



## **Ministerial Search Committee Congregational Profile September 2008**

MVUUF is a friendly, dynamic, growing community established as a lay-led fellowship in 1966. Over the years it has successfully weathered changes in building and space needs, ministry, staffing, and governance. We have a history of solid finances and committed and capable lay leadership. In recent years we have become more active in numerous social justice and environmental issues, including becoming a Welcoming Congregation in 2003, an International Peace Site in 2004, and a Green Sanctuary congregation in 2008. We also have an active group working on Peace issues; members gather each week to demonstrate in the community for peace. One of our goals is to expand our social justice and environmental work into the wider community.

One of our greatest strengths is our warm welcoming atmosphere, our sense of community and fellowship. We love to make and listen to music and are fortunate enough to have a creative and talented Minister of Music to help us do that. We enjoy a good laugh, especially at ourselves. We have numerous social clubs and activities. We want to preserve as much as possible our sense of intimacy despite our growth and the diversity that it brings. Our members are also strongly committed financially to the Fellowship. In 2002 we completed a \$925,000 expansion of our building that is 70% paid.

Another of our strengths is our strong lay leadership. We have always had wide participation in church responsibilities; several of our members have been honored by the UUA for their work. In 2007 we changed our governance system to a Board of Trustees and Program Council model, so we are still working out the details of that transition. Our new settled minister will be our first fulltime minister, so learning how to create a shared ministry satisfying to the minister, lay leaders and members will be an important goal over the next few years.

Possibly our biggest challenge in the next several years is growth—how to maintain intimacy, how to provide enough space for programs, how to adapt administration and governance to accommodate a bigger church, etc. As we have grown, we have also become more diverse--not racially, but theologically and with respect to age, lifestyle and life stage. Although most of us identify as humanist, we are a theologically diverse group. Though most of our members are over 40 years old, and many over 60, more young families have joined us; consequently, the numbers of children and young adults has swelled. Not only will we need to appreciate this widening diversity, but we will also need to work on better integration of new members and families with more established members.

MVUUF is a well-established, solid, committed, caring community that also likes to laugh and sing and play. Won't you join us?