

Where Is Your Congregation Along the Spectrum of Involvement?

**CSRI Training Presentation
October 7, 2006**

*Socially Responsible Investing:
"Making a Difference with Ideals, Impact, and Involvement"*

Presenters



- Joan Cudhea
UUA CSRI Committee Chair, 2003 to 2005
First UU Church of San Diego: (858) 272-4118
jcudhea@earthlink.net



Stage I:

**Rising Awareness
and Request for Transparency**



I'm thinking of leaving a bequest to the church, but I want to know whether it will be invested to accord with my values. How is our endowment managed?

Does our congregation own any Exxon stock?

Who votes our proxies? What is a proxy anyhow?

Is our church's sabbatical reserve sitting in any old bank? Couldn't that money be helping indigenous peoples somehow?

Let's remember that money is power.

Yes, let's be more conscious about how we use the power of our congregation's money.



Stage II:

Opening Doors to Active Investing

You've gathered advocates and info about congregational assets. Now what?



- Broaden your team, select one or two first steps of action, and either "lobby" decision-makers, or become one yourself. Educate and consult others:
 - Everyone if you are a small church or fellowship
 - Key groups if you are a medium-sized or large church.
- Subscribe to CSR2 Review newsletter – “The Congregations' Shareholder Resource on Corporate Social Responsibility.”
 - See www.CSR2.com for sample issue + subscription info.
 - Summarize key briefings in church newsletter

Example: Your congregation has just become a Welcoming Congregation...



- Encourage congregants research their employers' policies with respect to sexual orientation.
- Take on a Shareholder Activism project - even if just one company, and one proxy vote. See <http://socialfunds.com/sa/>
- Consider lunch table topics or covenant group discussions to engage more congregants in aspects of SRI. Ask about their priorities?

Example: Your congregation is a member of a faith-based community organizing group. Major project is affordable housing.



- Find the Community Development Loan Funds that provide such housing (preferably in your area). See www.communityinvest.org.
- Invest \$2,000 (or more) of the church's excess reserves in a three-year, interest-bearing note.
- Apply to UUA for a matching investment to double the social impact. See <http://www.uua.org/finance/sri/community/cdmform.pdf>

Example: Your congregation has received a bequest of \$50,000 which has spurred the need for establishing an endowment policy.



- Make sure policy includes language requiring consideration of UU values in decision-making.
- Sample bullet point that you might include in the list of Endowment Purposes:
“To affirm the values of our church and Unitarian Universalism through our financial assets, striving to achieve both financial return and social impact through sound investment choices.”

Example: Your congregation has a large endowment broken out among many managers. You want to consolidate...



- Consider SRI mutual funds – funds that incorporate social screens when making portfolio choices. See <http://www.socialinvest.org/areas/sriguide/mfpc.cfm>
- Consider investing all or a portion of your church’s endowment within the UUA General Investment Fund.



Stage III:

Strategic Alignment/Implementation

This stage is not easy! Even UUA's Investment Committee is struggling to match ideals with implementation.



- Learn about screening standards and how they can be implemented.
- How do SRI mutual funds do it?
- Attend Workshop #5.
- Develop a vision and a plan for the next three years.

On-going Oversight: Keep Walking the Talk



- If you are at this stage, congratulations!
- If you are at this stage, you are probably not on this call.
- If you are at this stage, we need you to tell us how you did it!