

## **So, What Do We Do Now?**

**The world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is filled with people seeking a meaning beyond what they experience in the day to day world around them.**

Most of these people did not grow up going to church, and believe it or not, have never sung “Jesus Loves Me.”

Many of these people may be a part of another religious organization that limits their view of God.

Most of these people are looking for a place where they can form lasting relationships based on trust.

Most of these people really want to do something to help others.

Most of these people really want to be part of a spiritual journey, they just don't care whether it's called Christian or Jewish or whatever.

**So, how do we reach these people? That is the next question we must struggle with at First Congregational Church of Houston.**

- ✓ Each board and committee must come to grips with the question: “what is this group's role in transforming First Congregational Church of Houston into a place of nurture for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, post-Christian society in which we live?”

**And,**

- ✓ Each member of First Congregational Church of Houston must ask him/herself, “how can I grow spiritually so that those who are searching will be pointed toward a nurturing relationship with God.”

## Final summary . . .

- ! We need more members . . .
- ! They won't look like members of even 10 years ago . . .
- ! A majority are going to be younger . . .
- ! They are seeking an experience of spiritual and relational growth, more so than a formal worship experience . . .
- ! They have no interest in sitting through meetings like this . . .
- ! It's up to us to create a church that will appeal to these people!!!!!!!

These suggestions are not meant to imply that we have to change everything in order to attract other people, but rather to try to help us become aware that the religious landscape has changed dramatically over the past 20 years. While we certainly want to be true to who we are, we also have to realize that being an "open" church may mean being open to new and different spiritual practices. We certainly cannot become something we are not, but we must make our church a place where people can experience a broad range of spiritual growth possibilities.