

## **GROWING OUR CHURCH!**

Energized by the church we already are and inspired by growing into the church we want to be, our Membership Team, supported by our Board, our Treasurer, and Rev. Frank, is proposing that we hire a part time Membership Coordinator. This will involve about 10-15 hours a week with someone qualified to work with our data base of members and visitors, that understands and supports Unitarian Universalist principles and can work well with our administrator, Rev. Frank, our Membership Team and our members and visitors. The cost of that position would be about \$10,000 annually.

The good news is that in 2014, our church had 291 first time visitors! An amazing number. In growing churches, the ratio of new visitors to existing members needs to be 1:1. We were above that number. Our membership count is approximately 215. The bad news is that despite a lot of activity by a large group of people, we only had 6 new members. That was offset by the normal loss of members who die or resign or move.

It is true of our church that our membership has stalled for a number of years at between 200 and 250. It became clear to our Membership Team in early January that we were headed for a negative growth, or at best a break even point.

Here is the good news...this church by most accounts is a truly happy, spirited place now and most of us are enthusiastic about what we have to share with new people and about enriching and deepening our experience in this church. We know we have a lot to offer.

We have a very high number now of frequent visitors who are people that have returned to our church more than eight times. The challenge of enriching the connection of our members who become slowly disengaged, integrating new members into our community as well as establishing on going engagements with new visitors and our large population of frequent visitor was more than volunteer effort could sustain.

We organized an all church forum in March with the Director of Congregational Life in the First Unitarian Church in Des Moines who was inspiring and precise about what is necessary to maintain vitality and growth in Unitarian Churches. Thanks to our own research and her solid consultation, we now have some clear ideas about what we need in a part time coordinator to maximize what we have to offer to enrich the experience for us and our visitors.

Please contact any Board Member, any Membership Team Member or Rev. Frank or me at [janderegg@cox.net](mailto:janderegg@cox.net) if you need more information, have questions, or would like to involve yourself in a new effort for this church!

Jackie Anderegg, Chair  
Membership Team