matching grant
- Participate in PCD – regional marketing campaigns

Objective G-2: Increase return attendance by prospective members.

Strategy:

Improve first impressions and demonstrate a genuine welcome and personal interest. Update the new-attende welcoming and orientation process. Develop and implement a “visitors” aesthetic inspection and correction process.

Objective G-3: Integrate new members smoothly and efficiently

Strategy:

Enhance the process for new member orientation and integration into Fellowship activities and operation. Enhance New Member orientation classes. Involve new members in Fellowship activities and operation

Objective G-4: Ensure adequate funds are planned and availability to accommodate Fellowship growth and operation.

Strategy:

Develop a long-range congregation estimated growth profile. Develop a long-range operating funds needs analysis and establish a year-round fund raising activity.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Goal: Expand and enhance the support activities provided by the UUFLG.

Situation:

Based on information gathered from the broad-based congregation survey and Cottage Meeting discussions, the UUFLG has a strong interest in expanding and enhancing its community support activities. The survey also indicated that there is a lack of awareness by the congregation of the current activities. A special emphasis is needed to both internally publicize current community support, enhance performance of current activities and to develop new areas for community support. In addition to satisfying a desire of the congregation, increased community support activity will “advertise” the UUFLG and UU in general and should attract additional potential members.

Objective C-1: Formation of a UUFLG Community Support Coordinating Committee

Strategy

A coordinating committee is needed in order to ensure successful enhancement and expansion of community support activities. Potential activities may fall under other committee areas of responsibility.

Objective C-2: Develop an indigenous (UUFLG led) community support activity

Strategy:

In order to expand current UUFLG community support, potentially attract new members and encourage current membership participation, the UUFLG will develop an indigenous (UUFLG led) community support activity. In addition, low cost or free use of the Fellowship facilities may be offered to benefit outside community support activities. A yearly review should be made to determine if a refreshed indigenous activity is needed.

Objective C-3: Participate in externally sponsored community support activities

Strategy:

There are several externally sponsored community support activities that might be of interest to the UUFLG congregation. However, the available opportunities may not be widely known by the congregation nor have a Fellowship “Champion” to organize participation. A periodic review of externally sponsored opportunities should be maintained from which a few opportunities can be selected and participation developed.

Objective C-4: Improve internal and external awareness of UUFLG community involvement activities

Strategy:

Develop and implement internal advertising to increase community awareness of UUFLG community support activities. Externally publicize UUFLG community support activities.