

Summary of Our Strategic Vision for 2018
Developed by Members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, New Hampshire
Initiated September 2008

Working with Strategic Planning Consultant, Larry Lemmel, 34 church members gathered for two full Saturdays on September 27 and October 11, 2008 to develop a Strategic Vision for 2018 for our church. This group included members of the Executive Board and Staff, our minister, committee chairs, and many other new and long term members of our congregation. The result was a remarkably user-friendly, workable plan for achieving “the church of our highest aspirations” within ten years.

WE STARTED WITH OUR VISION, MISSION AND COVENANT:

VISION

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, New Hampshire will be a beacon of liberal religious thought and action whose members are committed to the search for truth and meaning, the acceptance of diversity, and the promotion of social justice within a supportive and caring community.

MISSION AND COVENANT

Embracing the purposes and principles of Unitarian Universalism and the Vision we have chosen, as members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, New Hampshire, we will:

- Support and respect one another in our searches for meaning, value, and personal/spiritual growth;
- Join with one another in providing, nurturing, and celebrating a free religious community through common worship, shared activities, and programs for all ages;
- Promote a sense of family within the congregation through mutual support and friendship, and by attending to each other’s needs;
- Be a positive presence for, and work to create, a more just, humane, and caring society through outreach to our local community and to the wider human family.

WE ASKED OURSELVES:

The year is 2018. We have achieved our Vision and have successfully lived up to our Mission and Covenant. How do we know we have done this? What is our church like now, in 2018?

WE DEVELOPED THIS LIST OF POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF SUCCESS:

- ▶ everyone feels that our church is a community home
- ▶ our church community is as diverse as the changing community that we live in
- ▶ we have more than 600 members
- ▶ the majority of the congregation participates in the activities the church provides
- ▶ as a congregation, we feel comfortable with ourselves and are without internal dissent
- ▶ we have spun off another congregation
- ▶ we are financially secure
- ▶ our members are working throughout the community in social services; we’re known as a community that walks the talk
- ▶ our historic building has its infrastructure needs met
- ▶ we are a respected, visible influence for liberal religion throughout Nashua

- ▶ we have active members in the 18 to 40 age group
- ▶ our religious education program is truly life-span
- ▶ we are better connected with the White Wing School, helping them meet their needs and stay afloat
- ▶ we are known throughout the region for being the most supporting engaging and energetic church regardless of one's faith belief
- ▶ visitors and strangers feel very warmly welcomed
- ▶ long time members feel very warmly welcomed
- ▶ there is an institutional process for encouraging youth to be involved in the church
- ▶ we ask more and expect more from the young people in the church
- ▶ our church is vibrant
- ▶ we reach out to groups that utilize our facilities and welcome them into our community
- ▶ the community knows that, on the important issues of the day, we are there to help
- ▶ our pews are full and our members feel supported
- ▶ we have visibly diverse faith

TO DETERMINE HOW WE ACHIEVE THESE INDICATORS OF SUCCESS WE:

Brainstormed over 120 steps we can and are taking to achieve our Vision and Mission & Covenant.

These steps became our "Pool of Initiatives," which were grouped together into related activities. These groups were then given titles based on what completion of those initiatives would achieve.

THESE TITLES THEN BECAME OUR:

OBJECTIVES FOR REACHING OUR STRATEGIC VISION FOR 2018

- I. Involve Everyone in Financial Ownership
- II. Build a Stronger, More Welcoming Community
- III. Strengthen the Bonds within the Church Community
- IV. Develop and Promote Our UU Identity
- V. Grow Membership
- VI. Retain Youth and Attract Young Adults
- VII. Improve Process, Programs, and Systems
- VIII. Increase Volunteerism
- IX. Improve Facilities

WE ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON OBJECTIVES I – III:

OBJECTIVE I: Involve Everyone in Financial Ownership

Expected Results

- ✓ Every member contributes
- ✓ We have further reduced reliance on our endowment
- ✓ Pledges cover operating expenses
- ✓ We have long-term financial stability
- ✓ Increased congregational commitment
- ✓ Increased endowment through Planned Giving

OBJECTIVE II: Build a Stronger, More Welcoming Community

Expected Results

- ✓ Newcomers feel recognized and welcome
- ✓ We have many visitors
- ✓ Many visitors become members
- ✓ We have doubled our memberships since 2008
- ✓ We have a visibly diverse congregation
- ✓ We have well defined, intentional and friendly ways of assimilating newcomers into congregational life
- ✓ Greater Nashua is aware of our vibrant congregation and our contributions to the community
- ✓ We have diverse programming for spiritual development and services
- ✓ The church is a fun place where people want to be

OBJECTIVE III: Strengthen the Bonds within the Church Community

Expected Results

- ✓ Members and friends have a clear understanding of what it means to be a member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, grounded in our Mission, Covenant, and Principles
- ✓ We have high membership retention
- ✓ Our youth routinely become members when they become adults
- ✓ We have structures in place for communicating the joys and concerns of members and friends, so we all feel supported by each other
- ✓ The church is a major part of members' lives
- ✓ We have a unified, interactive community where each of us strives to know everyone else in the congregation
- ✓ We have many vibrant activities with great participation by both members and the community at large
- ✓ We have systems and processes in place that provide the flexibility we need to respond to current needs as they arise
- ✓ Members and friends feel comfortable organizing themselves to accomplish specific tasks and objectives
- ✓ Members feel comfortable taking leadership on new initiatives