

Beyond the Glass Ceiling

Rev. Stefan M. Jonasson

Director for Large Congregations

Unitarian Universalist Association

Barriers to Growth

- 1. Governance and authority.** Our general ambivalence about issues of authority leads, in most cases, to governance structures that are inadequate to meeting the challenges of size. Congregations that grow beyond the glass ceiling typically have governance structures that authorize leaders (both lay and professional) to lead, maintain clear accountability mechanisms, and refrain from confusing governance with program implementation (that is to say, ministry).

Barriers to Growth

2. Inadequate staffing, which includes not only staffing *levels* but also staff *competence* and *initiative*.

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3. Limitations of physical space, which includes not only campuses that may be too small (in whole or in part) but also a general lack of imagination in using the space we have more fully.

Barriers to Growth

- 4. Underutilization of some form (or forms) of small group ministry as the primary means of assimilating newcomers and serving existing members.**

Barriers to Growth

5. Underutilization of interactive technology and media.

Barriers to Growth

6. Lack of market differentiation, which is, in religious terms, related to clarity about spiritual identity and mission.

Barriers to Growth

7. The pervasive presence of low or mediocre expectations, which often leads to an underdeveloped sense of communal conviction and commitment, too often lead us to aspire to be far less than we could be, whether as individuals or congregations.

Removing the Barriers

- Any congregation that breaks through the glass ceiling can be expected to exhibit good governance, adequate staffing, adequate and fully-used space, robust small group ministry, comfort with interactive technology and media, a distinct identity and mission, communal conviction and commitment, and high expectations for its members, itself and the world.