

**Factors/Aspects of the Congregation That Enhance Growth/
Attractiveness to Newcomers**
(responses from five groups)

Group 1

Friendly/welcoming

Youth program and children's RE

Courtship of new members

Adult RE and small group ministry

Mental health community ministry

UU values and principles

Inspiring sermons

Great music—eclectic—choir—hymn singing

Enthusiasm, willingness to participate, pitch in (i.e., take down)

Varied and beautiful aesthetics

Vibrant, accessible, egalitarian spirit in all aspects of the congregation

Informal—comfortable dress is OK

Group 2

Friendliness/welcoming

Core values

Openness—to all spiritual paths

Children's RE

Warmth and intelligence of members

Small group and RE for adults

Religious flexibility

No pressure

Welcoming congregation status

Life affirming

Regular physical space

Professional leadership

Website

Regular service

Opportunity to hear from many with many different views

Group 3

Welcoming, friendly congregation
People who are well informed
Greeters
Sermons, relevant, well done
Sermons provoke thought
Religious education
Openness to ideas, beliefs
Good music/some good rituals
Attractiveness of facility
Adequate parking
Some evening use of building
Openness to young people's activity
Many children
Approachable minister
Have website—it is up to date

Group 4

Active, capable people
Friendly, small atmosphere
Nice meeting space
Lots of programs
Commitment to children's RE
Great music
Good parking
Easy access
A lot of agreement that growth is a positive goal
Politically liberal
Age diversity
Lots of kids
Website
Pastoral and worship associates
High energy
Membership committee and tracking—one follow-up phone call after joining
Greeting newcomers

Group 5

Attracts religiously diverse people to discuss ideas
Freedom of thought
UU principles

Strong lay-led services/programs

RE

Community

Intelligent people—open-minded, caring, flexible, creative, friendly, challenge to be a better person

Sacred and casual —“come as you are”—unpretentious

Sacred into everyday life

Not afraid to laugh at ourselves

Guilt-free zone

Non-judgmental

Genuine caring

Freedom to have your own theology

“right size”

Music

Joys and concerns

Factors That Inhibit Growth/Attractiveness to Newcomers

(responses from five groups)

Group 1

Invisible meeting space

Limited size

Difficult availability logistics

Fear of the return of two services

Fear of building campaign

Lack of community signage/permanent signs

Lack of interest in churches

Not out in community enough

Lack of permanent minister

Not getting people in the door

Not big enough to offer weekday services

No advertising budget

Group 2

No settled minister—instability and unknowns

Unconventional

No dogma

No hell

Cultural “sameness”

Lack of money
Not big enough—lack of anonymity
No social status for being here
Reluctance to proselytize—hesitant to “sell”
Need to explain UU
Ambivalence around word “church”
Need to “overcome” cultural heritage to come here

Group 3

Lack of permanent sign
Lack of presence in community
No playground
Need advertisement
Lack of UU information
A spiritual movement/religion that is hard to explain
Intellectualism
Lack of spiritual ritual
Lack of diversity of ethnic/race

Group 4

Signs
Location
Lack of awareness of UU
Lack of exposure to community
Lack of publicity funds
Lack of publicity
Unclear definition of UU identity
Internal and personal hesitancy to promote our faith/UUness
No brief explanation of UU
Not east to find—visibility, search engine

Group 5

Size of Cole Hall
Need bigger sign on street
No Wayside Pulpit (changing quotation on street marquis)
Money
No way to publicize our existence
Cracked floor
No pipe organ

Goals Generated by Interest Groups

(with number of sticker votes from whole group @4 stickers per participant)

Membership and Publicity Group

Goal #1 20% increase in membership by July, 2011 (6 votes)
a) develop an "Elevator Speech"
b) "business card" with Elevator Speech members buy, about \$5-\$10

Goal #2 Community awareness (20 votes)
a) permanent sign - 2011
b) facebook/twitter - 2009
c) Wayside pulpit (electronic)

Physical Space Group

Goal #1 Building fund has \$30,000 in five years (6 votes)
Publicize its existence
Special fund-raising for it
Budget line item
Bequest structure
Round sanctuary
Stained-glass windows—the whole gothic trip

Goal #2 Find an existing building to buy and remodel in 10 years (7 votes)

Organizational Structure Group—board, program council, governance

Goal #1 Year 1: Nominating Committee charter — add Leadership Development
Year 2: model Nominating Committee — Leadership Development across the Board (11 votes)

Goal #2 Bylaws—review and possible revision (10 votes)

Goal #3 Plan for growth—shadow structure (2 votes)

Finance and Stewardship Group

- Goal #1 Donation envelopes indicating whether pledge, building fund, in honor or memory of, other - 2 months (8 votes)
- Goal #2 Planned giving program for bequests and/or endowment fund (local, district, UUA) - 6 months (10 votes)
- Goal #3 Create new committee or expand roles of existing finance/stewardship committees to include planned giving, etc - 2 months (0 votes)

Program Group A –worship, children’s RE, adult RE, social concerns, interest groups

- Goal #1 Send youth members to district-wide conferences (0 votes)
- Goal #2 Donate 1/2 money from collection place 1X/month to organizations chosen by Social Concerns Committee. Those organizations would make short presentation to congregation. (11 votes)
- Goal #3 Codify administrative procedures for DRE so volunteers can take over administrative work to free DRE for planning/executing children’s RE. Break administrative work into doable tasks, like Sunday Services does (8 votes)

Program Group B

- Goal #1 By spring 2010 offer adult RE classes that are available to the public as well (11 votes)
- Goal #2 By September 1 DRE hired. (8 votes)
- Goal #3 More space for children’s RE and a full-time DRE - (5 years) (2 votes)