



Church Office Hours:

The church office is open Mon. through Fri. from 10-3pm, but please call ahead to ensure access.

Please contact office manager Susan Stewart to arrange for a temporary key if you need access any other time.

Rev. Fees has office hours by appointment. Please call (610) 372-0928 or email sandrafees@verizon.net, to schedule an appointment. Monday is Rev. Fees day off.

Univoice Submission Guidelines

Email submissions by attaching a Word file or including your material in the body of an email message to univoice@uuberks.org. You may also put typewritten submissions in our mailbox in the new Chalice House in the box labelled *Univoice*.

The deadline is the 15th of each month. Please include the date, time and location of events, and the full name and phone number or email of contacts.

~Meghan Cocuzza, Editor

The Univoice

Mapping our future: Mission and Vision

We are a church with deep roots in our Unitarian Universalist religious tradition and in the county of Berks and the city of Reading. And we are indebted to those church members who have come before us for their dedication and efforts. As our hymnal reminds us every Sunday with its hymns, meditations and prayers, we are a part of a living past that flows into our present lives.

As connected as we are to our past, our congregation has witnessed an unprecedented time of change in a number of areas of church life. In the last five years we have seen increases in church membership of nearly 25%, growth in attendance of 39% and increases in pledge contributions of 37%. In that period, we have installed a full time minister whose presence has animated the congregation, creating a renewed possibility in many areas of church life. We have continued to develop the Religious Education program, increasing the Religious Education director's position to a half-time status and we have begun to strengthen our Music Program by adding a part time Music director. The support system for all areas of our church has been enhanced by our hiring of an Office Administrator and increasing the position to 25 hours a week, spread over 5 days. In other areas of church life in these years, we have worked to become a welcoming congregation and undertaken an important capital development project to combine our two church buildings into one unified church facility, renovating the spaces to create new usable spaces for our programs and ministries. In short we are substantially different in a number of important ways.

And so like a number of UU churches that have undergone this kind of dramatic change, we find that it is important that we stop and see where we are, what we have become and where we want to go. Last fall the Board appointed a mission-vision committee to review our congregation's goals and accomplishments and to solicit and incorporate the ideas and initiatives of our present membership into our congregation's ongoing vision and mission.

For the last seven months, the Vision-Mission committee (chaired by Doug Mealing with members Sandra Fees, Mindy Bortz, Peter Mitchell and Jeff Woodward) has been meeting to review church documents and to gather from members the ideas needed to form a Vision Statement and a Mission Statement that reflect the commitments of our current congregation. What emerged from these inquiries were a number of commonly emphasized ideas and initiatives that indicated the directions that members would like our church to move toward. These commonly repeated ideas formed various formal strategic goals that the congregation indicated it wished to pursue in the next five years. The committee started with the membership's most commonly mentioned suggestions about the desired future for our church. And from these specific strategic goals, the committee drew the more general cluster of ideas that have become the five themes of the Mission statement.

It is important to keep in mind that Vision, Mission and Mission goals are interrelated concepts; Vision has the broadest focus indicating our overall dreams; the Mission Statement spells out the more general themes of the Vision; the Mission goals indicate more specifically how these themes will be implemented.

And now these statements are ready for congregational consideration, feedback and eventual approval in the May annual meeting. We hope that you will take some time to read these and to think about them. (featured on pg. 6)

Vision Mission Committee - Doug Mealing, Mindy Bortz, Sandra Fees, Peter Mitchell and Jeff Woodward



