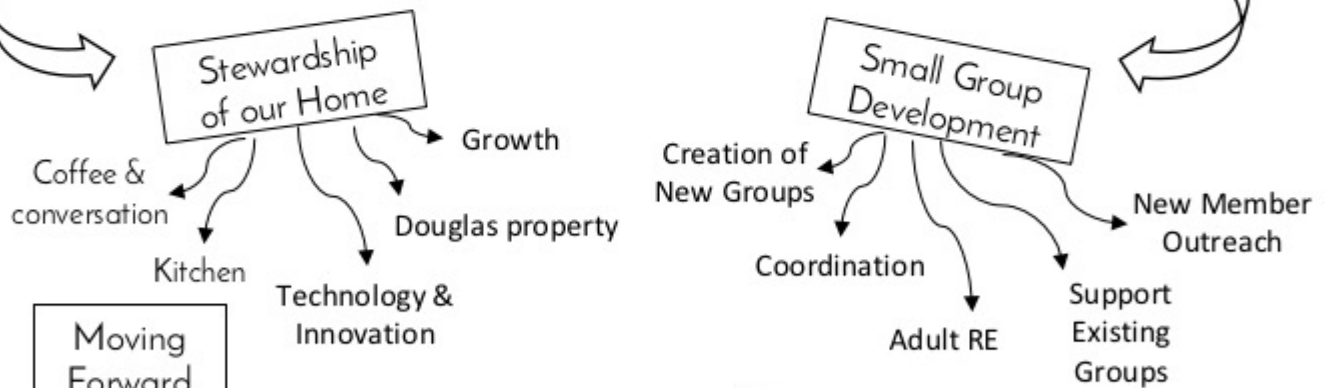


ROOTS & WINGS – BUUF's Strategic Plan



Actions informed by our mission, vision, and values



Moving Forward

1. Recommend creation of a task force to lead process about space
2. Hire/assign small group coordinator
3. Empower Social Justice Council to further develop "Furniture Bank"

Introduction & Vision

The Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is a healthy, vibrant faith community. Our programming and ministries are strong. We have an organized and sophisticated stewardship team. We have had no deficit or reserve spending in the last few years. Program funding and fair share compensation are a priority. We have a settled minister we love and trust. Our Sunday services are enriching and inspiring. We have a history of long-term settled ministry. Our membership has grown steadily. We have expanded our social justice work. Finally, we have a beautiful campus with acreage and growth options. And still we have the potential to do more. This plan articulates a clear, compelling vision and highlights three initiative areas of focus for the next 3-5 years.

We are called to be a haven of radical welcome, deep connection and spiritual growth and learning for all ages and identities. We are called to be a visible presence in our community with a heart for justice; to make love visible in the world and to create the change we wish to see.

We know there is a vital need for the communities and the voices of our liberal religious tradition in these times. We cannot exist for ourselves alone—and we never have, really. Our Unitarian and Universalist heritage has always been connected to the ideals of serving the greater good, the other, the vulnerable; the ideals of reaching within to examine our own spiritual selves while also reaching out beyond our walls - always with an eye toward building the kingdom of heaven here on earth. The initiatives in this plan are inspired by this call and vision.

Spiritual Connections

Deepening Roots - Transforming lives through spiritual growth, strengthening our current community and deepening connections.

Spiritual growth, learning, and connecting with others from this space is the central core of religious community. We need a spiritual foundation and connected community (or roots) from which we can reach out into the wider world through justice making, service, and community partnerships. We are a growing, vibrant community, and that growth has great potential to continue in the coming years. Keeping a growing church connected to its spiritual center and to its community is essential so people continuously feel invited to be part of the fellowship beyond Sunday morning worship. It is in small groups and classes where the deep spiritual growth happens, where theology gets teased out. They are the places where friendships are made and care and support are offered. They are the backbone to a thriving community.

Key elements of Spiritual Connections

- **Expand small group ministry program**
 - Create, coordinate, and support formation of new small groups around a variety of topics & identities. For example: Theme groups to explore the monthly theme, spiritual journey groups that invite sharing and exploring our past and present spiritual/religious lives, groups for families with young children, affinity groups (hiking, reading books, watching films), young professionals, men, women, etc. Some groups will be open and others may be closed once full for a period of time.
 - Support and strengthen existing groups, create regular communication and marketing plan to highlight what we currently have running now. (Men's covenant, affinity groups, compassionate communication, Quilters, etc.)
 - New member outreach – intentionally connect with new members to help them find and get connected with a group that fits their needs.
- **Nurture re-launch of adult Religious Education (RE) program**
 - Continue offering a variety of religious exploration classes for adults. Classes are linked to our UU identity, principles, sources, and spiritual formation.
- **Explore creative and innovative uses for theme-based ministry** (e.g. use of Soul Matters materials).
 - Expand social media interaction with monthly themes including take-home collateral for exploring theme at home
 - Consider Zoom and other virtual meeting spaces for small groups

Spiritual Connections (continued)

Key Players

To be fully realized, a robust small group ministry program will need consistent staff support. Consider increasing hours for Membership & Social Justice Coordinator and/or hiring a Ministerial intern (a position which could be shared with Magic Valley). Other players include: Minister, Adult RE Committee, Director of Religious Exploration, worship team. Consider creation of small group ministry leadership team to help recruit, train, evaluate, and communicate.

Financial Impact

Staff salaries: anywhere from \$4,000 to \$15,000 (depending on how much staff support is needed/ dedicated and in which areas).

Timetable & Action Steps

This initiative can happen in smaller pieces over time. We can begin implementing a small group ministry plan with a few new groups as early as next fiscal year (2018-2019) and increase our efforts gradually each year as resources (staff time and finances allow).

- **Year 1:** Determine level of staff support and volunteer coordination
 - o Host small group brainstorm meeting to gather specific input from key folks invested in this area and perhaps seed a leadership team.
 - o Create 3-5 new small groups to launch in Spring 2019
 - o Outreach to existing groups to discuss recruitment, communication, support needs, and spiritual formation within the group
 - o Continue support of Adult RE program; investigate integrating next level of Inquirers Series
- **Year 2:** Create marketing/communication plan
 - o Increase breadth, diversity, and number of small groups
 - o Create evaluation system for groups & classes

Engaging Space

Our physical spaces and places where we can come together to worship, connect, and engage in justice making must be inviting, sacred, and functional.

Key elements of Engaging Space

- **Begin structured, thoughtful discernment process about our “home” and property**
 - It is time to begin a thoughtful discernment process about our property and how we can best use/expand/modify our campus to meet anticipated growth and other needs of the future.
 - We need a dedicated Building/Campus team to lead us in this effort.
 - It is recommended that both the discernment process and initiation and execution of any building projects be conducted in line with best practice and consultant recommendations. It is also recommended that all potential funding sources (Chalice Lighter Grants, Capital Campaigns, etc.) be thoroughly explored.

Key areas for consideration for Building/Campus team include:

- The importance of dedicated space for coffee, hospitality, and fellowship that allows us to deepen connections with each other.
- Plans that help us maximize mission-related use of our facilities (including the Douglas Property)
- Plans to prepare for and accommodate expected membership growth
- Plans to update / modernize our space to allow for technological upgrades and innovative use.

Key Players

Creating a plan for changes or additions to our current space will need to be a fellowship-wide effort with strong leadership provided by a Building/Campus Task Force as well as the board, BUUF staff, and committees. Members and friends who can provide input about the core functions of our physical spaces and propose creative ideas and possibilities will be essential to helping us design a plan that will garner widespread enthusiasm and support.

Engaging Space (continued)

Financial Impact

- Minimal financial impact is anticipated in the next two years. Year One will be focused on formation of a building/campus team and a congregational discernment process, which should not require significant funds.
- During subsequent years, funds will need to be budgeted for a Financial Feasibility study, architectural renderings, and potentially additional consultant fees estimated between \$12,000 - \$25,000 to begin.
- Financial impacts beyond years 2 & 3 will depend largely on results of the discernment process, feasibility study, and our readiness to initiate a capital campaign and/or building project.

Timetable & Action Steps

- Summer 2018: Board to appoint a Building/Campus development team
- 2018-2019 Program Year: Building/Campus development team to lead congregational discernment process
- Fall 2019: Feasibility study
 - Note: Per consultant, Kay Crider's recommendation – a feasibility study should not be conducted until we have defined the general scope of a project, communicated said scope to the congregation and reached a super-majority consensus on the project.
- Spring 2020 - Summer 2021: Preparation for Capital Campaign (if indicated)
- 2021 - 2022 Program Year: Capital Campaign begins (if needed/indicated)

Justice Making

Transform the world through social justice making.

Social justice is central to our Unitarian Universalist history and identity. The vision of building the world we dream about has fueled some of the greatest justice movements of our time which have been teeming with UU leaders and change makers. Our seven principles anchor justice in our theology of love, welcome, and inclusion and provide valuable language and vision for holding it at the core of our spiritual lives. Justice making not only creates opportunity for us to have an impact in our wider world but to deepen our own spiritual growth. This congregation has long celebrated its social justice identity. Our current minister was called largely because of her expertise and our congregational need. Many in our church desire to elevate our presence in the community, to be a beacon of justice and a prophetic voice for liberal religion in the Treasure Valley.

Key elements of Justice Making

- **BUUF-led 'signature' justice initiative**
 - Empower Social Justice Council to move forward with vision to create a BUUF-led 'signature' social justice project tied to a community need and BUUF values (e.g. Develop Community Furniture Bank project aligned with various other housing first efforts).
- **Strengthen relationships with our interfaith & secular community partners**
 - Prioritize work that creates alliances with our community's most marginalized populations, i.e. people who are in poverty, especially those who are unhoused, people of color, and the LGBTQIA community
 - Through partnering with key agencies and organizations, develop BUUF's capacity to play a vital role in our community's social justice making
 - Explore ways to best use BUUF's assets, i.e. people and facilities, to enhance the social justice movement in Idaho
 - Explore ways BUUF can connect and work with other UU congregations in Idaho and the UUA Pacific West Region to further social justice.

Justice Making (continued)

- **Strengthen BUUF's visibility and impact in local & national justice advocacy**
 - Educate the congregation on how to participate in legislative advocacy at all levels.
 - Connect with and utilize the existing resources from the UUA, UUSC and local community organizations
 - Ensure adequate resources for justice making.
 - Create opportunities for more public outreach and media presence in op-eds, letters-to-editor, press releases etc.
 - Develop a better governance process by which the congregation can endorse social justice agendas/actions.

Key players of Justice Making

Social Justice (SJ) Council, Ministry Teams, Minister. Consider increasing hours for Membership & Social Justice Coordinator and/or hiring a Ministerial intern.

The SJ Council is already collecting names of those interested in serving on a furniture bank leadership team. Considerations for a staff Director-level position will be important as the project grows.

Financial Impact

While much of the core work can be handled by a robust volunteer team, as this project develops and grows (likely beyond the next 5 years) considerations for a dedicated staff leader will be important as the project grows. While the program could utilize BUUF resources (as we are the sponsoring organization) we may need to increase office expenses to accommodate those and any additional operating costs. Additional funding could come from outside grants and other sources but we'll want to consider \$15,000 - \$20,000.

Timetable & Action Steps

- The SJ Council has drafted a comprehensive 5 year plan for exploring and developing a signature BUUF-led project, here are some highlights:
- Year 1 - Gather leadership team for early formation and exploration. Investigate other successful models (perhaps take a visit). Meet with Community Partners willing to support this work .. Establish mission, vision, logo, etc.
- Determine space needs and location
- Year 2 - Could be a part-time opening, operational 3 days a week with a goal to expand to daily services. Determine evaluation/assessment tools.
- Year 3 - Explore additional related projects