From the Prez

Our Magic Kingdom

Two weeks ago, over 30 people gathered to brainstorm UUCSC's Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Hopes. What struck me in typing and organizing the **flip charts** was that there were two ways participants looked at things: (1) through a magnifying glass, and (2) through a telescope. Both are valid; both are useful. And they are different.

When looking at the world through a magnifying glass one sees things up close, details are magnified; one sees both what is here in the present and what could be in the future that are concrete and specific and for which the path to achievement is relatively clear and defined. As such, fixing the back yard gate, moving signage for better visibility, offering film nights, even becoming a Columbarium (resting place for cremains) are all eminently doable – if we wished to do so (and if someone stepped up to organize the effort). I've posted a list of many of these specific ideas on the bulletin board in the Oneto Room. If you'd like to help make these happen, please sign up.

By contrast, looking through a telescope offers a bird's eye view – a long-range vista through which we might focus on a future that right now we can only imagine. In the organizational development literature, Jim Collins coined the term "BHAG" (pronounced "Bee-Hag," short for "Big Hairy Audacious Goal"). Imagining sending a man on the moon was a BHAG in the mid-1960's. Gasp! A BHAG engages people – it is tangible, energizing, highly focused, and asks the question: What do we need to do today, with relentless focus, and tomorrow, and the next day, to defy the probabilities and ultimately achieve our BHAG?

For me, I see a UUCSC BHAG that builds on what we have now but takes it much further. (BHAG descriptions are worded in the present tense as if it is happening now.)

The word is out! UUCSC is widely known as an intergenerational community of love, where caring for each other is evident in the way people show up for each other, where newcomers are welcomed and included, where children and youth are integrated seamlessly into worship and the community. There is a vibrancy and joy to the congregation that draws people to us – opportunities to build relationships and form meaningful connections abound; opportunities for spiritual growth extend beyond the rich and meaningful Sunday services. We are diverse in faith, ethnicity, gender identification and spirituality, but aligned in our desire to make a difference for the good. Indeed, UUCSC is a leader in key social justice initiatives in South County. UUCSC is financially secure. Not only do we have a substantial endowment, the income of which covers 50% of our operating budget, but facility repair and maintenance is up-to-date and secure for the next 25 years. Cutting edge technology allows our expert technology team and volunteers to offer innovative programs for the community. As children grow up their involvement in the community deepens and youth choose to remain connected to the congregation after they "bridge". UUCSC is bursting at the seams with people loving each other, building community, and creating a just, equitable society.

Is my vision possible? As Walt Disney once said, "If you can dream it, you can do it. Always remember that this whole thing was started with a dream and a mouse." At UUCSC we have a dream; we have a mouse. Together, we can create our magic kingdom. I look forward to the journey with you.

Nancy