

A Vision for Multi-Platform Community  
September 2021

Gathering during a pandemic takes different forms, but still we gather. We gather to find meaning and live more deeply. We gather to create connections within, among, and beyond us, calling us to our better selves, calling us to live with more wisdom and more compassion.

—UU Church of Reading

Still we gather- to find meaning and live more deeply, to create and nurture the connections with, among and beyond us as we continue to seek how to live with wisdom and compassion in community. This statement is a vision for how we will gather and continue to create and nurture connections among and beyond us and how we use technology to be a community in the time of pandemic and beyond.

*What we've learned*

The pandemic caused us to become a virtual community using Zoom in order to keep one another safe and to keep our community connected. We adapted quickly to using technology and have thrived. We've discovered and expanded the capacity of technology to bring us together for community, for worship, and for ministry. We've been able to collaborate with other UU congregations for shared worship and we've been able to bring in speakers and musicians who otherwise might not have been able to be part of our services. We have also realized the power of technology to connect with and include people who are not able to attend worship in person for a variety of reasons, including distance, health, or other circumstances.

*A vision*

Even as we're able to gather in person again, first in a limited capacity and hopefully eventually in large groups, the use of Zoom and other technology will continue to play a central role in our shared life and worship. In order to shape and prioritize the decisions we make for how we use technology, here are some goals for multi-platform experiences.

## *Goals*

1. There will be a strong connection between remote participants and in person participants with plenty of opportunities to participate in worship and community events, whether in person or virtually.
2. We will continue to include remote speakers and musicians, either live or recorded, as well as other videos, visual presentations, and rituals designed for both in person and remote participation.
3. We will continue to collaborate with other UU congregations and invite them to join us for worship.
4. We will use multiple cameras and other devices for a variety of views and angles to create a feeling of intimacy and participation. My vision of multiple camera views include the pulpit, the center of the chancel, the music area, and the congregation.
5. Worship and event leaders will feel connected with both remote and in person participants and will understand the importance of talking to people who are in person as well as those who are attending virtually.
6. There will be excellent internet bandwidth and the technology components needed to achieve this vision, along with a well staffed team that is carefully and thoughtfully trained and passionate about using technology for connections.
7. There will be a paid Technology Staff person to lead this vision and oversee the program as a ministry of our congregation.
8. There will be more than one location ('satellites') where people can gather in person on the UUCK campus to participate in worship and other community events.
9. There will be an off-campus protocol for technology use that will allow both in person and remote participation for worship and other events that occur in settings such as a local park.

10. There will be joy and creativity inspired by our desire to nurture our community's life and work through the use of technology and multi-platform opportunities to gather, connect and thrive.

11. We will be able to use our technology to attract renters seeking multi-platform spaces. We will also be inclusive of using our technology to support the community and other non-profit organizations at cost (or even at below cost for some organizations).