

The Board of Trustees, at our December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, engaged in lengthy discussion on two topics that we think it's important for the congregation to be aware of: an ongoing revision of our Ends policies, and the 2010 budget.

The Ends policies are the Board's description of why the First Unitarian Church of Oakland exists, and the difference we hope and expect FUCO to make in the world. The Ends are aspirational; we know we have not yet made them happen fully, but we expect to make progress in getting closer to fulfilling them. The Ends are one reflection of the Board's understanding of the mission, vision, and values of the congregation.

The Ends are the "marching orders" to the Executive Team. At the end of the day, the Board is supposed to evaluate the Executive Team based on how well the church has fulfilled these Ends.

On December 15<sup>th</sup> the Board re-organized the Ends policies. We took what had been six separate Ends, and regrouped them into three broad areas. We stated that the church exists to transform the world Within, Among, and Beyond ourselves. We placed the existing Ends within these three areas (with some minor modifications).

This change is just the first step in a longer process of making our Ends live. The Board will take the next step at a special Board meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup>, when we will further revise our Ends. Currently the Ends describe the transformations we wish the church to bring in the world. We will add language saying whose lives we expect to be transformed by each End, and specifying the relative priority of the Ends.

Once this is complete, we will start the process of monitoring how well the church is meeting the Ends. This will involve coming to an agreement with the Executive Team on interpretation of the Ends and how they will be measured. We will then start the exciting work of connecting with the congregation (and others outside our walls whose lives we aim to transform), through meetings, surveys, etc., to find out how we're doing.

The Board encourages you to read the revised Ends, posted on the website, both now and shortly after our January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, and to give us feedback. These Ends are meant to reflect your vision and values: how well is that mirror working?

The Board also spent considerable time reviewing and discussing three budget proposals brought to us from the Executive Team. We did not approve any of these budgets. We will resume discussion of them on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

The difficult situation facing our spiritual community is that we anticipate a 2010 revenue of \$527,082, as opposed to actual revenue in 2008 of \$640,348. That's a decrease of \$113,266, during a two-year period in which some expenses, such as health care costs, have risen.

Besides discussing some of the difficult budget choices we face with the Executive Team, the Board also talked about ways to bring the congregation together so that we can all face this reality as one community. Stay tuned for more information about such opportunities.