

EXECUTIVE ENDS INTERPRETATION 2016

INTRODUCTION

Our ends statement is in three parts: introductory language, the five ends, and language about how and where to apply them. I am calling the language that comes before and after the ends the “framework” because it applies to all the ends, and begin my interpretation there.

FRAMEWORK

Framework Interpretation

I interpret “**people of Eliot Unitarian Chapel**” as those responsible for achieving the ends. They include members, friends of the chapel who participate in community life virtually or in person, and/or are committed to serving its mission. It also includes chapel ministers and staff who are committed to serving the mission.

- I interpret “**of all ages**” to mean children, youth and adults.
- I interpret “**all walks of life**” to include identities such as gender, race, sexual orientation, and class or financial situation.

I interpret “**aim to make a positive difference**” to mean effecting a measurable change in the world in the direction of our values as encompassed by our **vision** and **mission: a just world, vibrant and beloved community, courageous love, a growing spirit, and compassion.**

I interpret “**within, among and beyond ourselves**” to offer a rough outline of our moral owners or stakeholders of Eliot Unitarian Chapel. Further,

- I interpret “**within**” to mean the individual touched by Eliot Unitarian Chapel.
- I interpret “**among**” to mean the interrelationships among “the people of Eliot Unitarian Chapel”, as well as the collective actions of this body.
- I interpret “**beyond**” to include systems, networks and communities beyond “the current community of Eliot Unitarian Chapel”.

Framework Metrics

Direct measurement shall be primarily through a survey which will sort responses to questions about all five ends by age group, membership or staff status, gender, race and sexual orientation. Survey questions will also ask if people see evidence of participation in promoting each end in the above demographic categories, as well as financial status or class. More than half of the responses in each category will be “agree” or better.

ENDS Ends Interpretation

End 1: “Care for and connect with one another within our shared covenant, even when it is uncomfortable.” The primary focus of this end is WITHIN and AMONG, as it aims to improve the health and vibrancy of the community itself. However, since the church serves as a laboratory to learn and practice our values, our improvement in this area shall impact those we are in contact with BEYOND our walls, such as family, neighbors, and co-workers.

I interpret “**care for one another**” to mean giving and receiving compassion in times of difficulty and celebrating the times of joy. It also includes honoring important milestones and rites of passage.

I interpret “**connect with one another**” to mean creating meaningful networks of friendship within the community.

I interpret “**within our shared covenant**” to mean that we are guided by the principles of community health found in the covenant of Eliot Chapel. We are willing to be accountable to these principles.

I interpret “**even when it is uncomfortable**” to mean that we commit to stretching beyond personal convenience in our interactions for the health of the community. This includes cultivating courage and vulnerability. As a whole, Eliot Unitarian Chapel is willing to hold members accountable to the covenant, even when it is uncomfortable for some members.

Metrics

Direct measure: In a congregational survey, members and friends will assess the care and connection they give and receive within the Eliot Community. They will be asked if they see evidence of their personal and collective accountability to the covenant. They will be asked whether they see evidence of stretching beyond people’s comfort zones in interactions. More than half of the responses in each demographic category will be “agree” or better

Indirect measure: We will hold one or more focus groups asking similar questions. We will measure overall attendance at worship and involvement in church life. If we are creating an environment of caring and connection, participation will be high.

END 2 Achieve greater spiritual maturity. End 2 focuses primarily WITHIN and AMONG, having an impact BEYOND ourselves.

I interpret “**spiritual maturity**” to include well-being, stability, love, joy, generosity, patience, inner peace, self-control, kindness and the ability to handle life’s difficulties while remaining open-hearted, compassionate and able to give and receive love and service.

“Achieving greater spiritual maturity” means becoming, over time, more and more a person whose presence makes this world a better place, through activism or joyful and spirited presence. It includes a commitment to practices which foster it, such as meditation, prayer, study, art, service work, worship, courageous conversation, yoga, and more.

Metrics

Direct measure: In a congregational survey, members and friends will assess the progress toward spiritual maturity in themselves and in others through association with Eliot Chapel. They will report on evidence of one or more spiritual practices. They will also report whether they see evidence of our spiritual maturity having an impact beyond our walls. More than half of the responses in each demographic category will be “agree” or better.

Indirect measure: We will measure participation levels at worship and programming aimed at deepening spiritual maturity. If we are achieving this end, participation will trend upward. We will hold one or more focus groups asking people to assess spiritual maturity within themselves and in general at Eliot.

END 3 Deepen our Unitarian Universalist identity. End 3 is focused WITHIN, AMONG and BEYOND in equal measure.

I interpret **“Unitarian Universalist identity”** to include a conscious awareness and adoption of the values, practices, goals, symbols of Unitarian Universalism, including appreciation of its history. It includes an outward expression, such that others could identify one as a Unitarian Universalist. As a church, Eliot Chapel will develop its national and regional relationship with the UUA. Locally, we will be known beyond our walls as a UU church and people will know what our faith is about by our example.

I interpret **“deepen”** to mean that the above aspects of Unitarian Universalism will have an increased meaning and importance in the life of the individual and the Eliot community.

Metric:

Direct measure: On the congregational survey, we will ask if people see evidence of greater awareness and adoption of UU values, principles, etc. in themselves and others at the chapel. Survey respondents will be asked if they see evidence of growth as a congregation in our relationship with the UUA. More than half of the responses in each demographic category will be “agree” or better.

Indirect measures: We will measure people’s participation in programs and worship that foster UU identity. We will hold focus groups that ask for stories that answer questions like, *“Can people tell that you are a Unitarian Universalist? How?”* We will take a neighborhood poll about people’s awareness of Eliot Unitarian Chapel and what Unitarian Universalist values are.

END 4 Nurture leadership and service in all. End 4 is focused primarily WITHIN and AMONG with implications for those BEYOND ourselves.

I interpret “**leadership**” to mean taking a share of responsibility to create health and vibrancy of the whole. By words and deeds, leadership motivates and equips individuals and groups to take effective action toward shared goals and helps foster overall community health. Leadership helps foster initiatives that further are mission and are consistent with policy governance. As a whole congregation, Eliot Unitarian Chapel offers leadership to the wider community to promote its values.

I interpret “**service**” to mean offering one’s time and talents for the benefit of others.

I interpret “**nurture**” to mean offering education, opportunities, encouragement and recognition of leadership and service.

I interpret “**in all**” to mean that we will cultivate an expectation of leadership and service for every member of the community. This means that we will utilize a variety of gifts and personal styles that offer leadership and service.

Metric: Direct measure: A congregational survey will ask respondents whether they see evidence of leadership and service, and whether they feel it is being nurtured here. The survey will also ask how many hours people spend at the chapel in leadership and service. More than half of the responses in each demographic category will be “agree” or better.

Indirect measure: We will track participation in training and volunteer service. Compliance will mean there is an upward trend in participation.

END 5 Create a more just society, further dismantle racism, and improvement environment. End 5 focuses primarily BEYOND by building commitment and capacity WITHIN and AMONG ourselves.

I interpret “**create a more just society**” to mean creating social change and promoting equal rights for all at systemic levels. We offer opportunities balanced among the areas of education, advocacy, witness and direct service. We will focus on our particular context: the greatest need and opportunity at the present moment in our location. We will also give strong consideration to areas where we have the best resources.

I interpret “**further dismantle racism**” to mean changing systems and institutions that privilege some and disadvantage others because of race. This will include reducing violence, economic disadvantage, and discrimination in education, health, policing and neighborhood safety. It also includes increasing capacity to recognize privilege and build effective partnerships.

I interpret “**improve the environment**” to mean reducing the harm done by Eliot Chapel to the planet, and to partner with others to reduce the harms done by society at the systemic level, including public policy and consumption practices.

Metric

Direct measure: Through its congregational survey, people will report seeing evidence of personal and collective commitment and impact. We will see a greater understanding of systemic injustice and our impact on the environment, and greater capacity to respond at the systemic level. We will measure institutional effectiveness within Eliot Chapel for different areas of injustice.-More than half of the responses in each demographic category will be “agree” or better.

Indirect measure: We will survey community partners, including Metro Congregations United, the Meacham Park Neighborhood Improvement Association and Olive AME Chapel about our effectiveness.

