

## UUA GROWTH STRATEGIES

GOAL: Opening the doors of Unitarian Universalism, welcoming those who seek a liberal religious community.

Recent past strategies (relying on local energy for new congregation starts; moving small congregations committed to growth into full time professional ministry) proved successful in some respects. However, modest numerical growth and a declining number of congregations applying for these grant programs led to the realization that it was time for new approaches. That has led us into a time of experimentation, where success is not guaranteed and both the risks and possibilities for success are greater. Our strategies are opportunities for us to try new ways to share and grow this faith; involving “successful” congregations and building new congregation/district/ UUA partnerships. Until we have more experience and measurable results with a variety of strategies, it is impossible to craft a strategic plan that will predictably lead to certain numerical growth.

### STRATEGIES:

#1: Identify and promote *Breakthrough Congregations* and *Breakthrough Practices*.

- Identify Breakthrough Congregations that have achieved numerical growth by overcoming barriers.
- Identify Breakthrough Practices where congregations are exceptional in areas such as contemporary worship, Lifespan Faith Development, Social Justice, even if it hasn't yet resulted in overall numerical growth.
- Showcase these congregations and practices at GA, regional conferences, district meetings. Publicize their efforts in various communications such as InterConnections, UU World, The Religious Leader.
- Make “congregations learning from congregations” a fundamental value of the UUA.

#2: Support promising congregational and district initiatives.

- Hamden/CBD Partnership for Growth
- Davies Memorial/ Baltimore- Washington Growth Plan

#3: Initiate and support metro/regional growth strategies.

- Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex Strategies
- Philadelphia/Wilmington Regional Growth Plan

#4: Make UUism more broadly known and more broadly available in the world.

- Create and make easily available marketing and welcoming materials for use by congregations
  - Times Square
  - General Assembly outreach
  - Resources such as postcards, tabloid insert, 30 second video commercial, The Membership Journey (on line)

#5: Yoke our development work to support for local growth initiatives

- Develop and resource regional roundtables
  - Houston
  - Orange County/South Bay
  - San Francisco Bay Area
  - Boston Metro West
  - Twin Cities
  - Channel Islands (Santa Barbara/Ventura area)
  - Los Angeles/Valleys
  - San Diego

The goal and strategies framework comes from the UUA Growth Team. This document was prepared by Harlan Limpert, Director for District Services and Growth Team convener, and Tracey Robinson-Harris, Director for Congregational Services.

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