

## **Task Force Q&A Congregational Meeting December 9, 2007**

Nancy Loughrey distributed the draft of a timeline for the proposed next steps for the joint Task Force between OCUUC and Tapestry. She explained that this is just a draft at this point and must be discussed with the board. She pointed out various aspects of the timeline and said that just sharing a building with Tapestry without joining forces with them as a single church is not considered advantageous to either congregation and will probably be dropped from consideration.

**QUESTION:** Have we considered bringing the Laguna Beach Church into the venture?

**ANSWER:** When a merger was attempted between the south country church and Laguna Beach, the discussions died because Laguna members did not want to leave their building, and their site is too small and out of convenient range for a joint church location. A second reason for their remaining a separate entity is that they represent an option of an active smaller church in Orange County. This does not mean that they shouldn't be asked again, and Nancy Loughrey will follow up.

**QUESTION:** Will we list our property before we find another place?

**ANSWER:** Yes, but with the provision regarding when the new owner can take possession of the property. Also, within a very short time, we will have a joint sub-task force to explore potential real estate. Tapestry already has its members selected for this committee, and we will very soon.

**QUESTION:** What will be the new name?

**ANSWER:** That's the hard part! A new name will be decided down the road with due, joint process with the members of both congregations.

**QUESTION:** What about the Endowment Fund?

**ANSWER:** This was not mentioned in the Profile, and it probably should be. The Profile is a living document and will be updated as needed.

**QUESTION:** What is the status of our parking arrangements?

**ANSWER:** For the time being, we have a renewal of 15 months from the owners next door, at \$100 a month. However, there is no promise that this agreement will be renewed when it expires at the end of 2008.

**QUESTION:** How will we select a realtor?

**ANSWER:** We may have separate committees and realtors for the sale of our property and the purchase of another property. We will not have any member of either church as a realtor. There will be many small group meetings to seek input on the location of a new church. The demographic map posted on the web site and displayed at both congregations will be crucial in determining a site.

**QUESTION:** What are some of the "cultural differences"—differences in the way things are done—between the two congregations? Are the two congregations compatible?

**ANSWER:** Mostly, we do things pretty much the same way. One difference is that Tapestry requires a minimum pledge for membership, one that at least covers District dues, UUA obligations, and the cost of the newsletter. OCUUC has no pledge requirements for membership. Also, OCUUC has much more of a budget for paid staff, while Tapestry relies more on volunteers.

**QUESTION:** How will differences such as this be worked out?

**ANSWER:** With much dialogue and sub-committee work. As in any relationship, discussion and compromise help harmony. As a choir member pointed out, the two choirs got together for a recent service, and “our voices just blended.” This is perhaps an apt metaphor for the possibilities of joining forces. We need to get to know one another and begin working together.

**QUESTION:** I object to the use of the word “we” to discuss and describe the separate parties in this venture. It sounds like a “done deal,” and I don’t feel I have a say about it.

**ANSWER:** Since the Task Force members have worked cooperatively together for several months, our language has naturally evolved beyond “we-they” terminology. OCUUC, however, will have several opportunities to question and vote upon any permanent decision. Beginning in January, we will have small cottage meetings at a variety of county locations to ask and answer questions and express concerns. Also, the congregational vote January 20 is simply one to “attempt a Union” and “authorize Boards to form task forces” to explore a variety of issues. If that passes and we proceed, a more definitive vote will occur at a later time, which will if passed approve listing our property for sale and will use the word “commit” in some form to describe the relationship between the two congregations. Not before June—at the very earliest and only if all goes especially smoothly—will we vote once more for whether or not a new UU congregation will be official.