

ELIOT CHAPEL ENDS 2016 WHITEPAPER

April 28, 2016



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INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines the process undertaken by the Board of Eliot Chapel in the winter of 2016 to formulate Ends Statements as part of the overall renewal of the Mission, Vision and Values of the church. Besides recapping the process used, this paper will provide some recommendations for future Boards performing the same Ends renewal process.

Ends Statements are the culmination of a process of periodically renewing a church's mission, vision and values. The Mission, Vision, and Value aspire to define our identity and our reason for being, and to offer a holistic image of a future to which we can commit ourselves. The Ends statements are a very special type of goal, one that designates the results for which the organization exists and names the recipients or beneficiaries of those results. The End Statements form the basis for the Lead Minister's day-to-day decisions regarding Means to achieve the Ends (goals). Therefore, the Eliot Chapel Board believed that a clear and definitive set of Ends Statements needs to embody the goals implied by the values, mission and vision of the congregation. They felt that was imperative to bring to this round of renewal and discernment to fruition.

Furthermore, the Board decided NOT to begin with the current Ends Statements but to write new Ends Statements "from scratch" using the new directional context. Besides using the Mission, Vision, and Values statements as input, the Ends work was also seen to be based in the wishes and images expressed by the congregation through the survey and small group work during Vision2020. (For more information on this process for discovering themes, consult the Mission and Vision Whitepaper, Jan 17, 2016.)

Through its preparatory work, the Board became familiar with a framework from Unity Consulting for structuring Ends Statements. This framework suggests that an Ends Statement is either about the inner life of the individual (the "within"), about the life of people relating to one another in the church community (the "among"), or about the lives of people outside the church community (the "beyond"). The Board examined several examples of Ends Statements structured using the three domains (see Appendix A).

INPUTS

To recap, the renewed direction of the church is expressed as follows:

Values: Inspiration, Compassion, Connection

Mission: Bound by courageous love, growing in spirit and inspiring compassionate action.

Vision: Creating a just world through vibrant, beloved community

STEP 1: BRAIN-STORMING THE NINE CELLS

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Jordi Prats, the Board Chair, asked each member of the Board to brain-storm their first draft of Ends statements by applying the three phrases of the Mission Statement against the three domains (within, among and beyond). For example, if the Board Member thought that “growing in spirit” could be expressed as a goal for within, a different goal for among, and a third goal for beyond, they then wrote three separate goals inspired by the phrase “growing in spirit”. After all first drafts were submitted, the Board met to review their work. (See Appendix B for the raw results of brain-storming the nine cells.)

While this process generated a wealth of potential goals, several aspects of the framework came to light that were considered cautionary:

1. Nine End Statements with each one needing to be interpreted by the Lead Minister and monitored by the Board seemed to be cumbersome (The previous End statements were five in number.)
2. Many of the cells contained the same goal for one Mission Statement phrase. For example, the Mission phrase “bound by courageous love” yielded:
 - a. Within: “members take risks to grow and change, ... learn to be vulnerable”
 - b. Among: “congregants ... take risks and people allow themselves to be vulnerable”

STEP 2: CONSOLIDATION

Information from the nine cells was then synthesized to look for themes. Those themes were used to construct a consolidated set of Ends. Besides the within/among/beyond framework, the Board formulated goals using two other frameworks: one segregating goals using the three Mission phrases (loving / spiritual growth / compassion), and the other an alternative set of Mission phrases (bound / growing / inspiring). In all three frameworks, Ends emerged that crossed domains (e.g. within/among and among/beyond). [See Appendix C for a sample of this work.]

Their preliminary End statements were then further consolidated and tweaked to make them more usable for setting direction and monitoring progress. The set of working statements were shared with the Unity Consultant and Lead Minister.

STEP 3: LEADERSHIP DISCERNMENT

The Board moved into its final step of Leadership Discernment where the Board looked over the themes from the process thus far and added themes they felt were important to both deepen and broaden the draft End statements. The Lead Minister was also consulted. The Ends were embellished in four areas:

- fostering a multigenerational church in which children, youth, adults and elders can relate to one another
- caring for the environment
- nurturing leadership and service
- deepen our Unitarian Universalist identity

Ultimately, the Board decided NOT to categorize Ends by domain, but to add a concluding sentence after the Ends to make explicit the idea that each Ends Statement should be considered in terms of the changes it might produce within, among and beyond the Chapel’s walls.

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RESULTING ENDS STATEMENTS:

“The people of Eliot Unitarian Chapel of all ages and walks of life will:

- care for and connect with one another within our shared covenant, even when it is uncomfortable;
- achieve greater spiritual maturity;
- deepen our Unitarian Universalist identity;
- nurture leadership and service in all;
- create a more just society, further dismantle racism, and improve the environment.

We aim to make a positive difference within, among, and beyond ourselves.”

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Appendix A: Sample Ends Statements of UU Churches

[Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Asheville NC](#)

[Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis](#)

[First Unitarian Church Salt Lake City UT](#)

[Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Springfield, MA](#)



Examples of Three
Domain Ends.docx

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Appendix B: Results of the Nine Cell Brain-Storm

| Domain | Bound by Courageous Love | Growing in Spirit | Inspiring Compassionate Action |
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| <p>W I T H I N</p> | <p>Give & receive compassionate pastoral care in times of celebration & need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging • To cultivate a loving mind and attitude. • To practice being kinder and gentler in the face of conflict. <p>Members take risks to grow and change, build courage, understand what courageous love means and find ways to act upon it. Members learn to be vulnerable.</p> <p>Promotes a challenge to live life with courage expressed through love for self and others.</p> <p>Be more loving, accepting of myself and others</p> <p>through spiritual practices (prayer, meditation, reflection, service) to both strengthen and soften heart/soul; learn (many teachers) what it is to love; what it is to love with courage; learn to love the desert places, the thorny places. Where are they? Seek</p> <p>Individually strong and self-actualized. Love thyself....</p> <p>Internalize what it is like to be “the other”.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for loving precisely when it is personally uncomfortable to do so.</p> | <p>Embrace our UU principles, values & practices which explore & question the awe-inspiring mysteries of the spiritual. Cultivate spiritual practices to nurture reverence & mindfulness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubt • Discovery • To provide the inspiration and resources to allow for individuals to grow spiritually. • To develop our spiritual practices. <p>Members have a spiritual practice and form of study. Members commit to growing in spiritual maturity.</p> <p>Provides sources for lifelong (all generational) spiritual growth and identifying meaning in that is beyond self.</p> <p>Expand personal spiritual practices – meditation; being in nature; mindfulness; Learning about other faith traditions (self-study)</p> <p>through spiritual practices (prayer, meditation, reflection, service, movement, travel) --attune oneself to experience deeply, breathe deeply, open, to be inspired. like waking up. through whatever means, find a path, walk, journey. the maze, labyrinth</p> <p>Eliot should nurture each person’s individual faith journey. Adult RE and other resources. Expectation of this.</p> <p>Challenge personal comfort zones.</p> <p>Provide space and time for personal meditation and communing with nature</p> | <p>Practicing generosity & humility, be careful stewards of our resources & facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service • To develop inner tranquility by developing love and compassion. • To be compassionate with yourself and forgive yourself. • “To begin again in love” • To cultivate your ability to be compassionate <p>Members contribute to the social action of the church.</p> <p>Members grow in compassion.</p> <p>Provides a community of hope that inspires personal sustained action and individual growth.</p> <p>(Re)kindle the flame of compassion and service</p> <p>every action begins with preparation--self-examination; questioning motives; purification</p> <p>Developing personal <i>capacity</i> for activism. Education element.</p> <p>Ensure members know of opportunities for action and inspire members to get involved.</p> |
| | <p>Support & encourage all in our multi-generational congregation through covenant, mutual respect & deep connection</p> <p>Maintain curiosity & openness to authentically connect to one another to form strong relationships (or friendships)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gifts of spirit | <p>Grounded in the transforming power of our UU faith, value our shared ministry, appreciate that each member is responsible for finding their own truth & accept the various journeys and differences in beliefs.</p> <p>Foster a culture of open, inclusive dialog that sustains meaningful engagement & mutual respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UU shared experience | <p>Have the courage to stand together in the face of injustice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selflessness • Sustainability • To listen to others’ viewpoints and beliefs. • To demonstrate that you are concerned for |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">A M O N G</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To nurture a sense of belonging among members and visitors. To value and respect others who are among the congregation. Practicing hospitality. <p>The quality of relationship among congregants is one that takes risks and people allow themselves to be vulnerable. The congregation actively engages its covenant in building community. We handle conflicts openly and constructively with care for one another.</p> <p>Provides a community of caring where individuals are encouraged to care for those that they dislike.</p> <p>Love one another, even when it's hard (e.g. when we disagree, when we don't like someone, etc.)</p> <p><i>We are not in church to be with people who want to sing the same music, or rally for the same cause, or attend the same retreats. We are in church to learn to love better. And learning to love better can only happen when we love past our disappointments and return to a place of acceptance and affirmation. This is true in our personal lives, in our work lives, and in our church lives. It is a deep spiritual practice.</i></p> <p><i>-Laila Ibrahim (Dir. of Children and Family Ministries, 1st Unitarian, Oakland, Cal.)</i></p> <p>Live by the Covenant. What does it mean to be in covenant with other members of the Eliot community? This should drive growth in spirit →</p> <p>Find space to share individual differences so that we can practice what it means to embrace those differences in love.</p> <p>Ensure our policies and programs and formal discussions do not inadvertently exclude anyone.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To put spiritual beliefs into practice. To support others' spiritual journeys. To develop a sense of a meaningful life. To function and work together as a spiritual community. <p>Relationships among members allow us to grow in spiritual maturity. We have a shared experience of the spirit moving among us. We have a sense of belonging and service to Eliot. We learn together.</p> <p>Provides members a palpable sense of enthusiasm toward each other and feeling charged through commitment to the community and loyal generosity.</p> <p>Grow together as a faith community; Connection; Learning about/celebrating other faith traditions (together)</p> <p>extend a hand, hand of friendship, the kiss of peace, we take hand of another at benediction, as we go forth, go beyond</p> <p>covenant groups explore spiritual journey,</p> <p>room for RE here--recalling David Keyes' Lenten Study Groups, communion</p> <p>Communion-- a spiritual practice particularly suited to UU-- lifts spirit,</p> <p>Where does this belong: Make our message succinct to outsiders?</p> <p>Ability to truly engage with people across a spectrum of beliefs. Use Eliot community as a lab for functioning in the wider community.</p> <p>This should drive community activism ↘</p> <p>Provide opportunities for members to help each other on the other's faith journey.</p> <p>Offer adequate resources for members and staff to grow.</p> | <p>the welfare of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To care for and support one another. <p>Relationships among congregants model compassion. We are proactive in reaching out to each other.</p> <p>Provides a welcoming community that is highly adaptive and resilient in the face of change and celebrates differences.</p> <p>Work together to build a stronger Eliot Chapel; Finding ways for members/friends to take action within our four walls</p> <p>some actions--unstated here is that the congregation may consider acting in concert, not as individuals--so we must be supportive but cautious (reserved) in how we influence others (humility in our conviction)</p> <p>Strength in numbers. Doing more together than we could ever do by ourselves. Being strong as a community to present a unified front to the outside world.</p> <p>Structure action opportunities to include service to the Eliot community.</p> |
| | <p>Open our doors & hearts to any and all who seek comfort, courage & meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusiveness | <p>Serve as a beacon of liberal religious thought & action</p> <p>Support & help others in need regardless of faith, race, sexual orientation or economic status</p> | <p>Courageously work as a trusted leader, partner and advocate to end oppression, dismantle inequality, fight for a just society & sustain our environment.</p> |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">B E Y O N D</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming • To practice tolerance with those whose beliefs are different than ours. • To be a force for love against forms of anger, hatred, vitriol and oppression. <p>The congregation takes risks with demonstrating love beyond our walls – including times when we must sacrifice personal comfort or engage in potential controversy.</p> <p>Extends the "Fire of Commitment" outward toward marginalized communities.</p> <p>Love beyond our walls, including those whom society might deem 'unlovable'; Let our courageous love be a beacon in the community</p> <p>it may be that Unitarianism and Universalism call us to love past categories (domains?) (One God, All Saved; none damned) to resist what may be the hardest thing to resist, for it may be in our DNA, key to survival, "the other"--us v. them. the impulse to pick up a rock and injure those who are different, threaten. it is too much, to love thy neighbor as thyself.</p> <p>Need to embrace all faith traditions. Engagement with other UUA congregations.</p> <p>Learn more about those around us through dialog and exchange. You cannot love that which do you do not know.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community <p>To practice UU principles in the community. "Living our values in the world."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To advocate for the advancement of the larger community in accordance to UU principles. <p>The congregation has a sense of belonging to, and serving something larger than itself.</p> <p>Expands the St Louis Community's awareness of UUA religion.</p> <p>Spread the word of Unitarian-Universalism in the broader community (proselytize?? In a UU way of course!); Visible presence in the community that demonstrates our UU principles</p> <p>opening the doors, greeters and ministers, come, come whoever you are (the only part of the hymn I get) witnessing for justice, love, truth, understanding--again, the journey (walking Kirkwood, joining with other faith communities) to support spiritual growth--love all the signs for community gospel sing</p> <p>Adult RE?</p> <p>Provide opportunities for inter-faith and non-faith interaction in worship and service.</p> <p>Contribute resources to our broader community to facility an environment suited to spiritual growth.</p> | <p>Partner with other faiths, congregations & organizations in support of shared objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach • To have an open heart to others. • To create a web of interconnection • To take action on behalf of those who are marginalized. • To fulfill expressed needs, not presumed needs. • To put a human face on suffering <p>The congregation takes compassionate action as a whole (beyond supporting individual actions) to promote social justice.</p> <p>Recognized in St Louis and UUA as a leader in using alliances for the creation of beloved community.</p> <p>Standing on the side of love as exemplified by our social justice activities; Spreading/ sharing our 'flame' with the larger community</p> <p>beyond our doors, we represent UU spirit, tradition, teaching-- to stand on the side of love means standing on cherished principles--e.g. affirming the "inherent worth and dignity of every person"</p> <p>Activism in the community: Kirkwood, Metro Area, Missouri, U.S. Our actions serve as a beacon (give strength) for others (other people, other communities of faith, other UUA congregations)</p> <p>Document and publicize our involvement in action for and progress towards a more just community.</p> |
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Appendix C: Sample Consolidated Goal Statements

Within, Among and Beyond Format

Within

Eliot Chapel challenges members to grow personally by stretching comfort zones around spiritual beliefs, confronting mystery and doubt, caring for outsiders, and loving when it is uncomfortable.

Within/Among

Eliot Chapel is a caring community that is committed to its covenant where individuals (Eliot members and visitors) can build inner strength (capacity) by being welcomed, valued, supported and cared for.

Beyond

We courageously live by and express the Unitarian Universalist Principles through our work as a trusted leader, partner, and advocate to end oppression, dismantle inequality, and fight for a just society.

We serve something larger than ourselves in our steadfast actions to eradicate racism, create positive environmental change and to cultivate a better planet for future generations.

We seek a renewal of the spirit by actively engaging and examining other viewpoints, faith traditions and cultures.

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APPENDIX D: COMPARISON OF PREVIOUS TO NEW ENDS

| Previous Ends Statement | New Ends Statement | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| | "The people of Eliot Chapel of all ages and walks of life will:" | Preamble captures the vision of an intergenerational, and diverse, congregation. |
| "Members, friends and visitors of Eliot Chapel feel welcomed, safe, respected and cared for." | "care for and connect with one another within our shared covenant, even when it is uncomfortable" | Applies "bound by courageous love" from the Mission to express the goal of caring for each other in covenant. |
| "Across the lifespan, congregants gain experiences, skills, knowledge and practices to grow spiritually, intellectually and emotionally enabling them to experience enriched, encouraged, and inspired lives." | "achieve greater spiritual maturity" | Succinctly expresses the goal of the religious life: rather than spiritual growth, spiritual maturation. |
| "Our work and resources make positive differences in the lives of those in need. The wider community benefits from and recognizes Eliot Chapel's action and voice toward religious tolerance, human rights, social and economic justice and environmental stewardship." | "create a more just society, further dismantle racism, and improve the environment." | "The wider community ... recognizes ..." is difficult to measure and monitor, so dropped. Focus on three areas of differences to be made. |
| "Those touched by Eliot Chapel experience the awe, wonder, and mystery of the spiritual journey and a reverence for the natural world." | | Not supported by congregational wishes and vision. |
| Through Eliot Chapel's actions and voice, the wider community recognizes and gains understanding of Unitarian Universalist values and principles and of their roles in the betterment of community. Successful split plate collection each month, helping | "deepen our Unitarian Universalist identity" | Refocus on improving our own identification with our religious tradition (within and among rather than beyond). |
| | "nurture leadership and service in all" | Important new goal. |