

Notes from Congregational Conversation – taken by Kim Cooper, Board Secretary  
Unitarian Universalists of San Mateo, CA  
April 6, 2009

- 1) Religious Education is significantly impacted by lack of space
  - a) Classes are made to take turns at tables because there is not enough room.
  - b) Not enough outdoor space to play and we need more boy-type play facilities.
  - c) Dependent on lease to have space at Petit Sorbonne
  - d) No room at all for teens
    - 1) The teens, or others, could meet in Hemingway Lounge during services, but that would create a noise problem
  - e) The classes are going to get larger in the future, so space will be even more of a problem. Not only are there more kids in the classes, but they get physically bigger as they grow. When the large group that is now in third and fourth grade get older, the space will not be usable for them.
  
- 2) Administration is also short of space
  - a) Wendy and Lauren's offices necessitate walking through the meeting room in the cottage to get to, often disrupting classes
  - b) Vail's office isn't big enough for family counseling sessions or group meetings
  - c) Vail's office and the business office get very hot in the summer -- too hot to use.
  - d) The business office is used by several people and is very crowded. It has no conference room or area for normal business meetings, and there is no way to make confidential phone calls or have confidential meetings concerning personnel matters.
  - e) Wendy and Lauren's offices are very far away from the other offices and this hampers communication and sharing.
  - f) Both the minister's office and the business office are at the top of a narrow steep stairway, making it inaccessible to many people. The stairway to the space above the kitchen is even worse.
  - g) We have NO STORAGE!!
  
- 3) Worship space is too small
  - a) Besides the full sanctuary, especially on holidays;
  - b) The choir doesn't have adequate legal space for storage, preparation, rehearsal, dressing, lining up
  - c) the building is not very handicapped accessible: the ramp that we have is too steep, the corner in it is too tight, and the door it leads to only opens from the inside (so if no one hears the bell ringing, you can't get in that way.)
  - d) our restrooms are not handicapped accessible, making us unwelcoming for people who are differently-abled, and there is no room to expand them.
  - e) we can't remodel our current space: we cannot expand because the city won't permit it without parking, and we can't do anything other than cosmetic remodel without bringing it all up to code -- especially the handicapped accommodations.

#### 4) Other

- a) facilities: Supplies and tools are, in many cases, stored in sheds which are not weather tight or secure.
- b) Parking: There is no off-street parking. During services and large social functions, parking options are either too remote, too problematic, or technically illegal, as in the case of the nearby medical building lot.
- c) Handicapped accessibility. The current facility meets none of the modern standards for handicapped accessibility, and there is no adequate space to build accessible toilet rooms anywhere in the building. Like many religious organizations, we have a disproportionate percentage of our membership which is elderly, blind, and/or mobility challenged.

I might add:

- f) Our foyers are very very small, leaving little room to welcome guests.
- g) We need space for teen and twenty-something activities to keep them with us. (like a media room?)
- h) We need an adequate apartment for the sexton
- i) We could use some storage space
- j) The kitchen needs more storage space