



# **THE NEXT GENERATION INITIATIVE: THE FUTURE OF ORUCC HAS BEGUN!**

*December 7, 2008*

## **HONORING OUR FOUNDERS, HONORING OUR FUTURE:**

Fifty plus years ago, a far-sighted and bold set of founders built a new church; our church, Orchard Ridge UCC. Now we, the people of ORUCC today, are challenged to build the church for the next fifty years. We pray to bring the same faith, courage and hard work to our challenge and times, as the founders did so many years ago.

## **THE NEXT GENERATION INITIATIVE:**

Reflecting on the foresight of our founders, our congregation commissioned development of “The Next Generation Initiative,” specifically *proposals for expanded and improved programming and facilities that will strengthen and deepen our faith*. Built on extensive congregational input and hard work of several committees, the Next Generation Initiative (NGI) is emerging as a *strategic plan for the future of our church* in the next 5-10-20+ years. The NGI will allow us to live out our vision of being spiritually alive, joyfully inclusive, & committed to justice over time.

**WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES OF THE NEXT GENERATION INITIATIVE?** Improved programming and facilities for:

- Children, youth and their families: growing our joy, today and tomorrow.
- Music: increasing our joy in worship and in community.
- Growth in relationships with God, one another, and the wider world: the essence of our vision and mission.
- “Greening” our church and lives, honoring Creation and Creator: *the* challenge of our time.

## **WHAT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS ARE RECOMMENDED?**

The table that follows highlights program goals and short-term objectives recommended by the Leadership Team (not in any priority order). Of course, specific program offerings will evolve over time with changing needs and our experiences of what “works” to engage congregational participation and enthusiasm. We believe, however, that these general directions are the right ones for our “Next Generation.”

**NEXT GENERATION INITIATIVE: OVERVIEW OF LEADERSHIP TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

GOAL	PROGRAM	YEAR ONE TO THREE (2009-2011)	BY YEAR FIVE
Expand & improve the music program for all ages to praise, honor and worship God – involving people of all ages in activities and ultimately using music for outreach to the larger community	Rebuild children’s music and arts program – with instruments, singing, rhythm and movement, drama, etc. Experiment with inter-generational programs.	Expand use of drums, dancing, singing. Experiment with more activities as resources are added.	Music camp? Musical? More?
	Add support for high school music – including Tru Function.	Add Tru Function hire, sound equipment. Consider added steps.	Music Scholarships?
	Expand opportunities for more people to participate in congregational music, including but not limited to senior choir and bell choir. Experiment with more diverse music.	Provide more, easier and varied points of entry for more congregational participation. Recruit, train, support participation.	Performance opportunities? Outreach?
Strengthen and deepen our relationships with God, with each other, and with the wider world. Infuse spirituality and faith development more deeply into all our activities. Put our faith-into-action in the wider world. Build a community of small groups that actively practice faith.	Support spiritual growth and practice throughout the week. Provide education/ tools for individual use and support small group practice. Build spiritual practice and faith reflection into current & new programs of all types.	Create small, meditative spaces inside and outside the building. Add a labyrinth. Provide lay/staff leadership for programming, web and library resources, and other supports.	Continue & enhance
	Encourage ways to help people personally assess their individual spiritual development.	Offer programs and tools and encouragement.	Continue.
	Develop small groups to explore faith and life issues.	Expand number and type of groups, experiment with retreats	Encourage more participation.
	Continue to enhance our worship time together to be spiritually vibrant, fueling faith and impetus to live it.	Continue to experiment with ways to enhance worship experience& participation.	Consider facilities/formats
	Build partnerships with poor people in our community, our state and our world to promote justice. Combine justice & service work with intentional spirituality and community-building; for youth, adults & inter-generationally.	Align and enhance what we now do consistent with this goal (IHN, mission trips, Habitat, other). Experiment with Urban Immersion & other service projects & retreats.	Fuller partnerships, +participation, +generosity
Develop an unbelievably great program for children, youth & families. Offer more and deeper experiences & increase participation.	Energize music, spirituality, justice-service and “green” programming for children, youth and families. Build on recent innovations in programming for children and their families. Provide more opportunities for community-building among youth, families, and inter-generationally.	See entries for music, spirituality, justice-service work, and “greening” the church. Also, create informal and easy opportunities for youth to be together and explore with them how to energize their participation in ORUCC.	Consider other options that are youth-driven and family-driven.
Become a “green church” whose members, facilities and programs honor all creation and the Creator.	Plan for a “green facility” and grounds, with a sustainable use of energy and other “green” features.	Assess facility, make decisions, & raise funds to implement. Try community gardens.	Implement
	Deepen our relationship with God in nature, cultivating awe, respect and greater understanding of God’s world.	Experiment using our own grounds, nearby natural areas and retreat centers.	More
	Help members reflect on being “greener” in their lives.	Offer education & support groups.	More

**WHAT CHANGES IN OUR BUILDING, LAY AND PAID STAFF AND OTHER RESOURCES ARE REQUIRED TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN?** We, the Leadership Team, are excited by these strategic directions and ask the congregation to help make them our future reality.

1. **Power of People:** Our Next Generation programming will require focused, supported and trained leadership. This is a good time to experiment with various leadership models. At this time, the Leadership Team does not recommend significant changes in the number of paid staff. We suggest alternative modes of providing leadership, subject to evaluation over time.
  - a) **Music:** Current: 3 part-time paid staff (Handbell Director, Service Musician, Senior Choir Director); volunteers for Tru Function, substitute service musicians, and special music; other small contracts. Proposed: Continue current paid staff configuration until such time that any one of the 3 paid directors decides to leave ORUCC. At that point, assess possibility of a Music Director position. For 2009 budget: consider possibility of funding part-time help for Children's Music and Tru Function in the fall, if needed and affordable.
  - b) **Other NGI Staffing:** Current: 1 full-time Senior Pastor, .5 Associate Pastor for Children, Youth and Families, .5 FTE pastor or lay leader for Congregational Ministry in recruitment to spearhead and support lay leadership and participation. Proposed: Seek lay volunteer leadership/staff for middle and senior high school youth programs, faith-in-action experiences, and small group formation. Engage existing ministries (Adult Faith Formation, Youth Faith Formation, Christian Witness and Service, others) in these new directions.
2. **Power of Place:** Our 50 year old building needs major refurbishing – simply because the structure is old, and also to accommodate current and new programs, administrative needs, and our goal of becoming “green.” The first step must be a thorough and professional assessment and options analysis of the building and its grounds. This will allow us to make informed decisions on a specific plan to construct or reconstruct spaces, to become “green” insofar as possible, and to make the best use of our grounds consistent with our mission. Fortunately, one-time funds are available to us that can be used for this assessment, with congregational approval.

**Proposed motion.** “The congregation endorses the recommendations of the Leadership Team for the Next Generation Initiative. This includes four priority areas for enhanced programming to be led by pastoral and lay volunteer leaders: children, youth and their families; music; growth in relationships with God, one another and the wider world; and “greening” our church and our lives. The congregation also approves added resources for children and youth music per the 2009 budget. The congregation approves spending up to \$xx,xxx in one-time funds from an existing account balance, in order to do a professional assessment of our building and grounds and develop options for major refurbishing and changes needed for our next generation.” ... **We walk in the ways of God known, or to be made known, to us...**