

Communications Task Force Report

Members

Keith Hupperts – Chair
Alex Barnett
Carole Van Gorder
Julie Estlick
Kerri South
Cherry Sokoloski
Kimm Batavia

Overview

The communication task force was organized as part of the results of the 5 year planning team's initial group meetings held in homes and at church. One aspect of improvement identified during those meetings was in regards to church communications. Comments from the meetings fell into two broad categories intra-church communications and external communications.

The Communications Task Force was organized to:

- review the comments from the congregants
- add additional communications items to the listing
- prepare a plan to begin addressing these items over the course of the next five years

Process

The team met in January to discuss the comments from the congregation and comments from community members. This discussion was also a brainstorming session to attempt to identify as many communications issues as possible and opportunities to address those issues. The first meeting resulted in a large set of issues, and actions that could address the issues.

A task force survey was developed to allow team members to prioritize the possible actions that could be taken. We reviewed the expected impact of the change, when the change should be performed in the five year cycle, the ability for the church or a committee to realize the change, and an order of magnitude of the costs.

The team met again in mid-March to discuss the results of the survey and prepare the proposals detailed below.

Proposed Actions

Year 1

Number	Description
1	Establish a Communications Committee: The role of this committee will be to provide direction in setting

	<p>communications policy, as well as organize and execute the actions detailed in this report over the next 5 years.</p> <p>The task force did not feel that it was appropriate to make numerous recommendations without also providing a framework and organization to ensure that the actions were performed.</p> <p>It is expected that this committee would have sub-committees to address specific areas of communications. For instance, a sub-committee for the web page, a sub-committee to perform editorial reviews of publications, etc.</p> <p>There is also the possibility of combining some of existing committees to create the Communications Committee or perhaps providing communications coordination to other committees. Denominational Connections, Public Relations, InterCom, Campus Outreach, and others may all benefit from a coordinated FUUC-wide communications strategy while also maintaining their distinct identities.</p> <p>Most task force members are willing to continue working together, along with members from other existing committees to improve our communications.</p>
2	<p>Website updates:</p> <p>Create a Website sub-committee to define the content to be placed on the website and ensure that information on the website is up to date and refreshed on a regular basis.</p> <p>We recommend that a team of people be responsible for reviving the website, both in appearance and in content.</p> <p>Our understanding is that an upgrade of the website appearance is underway. However, the content of the website has yet to be fully defined. We recommend that during year 1 the website should undergo a significant update including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • up-to-date content • appearance improvement • the current InterCom • a calendar of upcoming events • other church news (potentially information from the various committees, board meeting minutes (or a synopsis), caring committee announcements, joys and concerns) <p>As part of the update a plan for the ongoing maintenance and content management will need to be defined. A primary goal of the website</p>

	<p>refurbishing must also be to create a site that allows the administrators to easily post new materials. The plan will need to address training the people who will be responsible for updating information on the website. This is currently expected to be performed by office staff.</p> <p>As part of the website upgrade, we recommend that the congregation try to make more use of electronic content. We should encourage people to utilize the website, and or their email accounts to receive documents such as the InterCom, the Adult Enrichment catalog, & Intercom inserts. This approach is greener and cheaper.</p>
3	<p>Document proofreaders:</p> <p>Simple punctuation and typographical errors are often able to be corrected with a quick review prior to publishing. Therefore, we recommend the establishment of a group of people to proofread documents such as InterCom, Orders of Services, and other documents published by the church.</p> <p>This group would typically need to provide a quick review of the document for any typographical, punctuation, and other simple corrections. It would not be expected that the reviewers would need to perform editorial changes to the documents. Reviews need not take much time – 5 or 10 minutes. A quick response to the request would be required as deadlines for printing often do not provide much more than a few hours for review.</p>
4	<p>InterCom inserts:</p> <p>Reduce the number of inserts in the InterCom. Inserts often add to the costs of the mailing, require additional effort for the InterCom team, since they have to collate the inserts into the newsletter, (often at the last minute) and require additional paper.</p> <p>Instead of inserts, the task force recommends the use of the church news section of the website.</p> <p>We understand that some inserts may still be necessary. However, we recommend that if the number of inserts will increase mailing costs we prioritize which inserts are essential. This means some may not be included.</p>
5	<p>Idea box:</p> <p>Some people have requested an idea box to be placed in the lobby area. We agree that this is a good idea and recommend that an idea box be created. This may be an actual box, or just a notebook.</p>

	<p>We also realize that with an idea box there is a certain level of responsibility to act on the comments and ideas. At a minimum, the person submitting the idea or request needs to be acknowledged and the idea needs to be forwarded to the appropriate person for discussion and action. The congregation must also realize that the act of submitting an idea may not result in the idea being implemented.</p> <p>We feel that the initial review and contact can be coordinated by the office staff and that follow-up contacts should be the responsibility of the party best able to address the idea (potentially church staff or committee members).</p>
6	<p>Advertising:</p> <p>The team feels that we should think about more and/or better advertising of our presence. We currently advertise in the Coloradoan and the Loveland papers on a weekly basis and in the yellow pages ad. However, none of the team members were aware of the advertisements in the paper, so we need to review the ad and assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>One form of advertisement that all task force members agreed upon was to become ‘Day Sponsors’ on KUNC and KRFC. Cost for a day sponsorship on KUNC is \$360/day.</p> <p>We recommend selecting one day, a week or two prior to a significant church event, (perhaps a concert, Halloween pumpkin carving night, new member Sunday) to advertise ourselves. We may also want to review advertisements that the UUA has done and make use of some of their newer materials.</p>

Year 2

Number	Description
7	<p>Branding:</p> <p>Begin to establish a ‘brand’ for our church that will help it be easily recognized at any event that the church hosts or participates in. This may mean colorizing the ‘Horsetooth logo’ chalice, or replacing it with a new logo.</p> <p>The ‘logo search’ could be a competition within the church community; asking church members to develop logos and having the congregation select the favorite. This logo would then be used as part of all of our documents, signage, website, etc.</p>

8	<p>Signage:</p> <p>Work with the ‘Buildings and Grounds’ committee to begin planning for new Drake Street signage. We would prefer to get a new sign that we can advertise upcoming events such as sermon topics, concerts, community forums and more.</p> <p>We believe that this sign may be expensive, so we would propose to fund it through a special funding drive, canvassing for a donor that would want to know what their money was being spent on, or by making multi-year funding requests to the endowment committee & the board of trustees and receive a portion of the funding each year.</p>
9	<p>Additional marketing:</p> <p>Before we pursue additional advertisement opportunities other than KUNC we recommend that FUUC contact the UUA to receive any information that they have in regards to marketing a UU church. We see FUUC making use of the UUA ads published in Time Magazine and republishing them in the Coloradoan.</p>
10	<p>Additional website updates:</p> <p>After, or in conjunction with, completing the content management aspects of year 1 to ensure that information is current and useful. Start to prepare to offer additional services and information online.</p> <p>Over the course of the remaining 3 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the ability to offer the taped services online, starting with audio and potentially offering video in the future (with permissions from the minister to publish any copyrighted materials) • Provide a secure ‘login only’ area to publish member information such as the Church Directory, a Services Directory • Host, or provide links to online community building tools such as member blogs, with the goal of making portions of the website an interactive forum to promote the sharing of ideas
11	<p>Information from the Board:</p> <p>Review reporting of board decisions and ensure that congregation is getting adequate information. If changes are required, look into better reporting methods.</p>
12	<p>Community Events:</p>

	<p>Sponsor a booth at community events such as New West Fest, Pride in the Park and the Sustainable Living Fair.</p> <p>Have a FUUC banner created that can be used at these events with the new/improved logo on it. Organize staffing for the both, have FUUC & UUA handouts available, as well as, small give-aways to generate booth interest.</p>
--	--

Year 3

Number	Description
13	<p>Long term advertising plan:</p> <p>Put into place an advertising plan based upon information & materials provided by UUA and input from the team and congregation.</p>
14	<p>Host additional community events:</p> <p>Organize and host more community events such as the uranium mining forum. This will require solicitation of ideas from the congregation, potentially using the congregation to 'recruit' speakers. Perhaps this can become a Speaker Series with community members, CSU Professors, and others coming to talk about a variety of topics.</p>
15	<p>External communication:</p> <p>Establish a policy, and review process, for documents that are published by FUUC, or FUUC affiliated groups, which are to be distributed outside of the church community.</p>
16	<p>Coloradoan:</p> <p>Establish a relationship with Coloradoan staff, and present general interest story ideas to them. (Day of the Dead celebration, community garden, whatever)</p>
17	<p>Continuous website updates:</p> <p>Since technology is ever-changing, we feel website improvement will need to be a continuous improvement project. We can utilize this tool both internally and externally to improve communication within the church and broader community.</p>

Year 4 & 5

Continue moving forward with all aspects of the communication plan based upon current progress, assessment of new needs, and success of changes to date.

Look at the possibility of having a Communications Coordinator on staff – either as a paid part-time position or on a volunteer basis to assist in communications activities internally and externally.