

**Overview of UU Advertising Campaign  
Orange County, South Bay and Long Beach California  
Prepared by Valerie Holton  
Marketing Outreach Director, UUA  
March 1, 2007**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In the spring of 2005, lay leaders representing seven congregations in the Orange County, Long Beach and South Bay areas of Southern California met with the Stewardship & Development Group of the UUA. They formed a regional Round Table with the objective of collectively funding a project that would support Unitarian Universalism. The Round Table decided to increase UU outreach efforts through an advertising campaign. With the assistance of the UUA Stewardship & Development Group the Round Table participants committed to raising \$100,000 for an advertising campaign. The campaign launched in Fall 2006.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The campaign had the following goals:

1. Generate brand awareness of Unitarian Universalism
2. Increase visitor attendance at local congregations
3. Increase membership
4. Create excitement and pride among Unitarian Universalists in the area
5. Build a sense of UU community among the seven participating congregations

**HISTORICAL DATA**

The seven congregations involved in the campaign are listed below. All have experienced strong growth, as indicated in the chart. Overall, the congregations have experienced a 21% five year growth and an 11% one year growth.

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Feb. 2000</b>	<b>Feb. 2001</b>	<b>Feb. 2002</b>	<b>Feb. 2003</b>	<b>Feb. 2004</b>	<b>Feb. 2005</b>	<b>Feb. 2006</b>	<b>% Change Five Year 2002 v. 2006</b>	<b>% Change 2005 v. 2006</b>
Orange Coast UU Church	200	209	224	241	239	233	249	11%	7%
Pacific Unitarian Church, Rancho Palos Verdes	220	220	220	225	208	208	252	15%	21%
Tapestry A UU Congregation	87	85	105	112	130	142	155	48%	9%
UU Church in Fullerton	110	113	125	124	120	124	137	10%	10%
UU Church in Long Beach	241	243	245	250	276	261	279	14%	7%
UU Fellowship of Laguna Beach	64	54	75	106	121	119	136	81%	14%
UU Church in Anaheim	40	44	41	33	36	41	48	17%	17%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>1035</b>	<b>1091</b>	<b>1130</b>	<b>1128</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>11%</b>

## CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

**Fund-Raising:** Funds were locally raised through the support of the Stewardship & Development Staff of the UUA in concert with local congregational volunteers. Donors were selected based on the recommendation of the ministers and lay-leaders as well as UUA donor knowledge. Fifty-five donors contributed \$97,000 to the campaign.

**Pre-preparation:** Congregations were asked to conduct a “needs assessment” and sign a covenant. Two workshops were conducted over a 12 month period. In October 2005, Ken Brown, District Executive of the Pacific Southwest District, facilitated a greeting and “best practices” workshop. In August 2006 a membership workshop was conducted. Chloe Mason Seagrove, Membership Director of All Souls Unitarian Church in Kansas City and Rev. Matt Tittle, Minister of the Bay Area Church in Houston co-facilitated the workshop.

**Celebrations:** Two inter-congregational celebrations were planned. A campaign kick-off party on Saturday September 16th was attended by over 150 local area UUs. On October 29<sup>th</sup> a UU Revival was held at the Westin Hotel, South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa. Approximately 300 UUs attended that event. UUA President Bill Sinkford was the keynote speaker for both events.

## ADVERTISING

The following is a summary of the advertising campaign:

**Time: September – October 2006**

**Media Mix:** A mix of mass media and targeted media was used.

### Radio

Seventy 30-second general service announcements were aired on KPCC (public radio, primarily news format), and KCRW (public radio, mixed programming).

All the UU congregations in the LA media market benefited from these announcements. As a result, the announcements mentioned “the 30 congregations in Southern California”. Ministers throughout the LA market area informed the UUA that they did experience an increase in visitors during the campaign and believe it was a result of the radio announcements.

The following was the radio schedule.

WEEK OF:	STATION	NUMBER OF SPOTS
9/17/2006	KCRW	10
	KPCC	17
9/24/2006	KCRW	17
	KPCC	10
10/1/2006	KCRW	<u>16</u>
Total		70

Ten additional spots were aired the last week in October on KPCC to promote the UUA Revival.

## Print Ads in Specialty Publications

Ads were placed in the following special interest publications:

- 1) **The September and October issues of BLADE Magazine** - a 50,000 circulation monthly magazine serving the Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual and Transgender community. 1/3 page ad.
- 2) **South Bay Center** - Monthly newsletter serving the GLBT community in the South Bay area of LA. ½ page ad
- 3) **Dot Magazine** - Monthly magazine serving the GLBT communities in LA, Long Beach, Orange County and San Diego markets. November issue: 1/3 page ad.
- 4) **Southern Sierran** - A classified ad ran in the September issue; a display ad (2" x 3") ran in both the October and November issues. Newsletter circulation: 50,000 Sierra Club members in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.
- 5) **LA Times** - Small ad (2" x 3"), three times October 27 & 28 in Orange County, and South East Zone, promoting UU Revival. Total 3-time circulation - 660,000.

## Direct Mail

160,000 oversized (6" x 11.5") postcards were mailed on Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. Several mailing lists were used to target households having a propensity to value the religious message of Unitarian Universalism. These households were within the top five zip codes that each congregation provided (35 zip codes total).

The lists include the following:

*New homeowners* (approx. 30,000 households - People who had moved within the last 90 days). New residents are often looking for a new church.

*Affinity Groups* (approximately 40,000 households). The UUA was able to buy specialty lists from organizations whose missions reflect Unitarian Universalist values. Lists include: Planned Parenthood, Sierra Club, Amnesty International, Anacapa Fund, etc.

*Demographic/Psychographic (life values) targets* (approximately 90,000 households). Households were chosen that represented the cultural diversity of the market (specifically high Asian and Latino), and younger life stage (families with children) attributes.

## Tabloid Insert in Local Newspapers

Approximately 550,000 4-page, 4-color flyers were inserted in the Sunday editions of the major newspapers. Inserts were distributed to 120 zip codes as determined by the congregations, in the following papers on the following dates:

PAPER	SUNDAY DATE	APPROX. CIRCULATION
LA Times	September 24	256,000
Orange County Register	October 1	200,000
Press Telegram	October 1	42,000
Daily Breeze	October 1	<u>49,000</u>
		547,000

**Cost of Plan (approximate)**

Media	Delivery	Approximate Costs
Radio	70 spots	\$25,400
Direct mail	160,000 households-one time	\$33,820
Inserts in Sunday papers (4-page/4 color)	547,000 circulation in Orange County, Long Beach & South Bay	\$33,700
Advertising in special interest publications		\$1,500
Creative Materials: Production		\$500
LA Times newspaper ads		\$770
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>\$95,690</b>

**PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT CAMPAIGN**

Two local UU volunteers with strong public relations expertise worked with the UUA's Communication Department to create press releases. The following newspapers covered the story of the advertising campaign:

- Two Laguna Beach weekly papers
- The Peninsula News serving the Rancho Palos Verdes market area
- The LA Times ran a ½ page article in the full run of the paper on Saturday, October 29; circulation ~ 770,000
- Rev. John Millspough, a featured columnist in the Orange County Register, submitted several editorials during the campaign.

**SIGNIFICANT RESULTS**

The campaign resulted in a significant increase in first time visitors. Below is a chart comparing first time visitors September- November 2005 & 2006:

Congregation	September- November 2005	September – November 2006	% Change 2005 v. 2006
Orange Coast UU Church	72	102	42%
Pacific Unitarian Church	35	37	6%
Tapestry, A UU Congregation*	43	65	51%
UU Church in Anaheim	NA	38	NA
UU Church in Fullerton	16	43	169%
UU Church in Long Beach	71	85	20%
UU Fellowship of Laguna Beach**	12	56	366%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>71%</b>

\*Two Sundays data only in Sept. 2005 & 2006

\*\* Did not separate first time from returning visitors

Membership results are not available yet. This report will be updated after the congregations present their membership figures to the UUA in the spring of 2007 & 2008.

## DETAILED RESULTS BY CONGREGATION

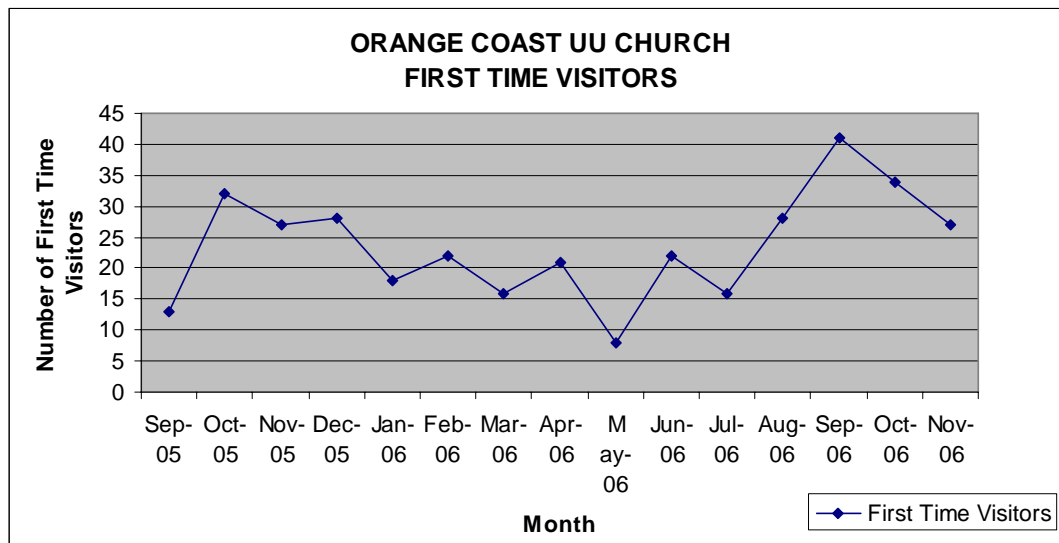
The following pages provide a detailed analysis of the individual congregation's results. Each congregation's results are presented separately and each analysis is intentionally different. This was done for two reasons. First, the results attempt to "paint a picture" of the campaign - to share the most important results for each church and make the analysis more interesting. Secondly, each congregation submitted different information making direct comparisons difficult.

Charts depicting results are located below congregation summaries.

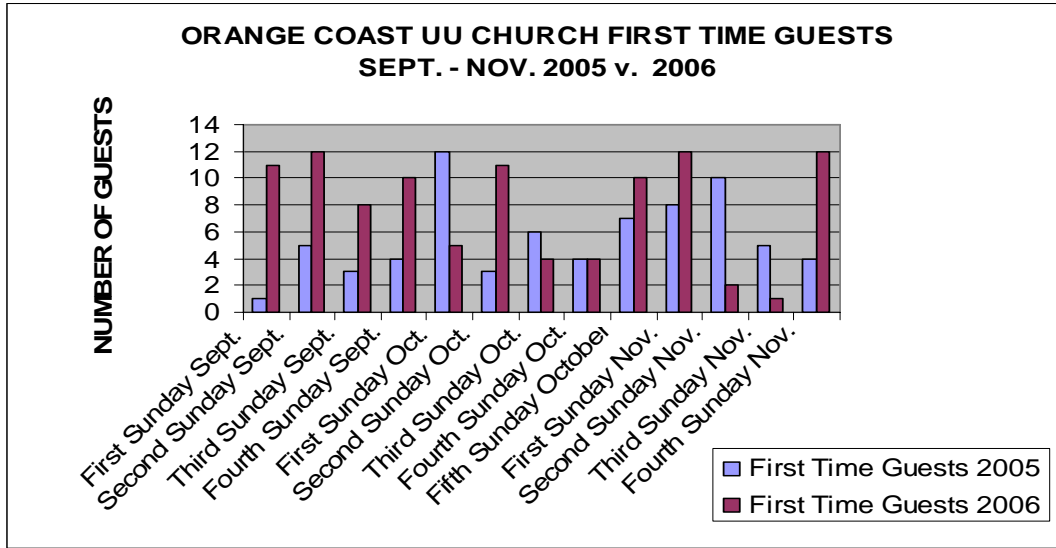
### Orange Coast Unitarian Church, Costa Mesa

- 42% increase in first time visitors September – November 2005 v. 2006 (from 72 to 102). See page 4.
- Significant number of first time visitors in September and October of 2006
- Data on first time and returning visitors:
  - Sept.-Nov. 2005: First time visitors: 72; returning visitors: 88. Ratio of returning to new 1.22
  - Sept.-Nov. 2006: First time visitors: 102; returning visitors: 86. Ratio of returning to new .85
- Current membership is 263, a 6% increase from Feb. 2006. This net growth is particularly significant because the congregation has lost several strong lay leaders to relocation

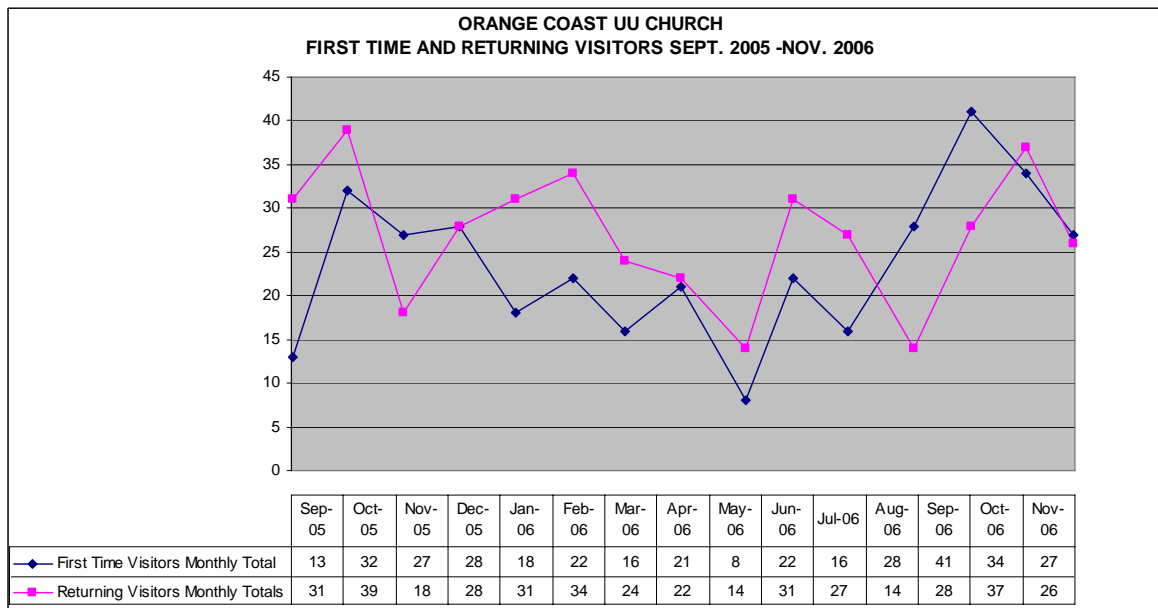
### Monthly First Time Visitors, September 2005 - November 2006:



**Comparison of First Time Visitors, September through November 2005 - 2006:**



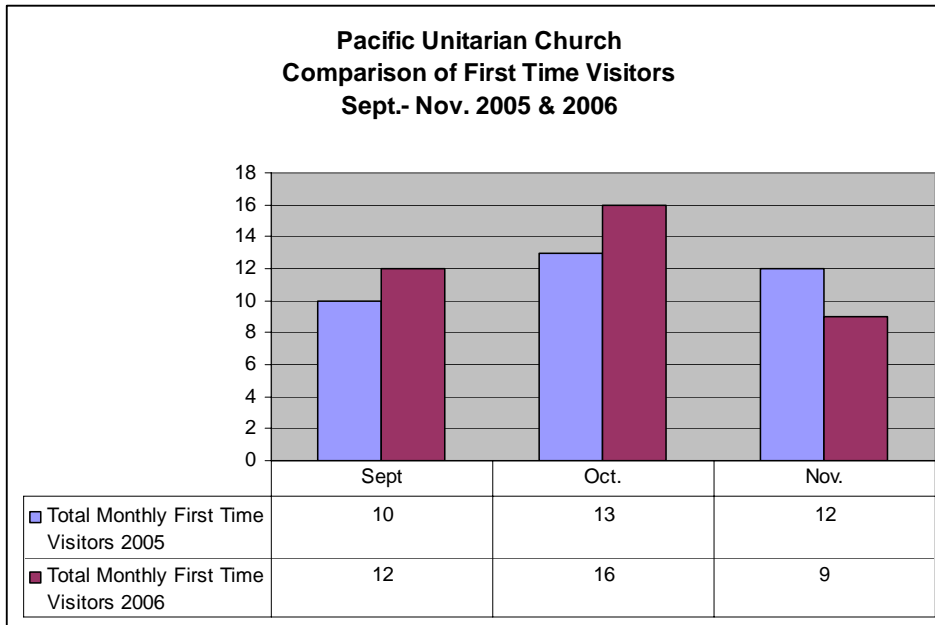
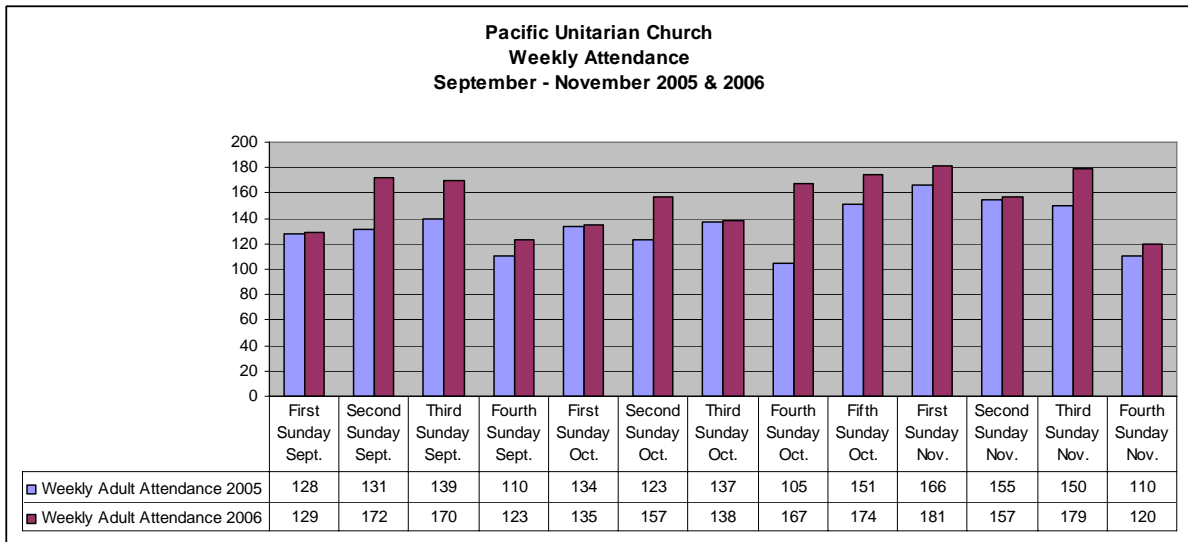
**Pattern and Percentage of New and Returning Visitors**



## Pacific Unitarian, Rancho Palos Verdes

The advertising campaign did not seem to significantly increase the number of new visitors to the church. However, Pacific Unitarian's attendance and membership numbers are increasing. This may be a result of Rev. John Morehouse's efforts; he is a "pro-growth" minister.

- 15% increase in attendance, September – November 2005 versus 2006; every Sunday's attendance in the fall 2006 was higher than 2005.
- 27% increase in visitors September – October 2006 v. 2005; however this increase was not sustainable; November saw a decrease in first time visitors from prior year.
- Total first time visitors increased 6% from September – November 2005 versus 2006 (35 visitors 2005, 37 visitors 2006)
- 14% increase in membership (38 new members) from September 2005 to November 2006. The congregation now has 280 members

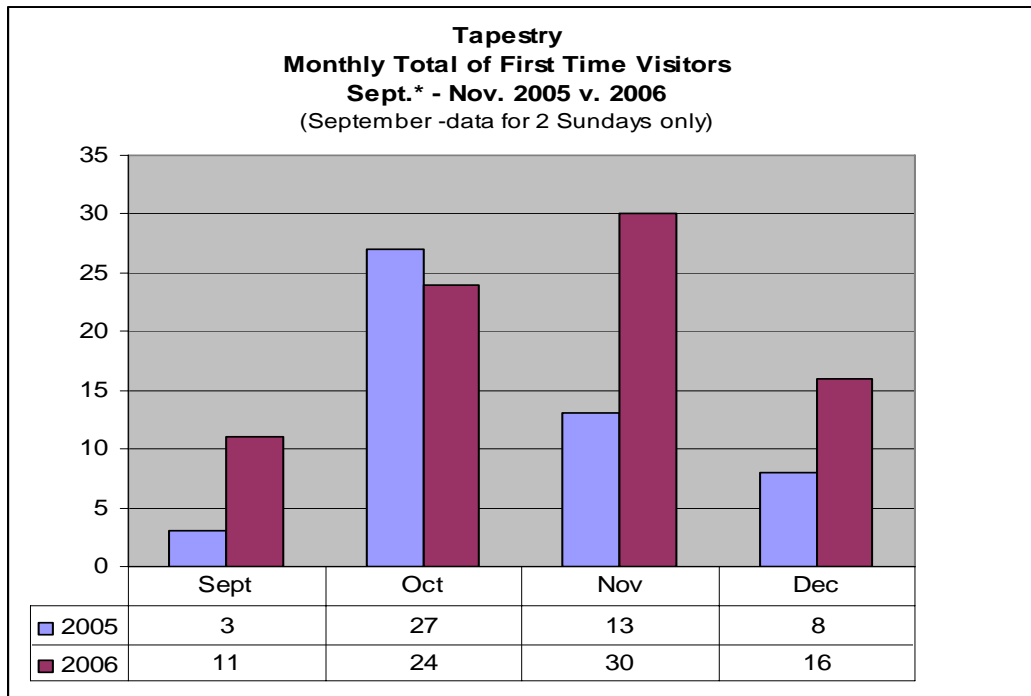


## Tapestry – A Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Mission Viejo

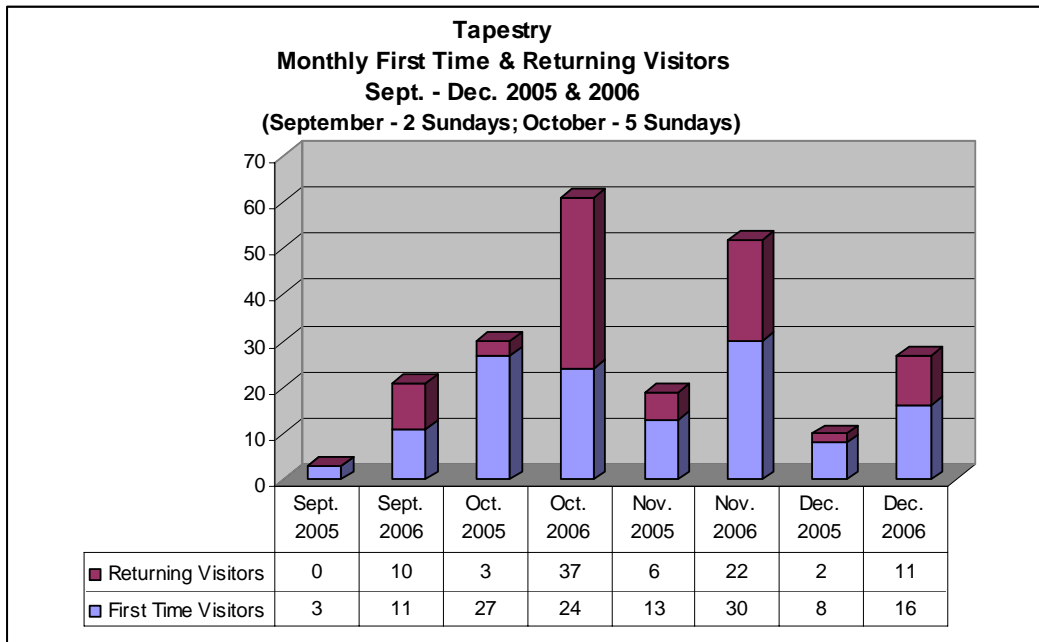
Tapestry's data from *mid*-September - December 2005 and 2006 indicates:

- 60% increase in first time visitors from 51 in 2005 to 81 in 2006
- 160% increase in total visitor (first & returning) attendance from 62 to 161.
- A significant improvement in the number of returning visitors as a percentage of first visitors – a key indicator of intentional welcoming, hospitality and potential membership growth.
  - In 2005, Tapestry had a total of 62 first time and returning visitors; 11 were returning representing 18% of the total
  - In 2006 Tapestry had a total of 161 first time and returning visitors; 80 or 50% were returning
- Comparative data for a 12 month period (January – December 2005 v 2006) indicates that average number of first time visitors has increased significantly from 11 per month in 2005 to 18 per month in 2006.

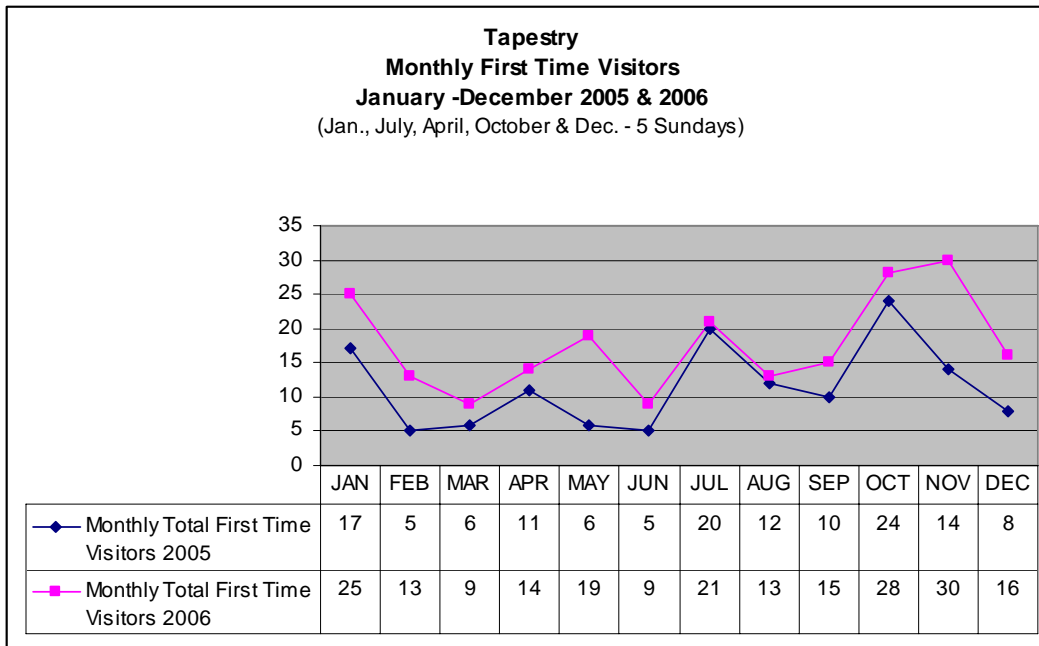
### Comparison of Monthly First Time Visitors, September –November 2006 & 2006



**Total Visitors Broken Out by First Time and Returning Visitors, September – December 2005 & 2006**



**Trend Line Comparison First Time Visitors 2005 & 2006**



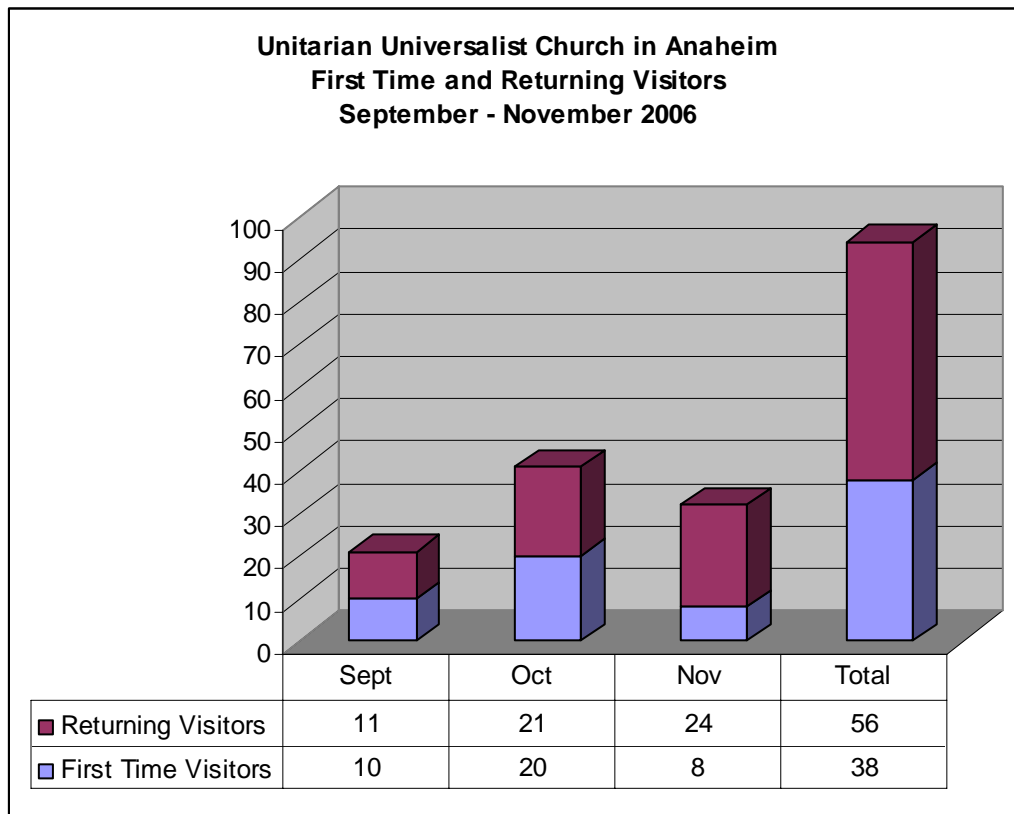
## Unitarian Universalist Church in Anaheim

The Anaheim congregation supplied Fall 2006 data only. The following is a summary of the congregation's results:

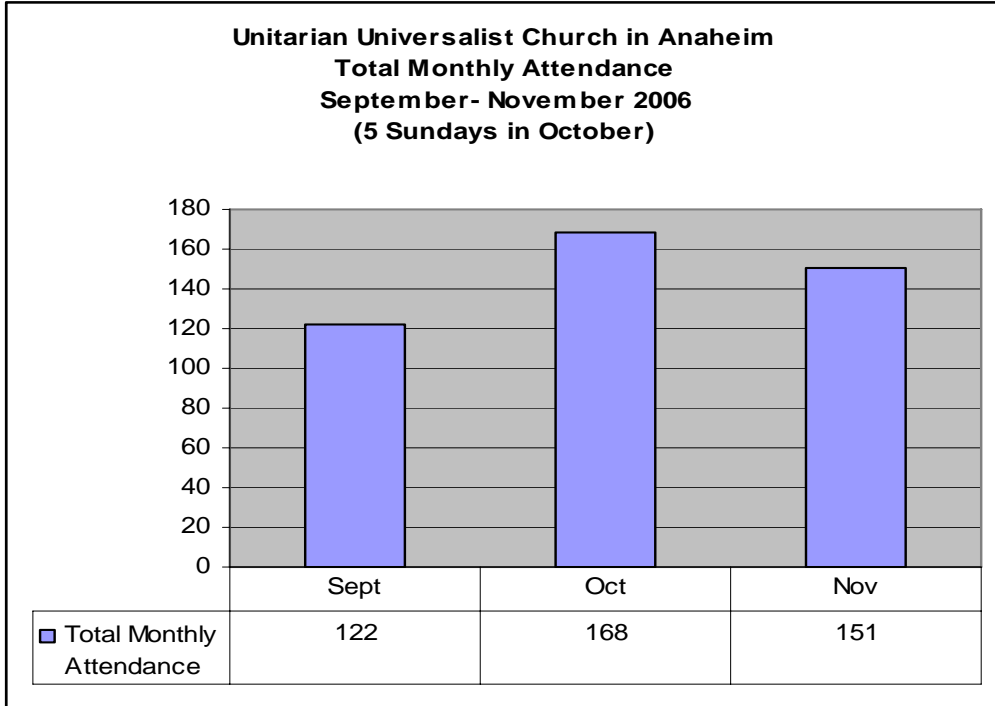
Current membership is 50. Membership has remained consistent over the past 2 years, after a significant decline in membership in 2003-4. With a new, dynamic part-time minister this bodes well for sustained membership.

- Anaheim had a total of 38 first time visitors and 56 returning visitors September-November. Ratio of returning to new was 1.5. If the congregation can convert them to membership, Anaheim should experience growth.
- Returning visitors represented 60% of total visitors
- These numbers are much higher, comparatively based on size, than the other congregations in the campaign. It appears that folks in that market area are visiting the church and returning.
- Anaheim had a significant increase in total monthly attendance. Average weekly attendance was as follows:
  - Sept.: 31
  - Oct.: 32
  - Nov.: 38

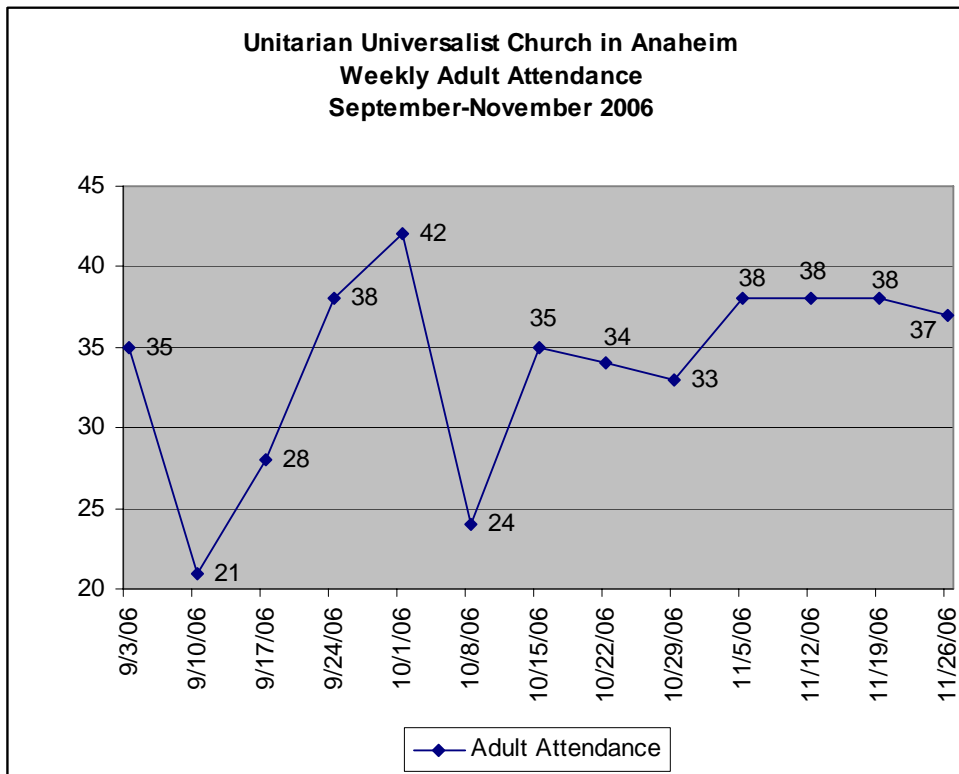
### Total Visitors Broken Out by First Time and Returning Visitors, September – November 2006



**Total Monthly Attendance, September – November 2006**



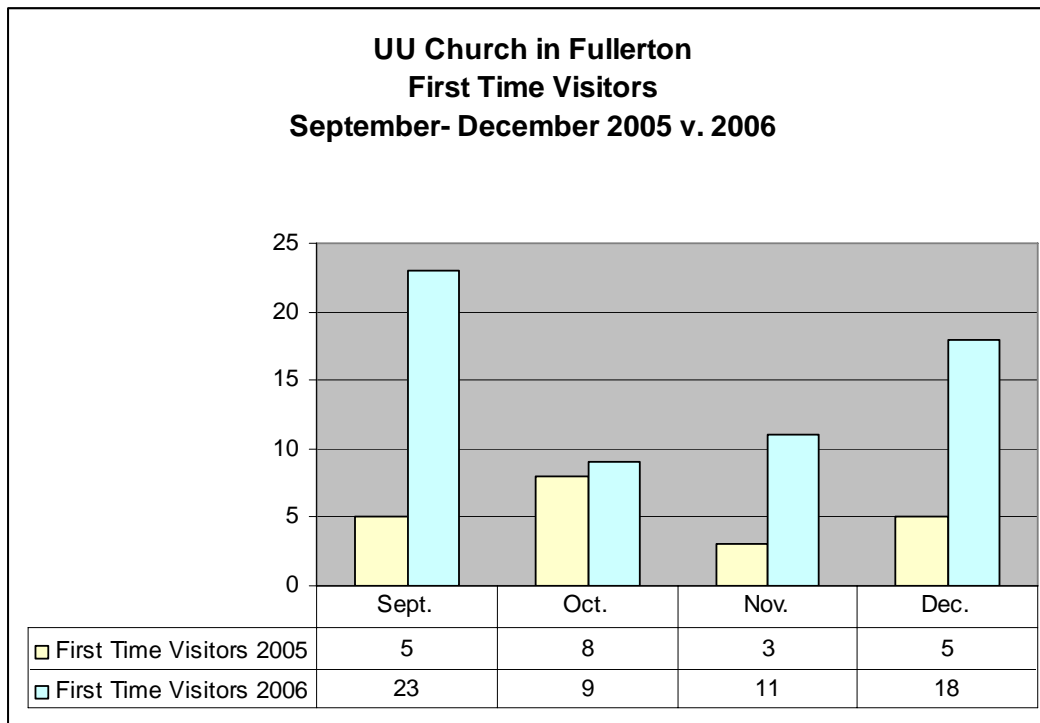
**Weekly Attendance, September – November 2006**



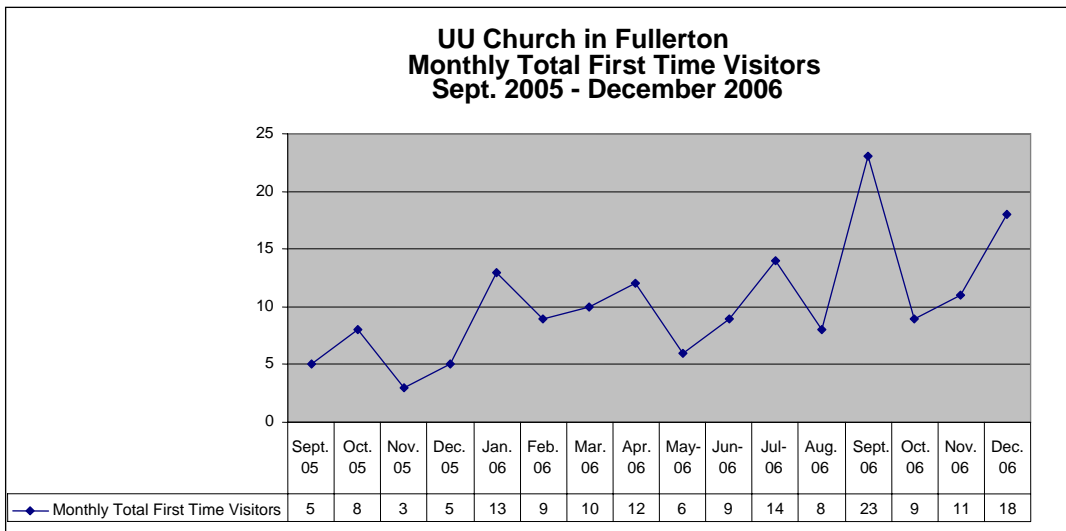
## Unitarian Universalist Church in Fullerton

- First time visitors September – December 2005 v. 2006 increased 190% from 21 to 61.
- While UU Fullerton experienced a dramatic increase in visitors, they also increased the percentage of returning visitors as a percentage of total visitors from 30% to 35%. While this indicates good work on the part of the lay leaders to be more welcoming and hospitable, the congregation's challenge will be to retain these visitors and move them to membership.
  - September – December 2005, UU Fullerton had a total of 30 first time and returning visitors; 9 were returning, representing 30% of the total
  - September- December 2006, UU Fullerton had a total 94 first time and returning visitors of which 33 were returning, representing 35% of the total.
- Average monthly attendance appears to be increasing, another indicator of congregational health and growth.

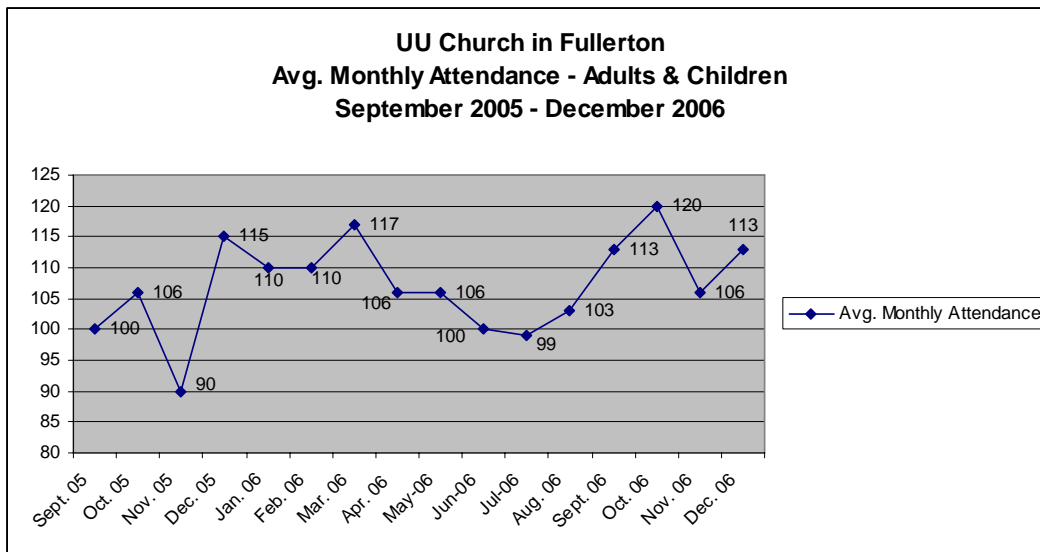
### First Time Visitors, September – December 2005 & 2006



**Trend Line First Time Visitors, September 2005 - December 2006**



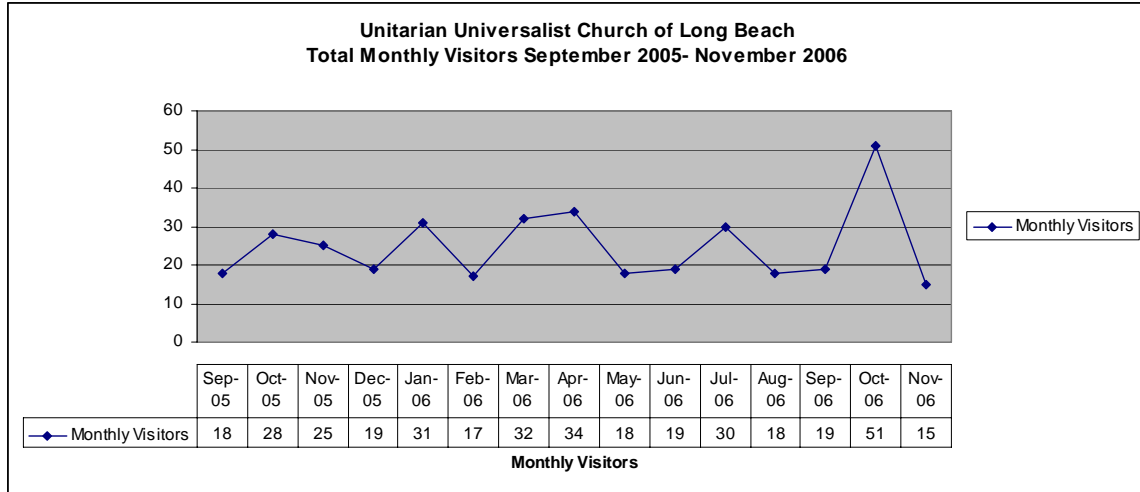
**Trend Line Average Monthly Attendance, September 2005 - December 2006**



**UU Church in Long Beach**

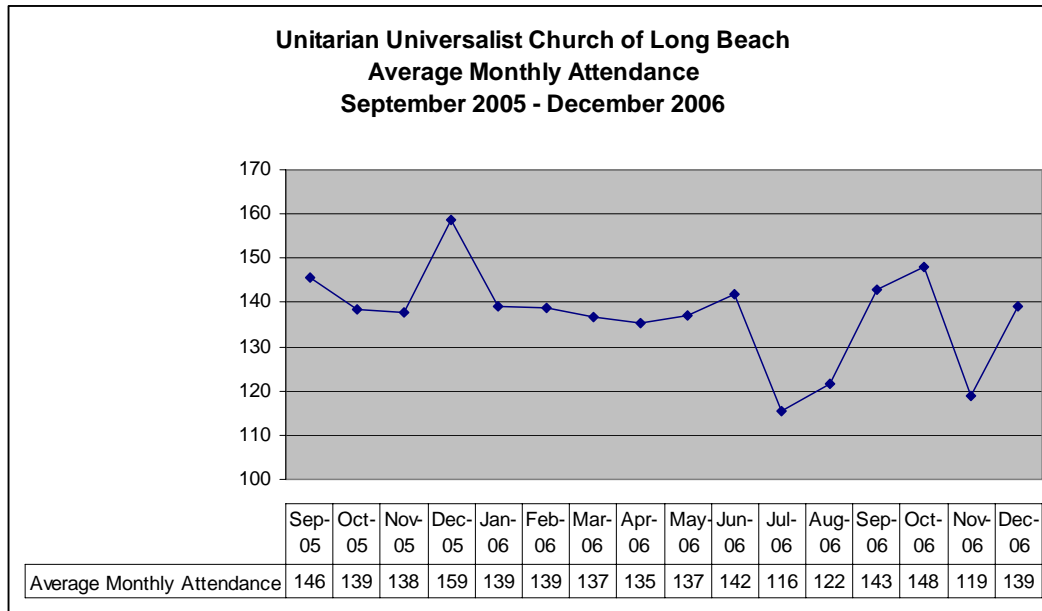
- 20% increase in visitors\* September – November 2005 versus 2006 – from 71 visitors to 85.
- October 2006 visitor numbers were significantly higher than the other 14 months; Long Beach attributes that increase to the advertising campaign.
- Visitor attendance was not sustainable.
- While October 2006 had the second highest average attendance during the sixteen month period, November 2006 was the lowest. Rev. Marguerite Lovett was on sabbatical in the fall of 2006 and this may have impacted attendance.

## Trend Line Total Monthly Visitors September 2005- November 2006



\* Visitors were those you signed the visitor registration book. Long Beach did not provide an explanation of whether these were first time visitors only, or first time and returning visitors

## Trend Line Average Monthly Attendance September 2005- December 2006

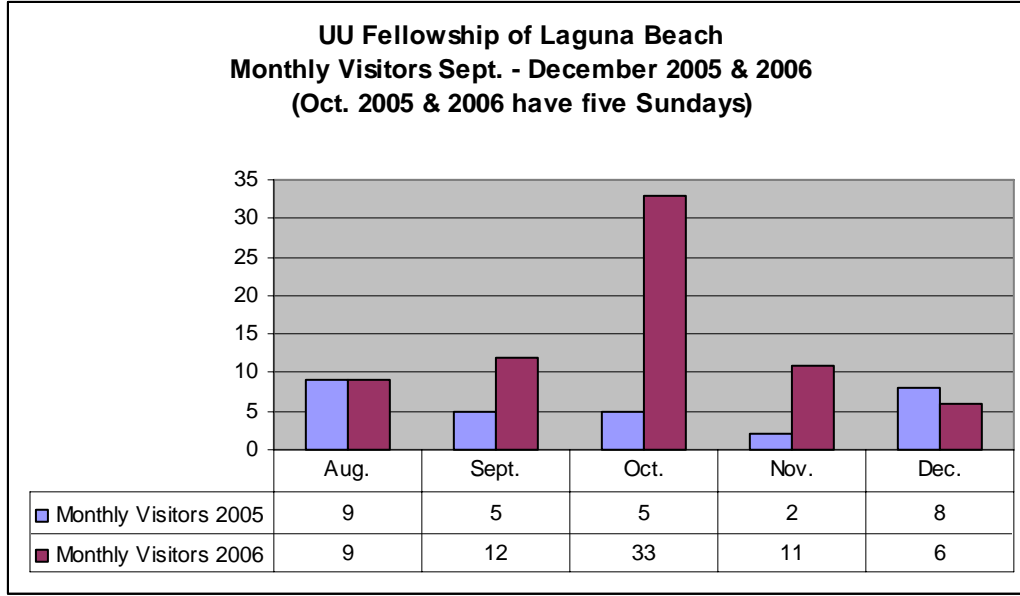


## UU Fellowship Laguna Beach

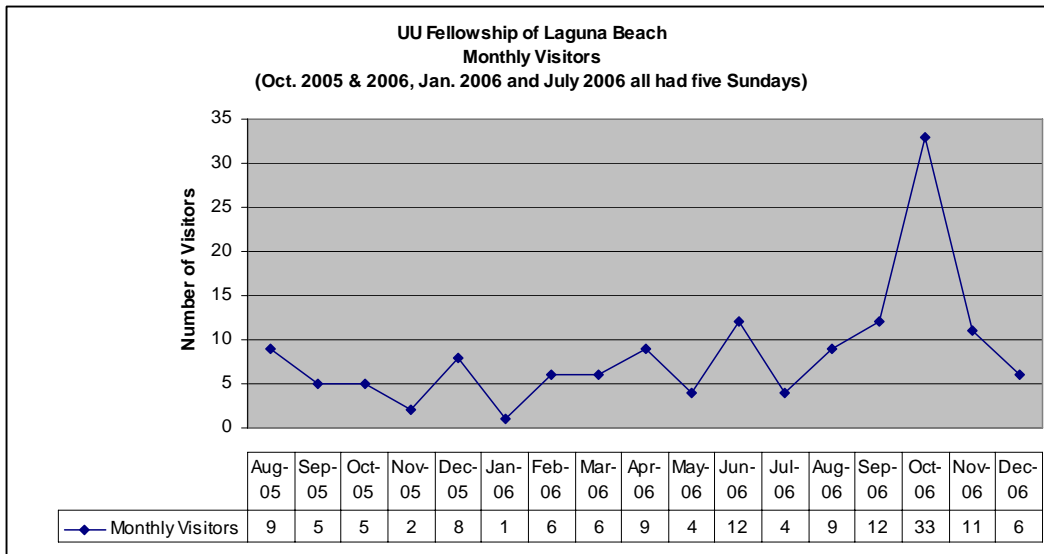
The fellowship did not keep separate statistics for first time versus returning visitors

- Visitors increased 210% from 20 to 62, comparing figures from Sept. – Dec. 2005 versus Sept. – Dec. 2006.
- Laguna had a significant spike in visitors in October 2006, however the increase in visitors was not sustainable
- There was not a positive correlation between the campaign and attendance.

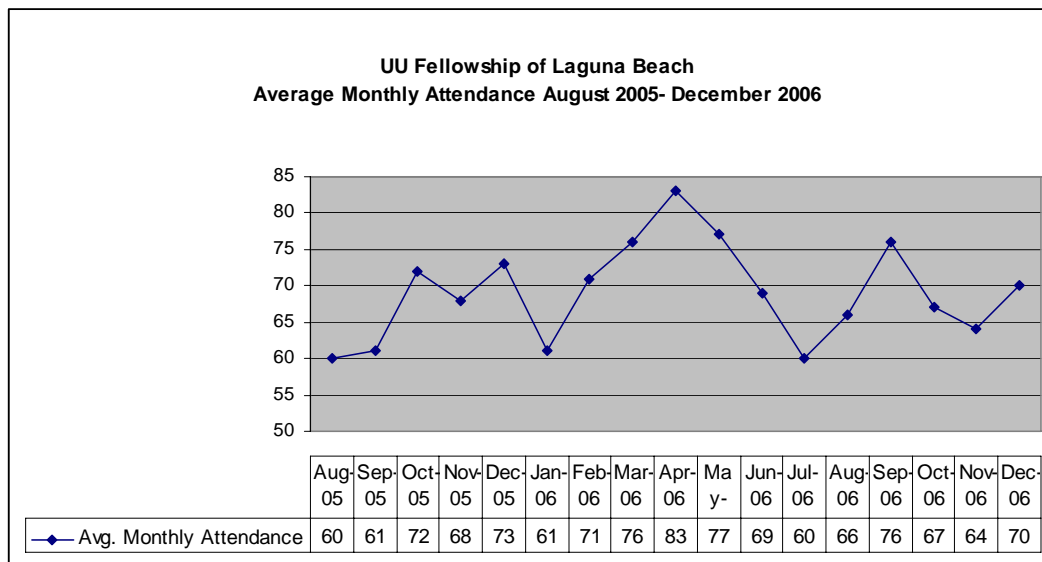
**Comparison Total Monthly Visitors September – December 2005 & 2006**



**Trend Line Monthly Visitors August 2005- December 2006**



## Trend Line Monthly Attendance August 2005- December 2006



### Ancillary Measurements

The UUA monitored hits to the UUA home page, links to “did you see us in Southern California?”, and the Global Warming pages – all of these were referenced in the campaign.

From August 22- December 31, 2006 the following were the results:

- A total of 551,877 hits to the UUA home page; 4,245 per day average
- 2,619 hits to the “Visiting from Southern California?” link; averaging 20 per day.
- 1,654 hit to the global warming link referenced in the *Southern Sierran* newspaper; average - 13 a day.

Unfortunately, no conclusions can be drawn about these results. Hits to the UUA home page come from many visitors and members. The number of hits to the Southern California page intuitively seems low. All advertising materials also listed the individual congregation’s websites, so folks interested in a specific church might have gone directly to the congregation’s site. The clicks on the global warming pages seem comparatively high particularly when considering the costs of that portion of the ad buy (<\$600) and yet we have no way of knowing whether these hits were from readers of the *Southern Sierran*.

## **ANCILLARY RESULTS**

Part of the success of the campaign includes the internal changes made by the congregations to improve their outreach and hospitality. Several of the congregations made significant improvements to their facilities, processes and procedures.

- Pacific Unitarian spent \$3,500 in the redesign of their website. They also improved their facilities, including new painting of their parking lot with visitor spaces clearly delineated and located close to the church building.
- The Long Beach congregation improved their website.
- Long Beach conducted a “clean up Sunday” prior to the campaign.
- Tapestry redesigned their welcoming and membership process, as well as their tracking and measurement processes - greatly impacting their visitor retention.
- Tapestry made significant improvements to their facility.

## **CONCLUSION**

The campaign appears to have accomplished the majority of the stated goals and objectives. Certainly, a 71% increase in visitors is a strong indicator of success. Anecdotally we know that we generated brand awareness – many people heard and/or saw our message. The congregations expressed a new enthusiasm for inter-congregational work. And Unitarian Universalists were proud to have their faith message in the “public square”. We will monitor the membership trends of the seven congregations to see if they convert visitors to members and have sustainable growth.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

Sharing the good news of our faith through marketing is a ministry. Rev. John Morehouse shared this story at the annual President’s Council meeting in October 2006.

“.....the ultimate testimony to the campaign’s transformative nature can be summed up in one short story. About three weeks ago a lesbian couple showed up for our worship service. They had seen the insert in the LA Times. After the service they asked to speak to me and told me they wanted to have a union ceremony to bless their domestic partnership. Over the past few weeks I have been working with them on this. Just the other day, one partner stopped me after church and asked to speak to me. She told me that what I didn’t know was that her partner was dying of cancer. ‘You see’, she said, ‘while that is sad, it so wonderful we found this church. At least we will be blessed by this community, at least she won’t die before she knows that there is such a religion for us.’ We have a world waiting to be saved. This campaign was a brave step into that work.”