

Table Talk 9/9/19 (5 tables reporting)

What is at our core?

- 7 Principles (iv)
 - This community allows me to live our principles
- Social Justice (v)
 - How we respond varies, when we are at our best is when we take things on directly
 - Active change in the community
- Welcoming/inclusion (iii)
- Community of spirituality (ii) (services, music/choir, classes, community)
- Community—being there for each other (ii)
- Children developing
- Climate change

What could we become?

- Broaden welcome/expand/more diverse (iv)
 - Reach out and connect—many don't know about us. There are a lot of people out there who identify with our goals—we need to draw them in. (iii)
 - Are we too introverted? Welcome anyone who comes in, but are we going out and inviting them in?
 - Invite people. We need to see the new faces and ask them personally—people like to be included. (ii)
 - More with youth
 - Attraction rather than promotion
 - Family feeling without fear of being indoctrinated
 - Now that we have full-time minister and RE Director, we are on a good course.
 - Need to be dynamic to keep this going.
- Build reputation/credibility (ii)
 - Respect for individuality of belief
 - Many turned off by traditional “church”
- More focus on supporting each other on spiritual journey
 - What inspires you? We focus on knowledge-based/evidence-based. Could celebrate more a sense of belief/soul/Spirit of Life.
 - Expressing soul through song & dance/choir/Sacred Sound/Healing Sound/opening ourselves
- Stronger sense of community
 - Safe place.
 - Come to be with people who are like-minded.
 - In respecting our differences, we end up doing nothing
 - Do more fun, out-there things that might attract youth/young adults
- More small interest groups (ii)
 - Earth-centered spirituality
 - LGBTQ
 - Ecological focus
- More passionate
- Church is not an end in itself

What will it take to do it?

- Fire of commitment (but who has time for that much commitment?) (iii)
- Communication (iv)
 - Use “Spiritual Center” on our signs/materials
 - How do we tell people who we *are* rather than who we are not?
 - Radio presence every Sunday?
 - But problem of doing this with volunteers
 - U-tube?
 - Put a priority on social media to promote events and share. (ii)
 - Advertise in Home Magazine
 - Campus outreach
- Provide advice on how to help (ii)
 - What *can* we do?
 - Challenge of the week
 - How to reach out while maintaining community and not becoming least-common-denominator
- Redesign format of services (ii)
 - Ritual with something more there
 - A more fluid worship space – not so traditionally oriented; that is what many are seeking to leave behind
 - More youth in worship
 - More movement. We stand all the time.
 - Don’t like pews—too Catholic.
 - Chairs in circle
 - Allows more movement
 - Allows more eye contact
 - Emotional elements—less traditional; spiritual feel of an AME (African Methodist Episcopal) church (ii)
 - Different service times (if/when resources/numbers permit second service)
 - Different day (Wed?)
 - Shorter? (15-20 mins?)
 - Often youth-led?
- Guest speaker day/night on regular schedule (ii)
 - Host more events like Ellie Krug
 - Economic justice (workforce housing/education gap/adult remedial education/job training, etc.)
 - Host most difficult conversations
- Offer more than other religions
- Meet, food, action
- A church van to bring people to services and events
- Keep improving availability of childcare
- Bring in younger generation (18-25 year-old group)—important, needs work
- Accept, but not necessarily expect to believe/think the same thing

Other Thoughts

- Next big trans/LGBTQ-related event—be sure to invite police to attend because they encounter trans & LGBTQ people on the job.
- Media should have been at the recent event, great that they advertised/gave info ahead, but also cover the event.
- Question for next time: What attracted *you* to UUFM?