

**Love Into Action: A Three Year Plan**  
**UU Congregation of Charlottesville**  
**Fall 2024-Summer 2027**

The Mission of the UU Congregation of Charlottesville (Adopted June 3, 2023) states:  
*The UU Congregation of Charlottesville builds community through love in action. Together we cultivate a safe and welcoming place for all. Together we nurture mind, heart, body, and spirit. Together we work for equity, justice, and peace for all people and the planet.*

Following the adoption of our mission statement in June of 2023, the Board of Trustees set into motion the development of a long-range plan. A task force (Achsah Carrier, John Griffith, Chris Little, Pam McIntire, Ellie Syverud, Greg Townsend, Tammy Wilt, and Rev. Tim Temerson) was appointed in November of 2023 and charged with developing a three year plan consisting of specific, actionable, achievable, and measurable goals. The task force reviewed the congregation's previous strategic plan as well as congregation conversations that were part of developing the new mission. During February and March of 2024, the Task Force held conversations with interested members, friends and stakeholders/leaders around the four key areas of the mission. The results of those conversations played a key role in the formulation of the long-range plan.

The long-range plan is ambitious and wide-ranging. The ideas represent the collective wisdom, passion, and imagination of our congregation. Implementing the plan will require focus, collaboration, and flexibility. To that end, we recommend that the Board of Trustees:

1. Take responsibility for the overall implementation of the plan and provide regular updates to the congregation on progress and challenges
2. In consultation with the Lead Minister, reconstitute a Committee on Ministries to support implementation of the plan
3. Appoint a task force to re-examine the governing structure of the congregation to maximize our ability to be mission and ministry-driven
4. Grow the congregation's financial resources. To that end, the Board is encouraged to:
  - a. Make the Stewardship Steering Committee (SSC) a permanent congregational committee and empower it to help build a culture of generosity and service through communications, programs, special events, etc. that invite and inspire UUCville members and friends to give of their creativity, wisdom, and financial resources
  - b. Charge the SSC to develop and oversee a Planned Giving program
  - c. Charge the SSC to explore a potential capital campaign in the next 3-5 years
  - d. Prioritize bringing our staff to UUA recommended fair compensation levels
  - e. Commit to growing church revenue from sources in addition to annual pledges, including building and grounds rentals, fundraising events, etc. To that end, the board is encouraged to:
    - i. Appoint a building rental team consisting of the Lead Minister, DAF, office administrator, and treasurer

- ii. Appoint a Fundraising Council that will coordinate and grow church fundraising
- 5. Along with greater financial resources, the success of the long range plan depends on cultivating and empowering a greater number of leaders and volunteers.
  - a. The Board is encouraged to appoint a Volunteer Coordinator charged with helping members and friends connect to ministries and programs and developing new leaders through training, workshops, etc. As financial resources increase, the Board may consider transitioning the Volunteer Coordinator to a part-time, paid position.
  - b. The Board is encouraged to develop a plan for leadership training

## **Key Areas of the Mission Statement**

### ***I. Cultivating a safe and welcoming place for all***

In order to cultivate a place that is safer and more welcoming, especially for those who have been historically marginalized in our congregation, in Unitarian Universalism, and in society at-large, we set the following goals:

1. Make our buildings and grounds more accessible, inclusive, cohesive, beautiful, and inviting. To that end, we will:
  - a. Develop a Comprehensive Building and Grounds Plan(s)
  - b. Create a board-appointed task force that will recommend and prioritize improvements to the accessibility of our building and grounds
  - c. Consider replacing/updating the “Marriage Rights” banner on the outside of the sanctuary and explore erecting a second banner and/or other signage that makes clear and transparent our safe and welcoming message in alignment with municipal regulations
  - d. Intentionally engage with the history of the land we reside on by moving us beyond weekly land acknowledgements to taking concrete actions that help repair relationships with historically marginalized communities
2. Grow our Ministry of Welcoming and Membership
  - a. Enhance our Sunday morning Greeter program, both in person and online. The Greeters will be coordinated by the Membership Committee and will receive regularly scheduled training that includes instruction on cultural sensitivity and inclusivity
  - b. In an effort to help new members get connected and feel at home, the Membership Committee will:
    - i. Create more opportunities to build relationships through actions such as New Member potlucks, follow up calls and classes, etc.
    - ii. Explore the creation of a new member welcoming program that would match a new member with an existing member who would serve as a point of contact and connection
3. Cultivate and Sustain a Vibrant Young Adult Ministry

- a. Grow the number of young adult members and friends by engaging in targeted outreach to UVA graduate students and other young adult communities, including focused social media marketing, welcoming events, and activities with appeal to young adults
  - b. Provide young adults with staff/lay leadership and support, including maintaining communications and outreach, supporting regularly scheduled gatherings/retreats, and connecting young adults to other UUCville programs of special interest, including spiritual practice and service opportunities
  - c. Encourage young adults to connect with the wider UU denomination by providing financial assistance/scholarship support to events such as the UUA General Assembly, regional gatherings and retreats, etc.
4. Create a board-appointed Safe and Welcoming Team charged with assessing and developing a plan to make our congregation safer and more welcoming for historically marginalized communities, including those who are BIPOC, LGBTQ+, gender-expansive, differently-abled, etc. To that end, we will:
  - a. Undertake and complete a wide-ranging Inclusivity audit of all UUCville ministries and programs and present the results of the audit at the 2025 annual congregational meeting
  - b. Based on the findings of the Inclusivity audit and in consultation with staff, relevant church committees, and historically marginalized communities within and beyond UUCville, develop a Safe and Welcoming Plan that will be presented to the board no later than February 15, 2026
5. Develop a UUCville Marketing Plan whose objective is to share our mission and message with the wider Charlottesville/Albemarle County community. To that end, the Board of Trustees will appoint a 2-3 person marketing team that will work closely with the Communications Committee to develop and implement a marketing plan that will raise our profile in the local community. The Marketing Plan should be especially focused on how to raise awareness of UUCville with communities that have been historically marginalized and/or underrepresented in our congregation, including young adults, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, elders, and those who are differently-abled.

## ***II. Nurturing heart, mind, body, and spirit***

In order to build a community of communities that nurtures mind, heart, body, and spirit for all ages and that recognizes diverse needs and experiences in our congregation, we set the following goals:

1. Deepen and expand our Caring Ministry by strengthening existing communities. The three types of care that are woven through the Caring Ministry are direct support (like meals and rides), companioning (connecting those who are lonely or isolated), and pastoral care (being a listening presence for those who are struggling). To that end, we will:
  - a. Expand CareNet to support additional caring needs

- i. Strengthen and expand support and service opportunities (e.g., rides, chores/handyperson, run errands)
    - ii. Strengthen support for organizational leadership (e.g., transportation coordinator position, technology support, etc)
    - iii. Contact other congregations and organizations to identify ways we could expand and sustain a broader CareNet
    - iv. Develop guidance to define the appropriate scope of services we can provide and a directory of external resources for additional support
  - b. Expand Pastoral Care Programs & Support Groups
    - i. Provide workshops or programs for all ages on important life issues including aging, death and dying, caregiving, and holding difficult conversations
    - ii. Create Support Groups to provide companionship for needs and concerns that are present in our congregation and not easily accessed in the local community
- 2. Grow our Faith Development Ministry by working collaboratively with the Minister for Faith Development, the Religious Education Committee, and leaders of key programs/ministries. To that end, we will:
  - a. Increase the breadth and depth of our faith development ministry for all ages, including classes, workshops, retreats, trainings, and affinity groups relevant to important demographics within our congregation, including young adults, elders, BIPOC and LGBTQ+, and that dovetail with key ministries and programs, including social and environmental action, and anti-racism and LGBTQ+ outreach
  - b. Prioritize our need to raise the next generation of UUs by centering the children in the congregation, supporting parents, and providing more connections across generations
  - c. Strengthen our Labyrinth Ministry. We have four labyrinths that can be used as part of a spiritual practice and as a community resource by convening regular labyrinth walks, including on solstices, equinoxes, and national labyrinth day.
  - d. Expand Opportunities for Embodied Spiritual/Physical Healing such as Tai Chi, Afro-Flow Yoga, and Kundalini Yoga
  - e. Engage in “Beyond the Service” programs through periodic conversations about the service/sermon theme
- 3. Enhance worship and music by making our music and worship life reflective of diverse spiritual paths and sources and inclusive of those seeking non-traditional worship and music experiences. These changes should include greater embodiment in worship, diverse guest speakers and musicians, and increased multigenerational involvement
- 4. Develop a Multigenerational Family Ministry  
Recognizing the yearning for community and connection that brings so many to our congregation, we will:
  - a. Build a multigenerational, Family Ministry that brings people of all ages (both within and beyond our congregation) together for friendship, fun, learning, and service

- b. Establish a Family Ministry “Council” (FMC) that will include but not be confined to representatives from faith development, hospitality, worship, and social action
- c. Expand support for parents and families. Create opportunities for family get-togethers and potlucks at the church at times convenient to families with all ages of children, and include childcare
- d. Connect parents and children with congregational elders in building a true multigenerational community through regular social events
- 5. Establish a Multigenerational Fun and Friendship Ministry
  - a. Expand on popular church events and programs, such as the Douthat Retreat and Game Nights
  - b. Create a Fun and Friendship Committee charged with planning, organizing, and publicizing regularly scheduled social events, including but not limited to dances, game nights, open mic nights, movie nights, and picnics
- 6. Establish an Elder Ministry that will build friendships, provide connection and companionship, center the needs of congregational elders in the broader life of UUCville and throughout all of our ministries
  - a. Build on the highly successful Elders Brunch, create more special events that celebrate the commitment and wisdom of elders
  - b. Honor milestones (birthdays, years of membership) of elders during Sunday morning worship and Social Hour
  - c. Explore the creation of an Elder’s Odyssey program in which congregational elders would be invited to share their life stories on video

### ***III. Equity, justice, and peace for all people***

In order to promote equity, justice and peace for all people, with a focus on antiracism and justice for members of the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities, reproductive rights and justice, we set the following goals:

- 1. Enhance the knowledge base of the congregation
  - a. Establish a series of opportunities for members of the congregation to learn about topics such as: the existence, source, magnitude and impact of inequities – with examples locally, nationally, globally; the work that has been done to achieve equity, justice and peace – Bryan Stevenson et al; and potential antiracist and LGBTQ+-supporting interventions
  - b. Use various methods to achieve this goal such as: talks/workshops at church (in-person and virtual); online resources (TED talks, youtube videos, podcasts, etc); book/film review sessions; guest speakers and preachers; a church webpage of ways to become involved
- 2. Enhance Proximity - the degree to which UUCville members are proximate with people we accompany, mostly in marginalized communities.

- a. Educate our congregation on what proximity means for our congregation - including metrics - and its many benefits to all parties, as well as its inherent necessity
  - b. Learn through Bryan Stevenson's four pillars: get proximate, change the narrative, stay hopeful, learn to be uncomfortable
  - c. Assess where we are and then agree on a target
  - d. Advocate for causes powered by closeness to people we know and love with an emphasis on mutual benefit - educational, transformational, bias reduction, credibility, joy
  - e. Create opportunities that best fit subgroups (youth, elderly, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, etc)
3. Enhance our Partnerships - Leverage partnerships to achieve a "whole is greater than the sum of the parts" impact and to learn from those who are already proximate or complimentary in other ways.
  - a. Commit to a short list of primary partners, such as City of Promise, Sin Barreras, The Haven, PACEM, who align with our agreed-upon list of "equity, justice, and peace" priorities.
  - b. Establish goals and plans with partners, monitor progress, and adapt plans
  - c. Evaluate partnership progress regularly to assess if we're on track and "break up" gracefully if too far off track
4. Establish a Racial Justice Committee with the authority and resources to coordinate our congregation's response to issues that significantly impact BIPOC communities, such as:
  - a. health equity
  - b. affordable housing/homelessness
  - c. criminal justice reform
  - d. food insecurity and access
  - e. immigrant/refugee rights
5. Establish a Reproductive Rights and Justice Committee with the authority and resources to coordinate our congregation's response, such as:
  - a. Build on our relationships with the Blue Ridge Abortion Fund and Birth Sisters of Charlottesville to develop partnerships
  - b. Engage in public witness and advocacy around issues of reproductive rights and justice
6. Establish an LGBTQ+ Justice Committee with the authority and resources to devise, implement and oversee the activities related to LGBTQ+ justice, such as
  - a. Provide meeting space for local LGBTQ+ advocacy/support/educational groups, including groups specifically designed to support LGBTQ+ children, youth, and families
  - b. Engage in community education around LGBTQ+ issues/concerns, both as a provider of educational courses like "Transforming Hearts" and as a host for educational panels and workshops like the Trans Health Panel hosted at UUCville in the Spring 2023

- c. Engage in advocacy around LGBTQ+ issues in partnership with local, state, and national organizations, such as Equality Virginia
7. Explore re-establishing the Social Justice Council and empowering it to closely coordinate and support activities of our social action groups and with the Environmental Justice Committee/Earth Ministry to recognize and take advantage of synergies between social and environmental justice

#### ***IV. Equity, justice, and peace for the planet.***

In order to inspire, support and promote our active commitment to stewardship of our planet as expressed in our 7th Principle (Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part) as individuals, as a congregation, and as a part of our community, we set the following goals:

1. Grow the engagement of our Congregation and our local Community by:
  - a. Building on our existing partnerships that promote sustainability in our community, such as IMPACT for mass transportation
  - b. Renewing our commitment to UUA Green Sanctuary Program
  - c. Developing a strong ongoing partnership with at least one local environmental group to strengthen the commitment that congregants have to the Cville community (for example: Rivanna Conservation Alliance)
  - d. Participating in at least one Cville community environmental project per quarter
  - e. Offering two environmentally-themed Sunday services per year
2. Enhance the knowledge base of sustainability among our congregation by:
  - a. Holding sustainable eating potlucks quarterly
  - b. Developing Adult Faith Development and Young Adult/YR UU classes and activities on how to live more sustainably
3. Make our building and grounds more environmentally friendly by:
  - a. Evaluating the sustainability of our building and grounds by having an energy audit completed (scheduled for June 2024)
  - b. Sharing recommendations from the energy audit with the Building Committee
  - c. Prioritizing attainable short term projects
  - d. Exploring longer-term projects that will reduce our environmental footprint significantly
  - e. Reaching out to local conservation groups (for example: Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District) to see how our grounds can be more sustainable and environmentally friendly
  - f. Researching available grants that may help UUCville achieve sustainable building and grounds goals
4. Provide ways for our congregation to be environmental advocates by
  - a. Partnering with the VA Interfaith Power and Light organization in their faith based climate advocacy

- b. Offering opportunities to sign petitions, write to legislators and support voter registration drives at least twice a year
- c. Facilitating church participation in at least one Lobby/Advocacy day per year to advocate for pro-environmental legislation