



# UCSA – FAST FORWARD

Concepts & Intentions for  
Creating the Unity Church of San Antonio of 2019

## INTENTIONS for UCSA of 2019



The Board of Trustees at Unity Church of San Antonio (UCSA) has intentions to see UCSA be the center of excellence in this part of Texas for spiritual transformation through celebration, study, and service, and to experience UCSA as a community full of excitement about spiritual transformation, as well as be increasingly attractive to visitors as a body of love. This publication describes the result of their work in visioning the future of UCSA.

Imagine being able to push a “fast forward” button and see where UCSA will be in five years. Unity Church of San Antonio is a center of excellence for spiritual transformation: mortgage-free Unity Heights, planned campus improvements in progress, state-of-the-art technology, spiritually supportive classes and activities every day, exquisite youth education, enjoying expanded opportunities for multi-outreach activities, musical expression, and intentional development of Unity leaders.

And UCSA people continue to be excited about spiritual transformation, having a broader prayer consciousness, and shining our light in exemplary sacred service.

Now, for the details on how all this will happen....

## **Intention: Hold Spiritually Supportive Classes and Activities Every Day of the Week**

A big part of how we transform lives is through classes and other activities that support spiritual growth and well-being. Looking for something to do? Come by our exciting campus for a meditation, a class, a workshop, an inspiring performance, a support group, a club meeting, or another activity that supports your spiritual well-being. These are also opportunities for Sacred Service, cultivating Unity leaders, and feeding excitement to promote our goal of being a Center of Excellence for spiritual transformation.

### **Where Are We Now?**

The calendar is growing. Besides education, meditation, celebration and fellowship on Sundays, we have mid-week meditation on the second Wednesday, Recovering in Unity on Fridays, Creative Circle on one Saturday, and various Spiritual Education and Enrichment (SEE) SEE courses and book studies. We have special visits from spiritual teachers, guest speakers, musical acts, and others. Plus, groups outside of UCSA use our facility for spiritually supportive meetings and classes like A Course in Miracles and Pranic Healing. There is room on the schedule for much more.



### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

There is a constant energetic buzz around our spiritual campus, promoting growth and retention. Something is happening every day, including celebration, study, and service for UCSA, and study for groups outside of UCSA (for example, outreach activities for Haven for Hope and nursing homes.) More people are involved, creating opportunities for sacred service, leadership and personal growth (e.g., administrative support for scheduling). Our greater space, campus plan, and state of the art technology allow it all to come together smoothly.

## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Design and Initiate Plans for a Campus that Fully Meets Our Needs**

Some decisions need to be made about the UCSA and Unity Heights property and facilities. Your Board of Trustees has chosen not to commit resources haphazardly but rather is determined to make the best use of existing resources in the light of a coordinated plan for the future of UCSA. Every facility decision has to consider cost, room for growth, functionality, accessibility and security.

### **Where Are We Now?**

Our facilities have served us well. If we are to continue to grow as a community, the sanctuary is too small (our history has shown us that adding a 9:00 a.m. celebration on Sunday doesn't meet that need, because that's not where the demand is). The old building behind the sanctuary needs to come down because it is a potential safety hazard but we also need to decide how best to use that space. Parking has been a concern. Proper signage is needed to make sure newcomers can find everything. It is also difficult to balance safety of our children and teens during Sunday celebrations with accessibility to newcomers and people who may have difficulty getting around.



### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

Needs assessment, resource estimates, design and master plan have been done, membership voted and accepted the plan, some projects have been completed and a plan for the rest is in motion. Plan provides for a larger sanctuary, and sufficient space for UCSA's sacred service ministry, youth/adult education, parking, offices, community center, bookstore, technology, prayer, music, meeting and outdoor spaces. It provides a layout that facilitates safety and accessibility. Specific solutions that have been considered include, e.g., building on (or reconfiguring) existing property, expanding onto adjacent and/or satellite property, and relocating.



## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Enjoy Greater Opportunities for Musical Expression**

It is often said that music has charms to soothe the savage breast...metaphysically we would interpret this as the soothing of the part of our being that at times forgets it's true Christ nature. Music, with its harmonic melodies and soul inspiring lyrics, has a way of touching and making sense to people that no other means of communication can.

### **Where are we now?**



We are fortunate to have a strong, spiritually based and selfless team in place. Their talent and dedication is unrivaled. With the addition of the new percussionist, their sound has exploded into the stratosphere. The message that is received through the music team every week may be the only word of truth a person hears because they needed their "savage breast" calmed.

### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

With increased participation, both formal and informal, from the congregation, we now have an expanded musical program with additional teams (youth, NGU, Choral style, etc.). Not only have we enhanced and diversified in musical instruments and styles, but we have also reached out into the community supporting different cultural and civic events. Music is part of more events at UCSA and our music teams seek out opportunities to carry UCSA's light to retirement homes and other venues



## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Employ State-of-the-Art Technology for Enhanced Celebration, Study and Service**

Technology has become just as vital today in Spiritual Communities as the hymnals and the blackboard to post the Sunday school lesson of the week back in the 70's. Though slide shows and video clips still have a major role to play in community celebrations, we are still to a degree, behind the times. Live broadcasting via the Internet for services, classes and other events are all possible now and into the future.

### **Where are we now?**

UCSA is at a level of technology use that is good. Our website, e-communications, social media, podcasts, and CD recordings are all wonderful tools that we use to reach out to our community. Our sound system, even though challenging to master, offers many undiscovered opportunities and possibilities.



### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

UCSA uses web capabilities for multiple purposes allowing YOU, off-site groups, or those who are traveling, homebound, or hospitalized to take part in real-time (e.g., live-streaming, webinars in English and Spanish, distance learning, and a UCSA channel). Security cameras and similar tools help protect our children and teens during classes and activities. And we routinely create multi-media content like on-demand products (e.g., guided meditations) and online material.



## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Shine Our Light in Exemplary Sacred Service**

Sacred Service is a spiritual practice of giving of our talents centered in love and guided by Spirit. Sacred Service is an enriching experience connecting our community and transforming lives.

#### **Where are we now?**



Sacred Service opportunities continue to expand with the leadership of a part-time Sacred Service Coordinator. Our Youth Ministry continues to nurture and develop our children and teens, allowing their Light to shine. Expansion is limited due to space availability and only part-time directors. We are at risk of letting volunteer time, talent and enthusiasm fade away if we are not organized to make use of it.

#### **Fast Forward 5 years:**

Full-time paid positions for Sacred Service Coordinator and Youth Director; established teams with comprehensive, tailored training; Sacred Service as a spiritual practice is an integral part of the UCSA experience; management tools are in use so that volunteers' zeal is not lost in administrative delays.



## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Build a Multi-Outreach Community Service Ministry**

We envision an awakened world community radiating God's light. Our Vision statement reminds us of who we came here to be. We can transform lives by becoming a visible expression of our divine nature.

#### **Where are we now?**

UCSA radiates God's light through opportunities outside our congregation. The THRU Project is our primary service project assisting children aging out of foster care. Our annual Thanksgiving



dinner at University Hospital and Christmas lunch and caroling at Pecan Hill Apartments have been ongoing outreach activities.

#### **Fast Forward 5 years:**



UCSA's community service ministry is a "go to" organization for community outreach groups seeking expertise and leadership. Our prosperity enables us to provide financial and

networking support to organizations outside of UCSA; leaders have emerged and developed connections to expand opportunities; many and varied opportunities are available.

## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Demonstrate a Widespread Prayer Consciousness**

Prayer at its simplest is a deliberate effort to experience our Oneness with the Divine, and may be the most important practice we have to transform our lives. In prayer we can create and re-create our circumstances by changing ourselves. We pray for others by strengthening our awareness of their Oneness with the Divine and seeing the highest good in their lives.

### **Where Are We Now?**

Rev. Linda's book promotes prayer consciousness throughout our UCSA community. Practice and study in prayer techniques is included in our education programs. UCSA's prayer chaplains are a powerful presence and great service to us, during and after celebrations and in monthly phone calls to members. Written prayer intentions may be submitted during celebrations. We have frequent opportunities for meditation and prayer in community.



### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

We enjoy the benefit of a constant prayer consciousness in our daily lives. More and more, we see prayer – the use of the word to increase our experience of Oneness – as something that is embedded in our daily lives. UCSA is doing more with prayer, for example, more trained prayer chaplains, a 24-hour prayer service, dedicated prayer/meditation space



in our updated campus, leveraging our updated technology to share prayer and guided meditations with those who cannot come to us, maybe a staff minister or Licensed Unity Teacher administering our prayer ministries.

# UCSA Fast Forward 2019

## **Intention: Cultivate Unity Leaders**

The Fillmores, Emily Cady, Catherine Ponder, and others who were powerful and dynamic leaders within Unity all made a conscious choice to step forth and be that powerful force to help change peoples' lives. Who will be our future leaders, at UCSA and in the Unity movement, to continue their great work?

## **Where Are We Now?**

No doubt UCSA has one of the premier ministers in the movement. We also have two LUTs and some people who have the wonderful ability to fill in for Rev. Linda on a Sunday morning. Our leaders are more than those who speak on Sunday mornings. People are coming into active roles throughout our community, expected and unexpected (for example, two teens, who led the recent youth rally from a place of confidence unmatched, and the emerging NGU, which is becoming a vital presence in our community).



## **Fast Forward 5 years:**

UCSA's potential leaders have the resources of additional LUTs who are credentialed to offer SEE classes and provide mentoring. Policy and procedure manuals are available to leaders encouraging best practices. UCSA is a training center for Unity leaders in our region.



Opportunities continue to expand for our youth to learn and practice. Our staff ministers and interns develop and implement tools for delivering the Unity message (e.g., the UCSA "sound byte") to a wider audience.

## UCSA Fast Forward 2019

### **Intention: Provide Exquisite Spiritual Education for Children and Teens in a Dedicated and Safe Space**

UCSA's youth need and deserve the finest spiritual education that can be offered, in an environment that is safe, appropriate and accommodating of personal expression and ownership.

#### **Where Are We Now?**

UCSA's youth are receiving excellent spiritual education from a committed youth ministry team. However, this education is being offered in space that is being leased by tenants, or in the community center. It is crowded, does



not allow for personal expression and is not conducive to the goals of the program. For example, the physical layout does not facilitate cost-effective, sensible safety policies and procedures. We have to go to extraordinary measures to ensure safety, because of the layout of the Unity Heights.

#### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

Paying off UCSA's mortgage allows each age group to occupy space that is dedicated, educationally appropriate and expressive of the youth that learn in it. Detailed safety policies and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed/updated. Youth are empowered through a strong



focus on the application of core Unity principles, as well as various opportunities for growth (e.g., leading Sunday services, serving as regional YOU officers, mentoring). Ongoing, effective teacher recruitment and training is in place.

# UCSA Fast Forward 2019

## **Intention: Pay Off the Unity Heights Mortgage Early**

UCSA currently holds a mortgage balance that is projected to be paid off in approximately seven years. At present, we lease space in order to generate income to satisfy our monthly mortgage payment.

### **Where Are We Now?**

Continuing to hold a mortgage:

1) Disallows UCSA to use the leased space for its own needs; and 2) Results in a property tax bill in excess of \$10,000 annually.



### **Fast Forward 5 Years:**

UCSA has successfully completed a campaign to pay off the mortgage two years early. The Unity Heights building is used solely by UCSA. As a



result, the youth ministry program is able to provide dedicated, appropriate facilities for its children and teens. Multiple adult education opportunities can be offered in less crowded rooms more conducive to learning. UCSA's community outreach teams will have the facilities they need to support their activities.

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