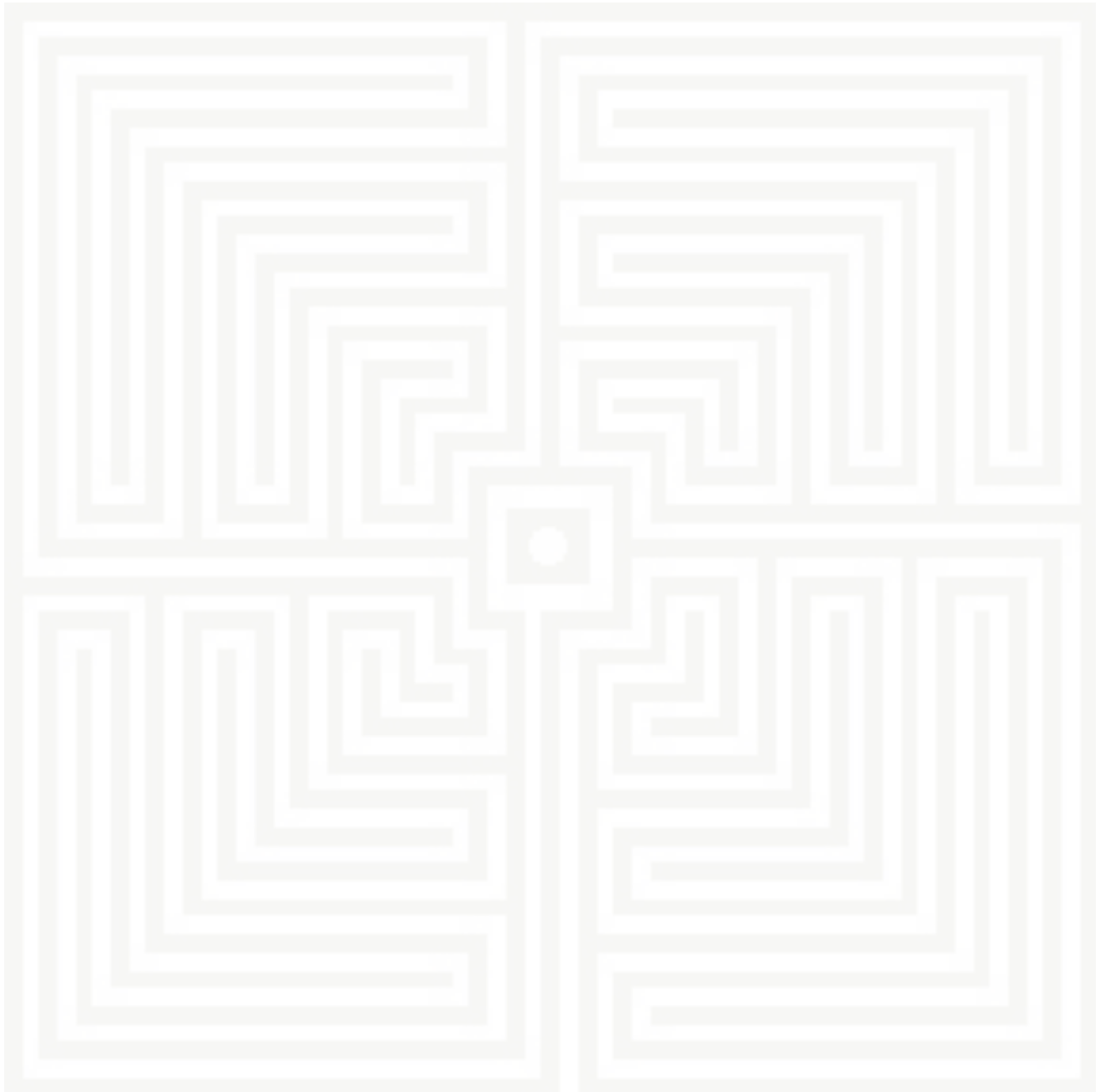


UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

# **ECUMENICAL CAMPUS Coalition**

## **Our Ecumenical Journey**

August 1, 2009





## The UDECC Churches – Our Ecumenical Journey

After decades of cooperating with each other for the good of the neighborhoods surrounding the University of Washington, the churches of the University District are in the process of moving from Cooperation to Commitment, from cooperating with each other to serve human needs to committing to and with each other to share a common future.

There is a long and impressive history of cooperation among the U District congregations, especially in serving the needs of the poor and of alienated young people in the U District. Some examples of this cooperation include the University Churches Emergency Fund, the U District Food Bank, the ROOTS young adult shelter, and the Teen Feed program.

The U District congregations, along with their respective denominational bodies, have founded and nurtured the campus ministry programs located at Covenant House. Campus ministry has a significant impact at the University, especially as an expression of the churches' commitments to justice and peace, including the importance of university students and faculty doing serious ethical and moral reflection on issues of our society.

There is also a long but limited history of the congregations coming together for worship on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Thanksgiving Eve, and other services.

There have been positive and collaborative relationships among our clergy for many years.

Recently, however, there has been a growing restlessness, especially among the lay leadership of the congregations, that Cooperation isn't enough. Cooperating with each other for the good of the community is very valuable, but it isn't enough in the face of growing disparity between the rich and poor; growing conflicts in the world, many of which have religious dimensions; growing animosity within our country over the direction and purpose of our democracy; the continuing reality of racism and other forms of discrimination; and the lack of civility in our relationships.

The people of our congregations have expressed in a variety of ways their yearning for a deeper sense of community among the congregations. We are becoming more and more aware that in light of all that is pulling our society apart, what we have in common with each other exceeds what divides us. Our specific traditions and insights are gifts that we can and want to share with each other, and by giving and receiving each other's gifts, we will all be strengthened. Through this sharing, we can make a more powerful contribution to the renewal of the human community of the U District. In the process, our congregations will also be refreshed and will experience renewal.

As churches that have inherited the results of more than sixty years of the modern ecumenical movement, we desire and see real value in giving more visible witness to the unity of the Church, which we believe is a gift of God. We believe we are being given the opportunity to become a visible sign of what God intends for the whole human family - a community that is characterized by commitments to justice, compassion, the dignity of every person, and peace in the world.



## An Ecumenical Timeline

- Circa 1890** University of Washington moves from Downtown Seattle to its present campus. Existing University District churches are established between 1890 and 1910.
- August 1948** First gathering of the World Council of Churches. Since then, a growing number of churches on every continent have joined in the search for Christian unity. They have built new bridges over ancient chasms separating believers from one another. WCC member churches today include nearly all the world's Orthodox churches, scores of denominations from such historic traditions of the Protestant Reformation as Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed, and a broad representation of united and independent churches.
- 1950s** U District churches' memberships peak; most expand their facilities. U Christian and U Baptist partner for shared campus ministry in the Baptist Disciple's Student Association.
- 1960s** Beginning of gradual but steady decline in membership in most U District churches, continuing with fluctuations to the present. Causes include disruption of neighborhood from construction of I-5 Freeway, exodus of families with children to suburbs, general changes in culture and demographics.
- 1969** **Campus Christian Ministries (CCM)** established in the U District; participating denominations include American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal Church, Lutheran Church (ALC and LCA, later to merge into ELCA), Roman Catholic Church, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church and United Presbyterian Church. A staff of eight clergy served the UW campus from four facilities.
- 1977** CCM purchases "**Covenant House**" near UW central campus, which becomes the center of shared campus ministries.
- 1980s** U District clergy begin meeting monthly. Calling themselves the **University District Interfaith Alliance (UDIA)**, the group confers on neighborhood issues, coordinated outreach service programs, and cooperative ministries to church members.
- 1985** U District churches create **Teen Feed** emergency feeding program in response to awareness of hunger among homeless youth. As understanding grows of homeless youth in the U District, additional programs are created including emergency youth shelter, case management, community roundtable, food bank, drop-in center, GED program, job skills training, art center, emergency services, etc.



- 1988** Ecumenical campus ministries at Covenant House continue to evolve. After the departures of the Roman Catholic and Episcopal campus ministry programs to other locations, United Ministries in Higher Education (UMHE) forms as a separate Council within CCM consisting of the American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church and United Presbyterian Church. The Lutheran (ELCA) Council also continues its ministry at Covenant House. UMHE name later changed to Cooperating Ministries in Higher Education (CMHE).
- 1990s** Emergency shelter rotates nightly among several neighborhood churches, providing safe overnight accommodations for homeless youth.
- 2000** Shalom Zone Nonprofit Association (dba **ROOTS** - “**Rising Out Of the Shadows**”) incorporates and locates at University Temple UMC to support creation of the region's only young adult (ages 18-25) shelter. ROOTS’ mission includes facilitating strategic alliance among existing, independent U District service programs.
- 2003** First formal charter of U District youth services providers signed. **Rotating shelter programs are consolidated at University Temple** in order to offer shelter in one place seven nights per week, year-round.
- Feb 1, 2004** First “**Ultimate Potluck**” with approx. 140 attending from eight churches (on Super Bowl Sunday!); Ecumenical Stewardship Task Force emerges from potluck’s “Facilities and Finances” conversation.
- 2004-06** **Ecumenical Stewardship Task Force** (with appointed representatives from each congregation) meets monthly, touring and studying facilities of all participating churches, and amassing data on building resources, operations and finances, demographics, programming and administration of all churches.
- December 2004** The congregation of University Lutheran Church votes unanimously to adopt a new long-range plan for 2004-2009. Plan commits the congregation to the following 5-year goals:
- Be in partnership with a congregation or an agency/institution that shares our facilities and is integrated with our mission.
  - Be in continuous collaboration with other neighborhood churches in worship, education, and service activities.
  - Combine energies and resources with local U District churches to achieve the highest and best use of each church’s facilities, resulting in increased efficiency of operations, maintenance, and facility use.
- January 2005** **Clergy Retreat:** Clergy from 7 University District churches assemble for a full-day facilitated retreat. The theme: “**Dreaming a New Church.**”



- Leadership Forum** involving 65 elected members of governance groups representing 8 churches. Initial report from Stewardship Task Force offers comprehensive picture of U District churches' membership trends, financial data, facilities analysis, real estate holdings, etc. The event results in a “paradigm shift,” moving church members from a pervading sense of scarcity to a profound awareness of abundance.
- April 24, 2005** Congregation of University Christian Church names the vision of a “**University District Ecumenical Parish**” and unanimously votes to commit itself to explore and provide leadership for this vision.
- May 7, 2005** **Ultimate Potluck II**; vision of University District Ecumenical Parish emerges; churches coordinate first-ever ecumenical presence at annual U District Street Fair
- June-Aug 2005** **Summer Salons**: series of ten ecumenical backyard gatherings, each focusing on a particular facet of the Church's life, with the objective of identifying additional leadership, and exploring the concept of Ecumenical Parish in greater detail. Over 80 lay leaders from eight congregations participate.
- Sept 2005** **Ultimate Potluck III**; report from Summer Salons including presentation of ecumenical vision chart constructed from input gathered from salon discussions. Second paradigm shift occurs, as laity begins to perceive and step into roles of visionary and empowered leadership.
- 2005-Present** Several Summer Salons evolve into **Ministry Groups and Task Forces** that continue to meet. On-going groups meeting at least monthly include Worship, Spiritual Formation, Stewardship, Fellowship/Community Building, Story Tellers/Evangelism, and Vision/Leadership. A Facilitators’ Team forms to guide and facilitate the process.
- Jan 11, 2006** “**Coordination Team**” emerges from Vision/Leadership group, comprised of clergy and appointed lay leaders from each church, as well as representatives from the on-going ministry groups and task forces. The Coordination Team is tasked with guiding the establishment and growth of the Ecumenical Parish. Monthly meetings begin, continuing to the present.
- Jan 22, 2006** **Ultimate Potluck IV**; Winter Gatherings and Lenten Studies programs established.
- February 2006** **House Meetings** are convened in members’ homes around Seattle, focusing on building relationships and sharing the Ecumenical Parish vision.
- March 2006** **Ecumenical Lenten Study Groups** begin meeting weekly.



**April 2006** Three **Ecumenical Worship Services** are held during Holy Week, including Palm Sunday, Good Friday noon service, and an Easter sunrise service.

Church Council of University Temple UMC unanimously votes to recommend passage of the **Ecumenical Parish Vision** (adopted from the April 2005 vision of University Christian Church) at their congregational meeting in June.

Congregation of University Lutheran Church unanimously votes to commitment to the **Ecumenical Parish Vision**. Congregation also votes decisively to proceed to explore collocation development with other neighborhood churches.

**May 2006** **Ultimate Potluck V**; with dramatic moment when representatives from University Christian Church, University Lutheran Church, and University Temple stand and recite, in unison, their churches' nearly identical statements of commitment to the Ecumenical Parish Vision.

University District churches **jointly sponsor and staff a booth** at the annual **U District Street Fair** for the first time. This coordinated presence is repeated annually at subsequent U District Street Fairs.

Supplemental to their monthly meetings, the **Spiritual Formation Salon** conducts an overnight retreat on Whidbey Island, at a Llama farm owned by a member of one of the churches.

**May 10, 2006** In the first of numerous **news and feature stories**, the Seattle Times publishes a feature article about the ecumenical developments among the churches in the University District, and the collocation concept they are exploring. Later stories appear in the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce, the Seattle Post Intelligencer, the North Seattle Herald Outlook, Seattle Metropolitan Magazine, and The Source.

**July-Sept 2006** **“Summer Stewardship Sessions”** - Seven churches appoint representatives who meet weekly for 12 consecutive weeks to examine the feasibility of a collocation development. They hear and discuss detailed reports from outside experts on development, legal and governance issues, the real estate market, and development financing. These discussions result in a deepening understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

**Sept. 2006** Having sold their home of over 80 years, the congregation of the Third Church of Christ Scientist vacates their historic church building and relocates temporarily to the Christian Science Organization building at 41<sup>st</sup> and University Way.

The ecumenical Coordinating Team conducts a **full-day moderated retreat**, with 50 clergy and lay representatives from most neighborhood churches.



**Ultimate Potluck VI**; with report from Stewardship Task Force on its analysis of information gathered during the Summer Stewardship Sessions regarding collocation development, and a presentation from Coordinating Team on its recent retreat.

- Sept-Nov 2006** Members of the Stewardship Task Force assemble the “**Traveling Road Show**,” a presentation summarizing the information gathered during their intensive summer investigations. The Traveling Road Show is presented to the full congregations of several participating churches.
- October 2006** The Church Council of University Temple votes to recommend funding and proceeding with a full-scale feasibility study of the collocation concept.
- November 2006** **Ecumenical Worship Task Force** coordinates several **ecumenical worship services**, including an All Saints service at Blessed Sacrament Church, a service of Remembrance and 103<sup>rd</sup> anniversary celebration at Christ Episcopal Church, and an ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service at University Temple. The Task Force continues to work toward development of a **full church year** of ecumenical worship opportunities among the U District churches.
- The Church Council of University Lutheran Church votes unanimously to proceed with creation of a new nonprofit corporation, in concert with other neighborhood churches, for the purpose of conducting a full-scale feasibility study of the collocation concept.
- The congregation at University Baptist Church votes to actively seek housing alternatives to its current facility, with options including the proposed collocation development.
- The congregation of University Temple votes unanimously in favor of participating in a feasibility study for a multi-use, ecumenical facility. \$20,000 contribution to the collocation feasibility study is approved.
- December 2006** The Third Church of Christ Scientist re-opens at 52<sup>nd</sup> & University Way in a recently-purchased commercial building. The church will operate a storefront reading room and meet for worship on Sunday mornings.
- Jan. 14, 2007** Following a 2-month series of weekly small-group meetings, the congregation of University Christian Church conducts a forum to discuss whether they will elect to stay at their current location, or sell the facility and chose a different future. Prominent among options under consideration is the proposed collocation development.
- Jan. 21, 2007** **Ultimate Potluck VII**, with Pew Exchange. Program integrated with other programming relating to the annual **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**.



- Feb-Mar 2007** **Ecumenical Lenten Mid-week Worship Services** rotate among 5 participating congregations.
- March 18, 2007** The congregation at University Lutheran Church votes unanimously to provide \$20,000 for collocation feasibility study.
- Mar-June 2007** **Collocation Task Force** meets 7 times in 13 weeks to plan and incorporate a new nonprofit entity to conduct feasibility study. Six worshiping communities participate. Incorporation documents to be filed with the State after approvals by all church governing bodies.
- March 25, 2007** The congregation at University Christian Church votes to provide \$20,000 for co-location feasibility study.
- April 7, 2007** The Collocation Task Force completes the work of drafting the incorporation documents and Mission Statement for the new nonprofit corporation, to be known as the **University District Ecumenical Campus Coalition (UDECC)**. Final drafts of the documents are sent on to the partner institutions for ratification.
- May 2007** Congregations at six worshiping communities commit to participation as member organizations, ratify the corporate documents, and assist in funding UDECC. Members include University Baptist Church, University Christian Church, Christ Episcopal Church, University Temple United Methodist Church, University Lutheran Church, and Cooperating Ministries in Higher Education (CMHE).
- CMHE, Christ Episcopal Church and University Baptist Church approve funding support of UDECC.
- Summer 2007** Ecumenical Parish **Launch Task Force** plans Ecumenical Fellowship Series. UDECC is incorporated with the State of Washington on June 12, 2007. First annual meeting of UDECC on June 30. Bi-weekly board meetings begin. UDECC submits application for tax-exempt status to the IRS. UDECC Board hires Clint Pehrson as full-time Executive Director. UDECC Board approves contract with Lorig Associates of Seattle as development consultant for Ecumenical Campus feasibility study.
- U District congregations jointly fund a full-page color advertisement in the annual **UW Visitors' Guide**, 100,000 copies of which are distributed to new and returning students and their families, U District hotel guests and others. The advertisement introduces the University District Ecumenical Parish. This begins an annual advertising campaign that has continued to the present.



- Autumn 2007** **Ecumenical Fellowship Series** draws together the congregations of the Ecumenical Parish in a series of guided conversations, in preparation for the incorporation of the Ecumenical Parish. Initially, congregations are paired-up for Sunday lunch gatherings. Later, 2 groups of 4 congregations each gather for further discussions, leading up to a gathering of all 8 congregations in another Ultimate Potluck celebration in December.
- Oct 2007 – Present** After several months of bi-weekly meetings, and in addition to periodic working retreats, the UDECC board switches to monthly meeting schedule, typically on the 3rd Saturday morning of each month, continuing without interruption to the present.
- October 27, 2007** The UDECC Board of Trustees meets for a full-day retreat to discuss details of the building program for the proposed Ecumenical Campus, and to delve into details of ownership and governance of the shared facility.
- November 16, 2007** UDECC Receives IRS determination letter indicating that it has achieved 501(c)(3) **tax-exempt status**.
- November 18, 2007** The members of University Baptist Church vote unanimously to sell and vacate their church home of 82 years.
- December 2, 2007** **Ultimate Potluck VIII**; the culmination of the Ecumenical Fellowship Series, A large ecumenical gathering of church members in final preparation for incorporation of the University District Ecumenical Parish.
- December 2007** Church Council of University Congregational UCC contributes \$3,000 to UDECC in support of the Ecumenical Campus feasibility study. UCUC leadership continues to consult with UDECC leadership, with goal of considering participation as a UDECC member organization.
- January 5, 2008** First **Ecumenical Youth Gathering** with youth from several churches (Grades 6 through 12) gathering to watch and discuss the film *Freedom Writers*.
- January 10, 2008** UDECC convenes its “**Housing Summit**” with representatives of 4 low-income housing developers and 6 U. District churches with potential sites for housing development, to discuss funding and coordination of development of hundreds of housing units in the University District. Representatives of the Seattle Office of Housing and Washington State Legislature participate, as well as private-sector funders.
- January 17, 2008** Seattle law firm Perkins Coie becomes pro bono General Counsel for UDECC, providing a broad range of legal services including land use, corporate, nonprofit tax law, employment law, and real estate acquisition.



- February 2008** **Faith & Form, the Interfaith Journal on Religion, Art and Architecture**, features the Ecumenical Campus project in a 4-page feature article, published nationally.
- February 7, 2008** First meeting of the UDEP task force for planning an ecumenical lay school of theology.
- February 25, 2008** Washington State House of Representatives adopts supplemental budget, following passage of House Bill 3142, providing \$10 million “**Rapid Response Fund**” for low-income housing projects in rapidly-gentrifying neighborhoods, and naming University District Ecumenical Campus Coalition properties in the legislation. These funds, to be administered under the Washington State Housing Trust Fund, will enable low-income housing providers to acquire development sites from University District churches wishing to collocate into the Ecumenical Campus project.
- Feb-May 2008** UDECC board members conduct interview meetings with Executive Directors of 15 human service agencies in U District.
- March 2, 2008** **Ultimate Potluck IX (with Sunday morning pew exchange)**; including a presentation on the proposed **Questions of Faith Institute (QOFI)**, a lay school of theology in the early stages of development among the UDEP congregations.
- March 21, 2008** UDECC Executive Director Clint Pehrson represents UDECC at signing ceremony with Governor Christine Gregoire for signing of Rapid Response Fund legislation.
- April 2008** **Wesley Foundation** joins UDECC as the 7th voting member organization.
- April 29, 2008** Fully-developed UDECC website “goes live” online.
- May 4, 2008** UDECC board retreat to review Ecumenical Campus draft building program.
- May 5, 2008** UDECC receives **\$10,000 grant from the Norcliffe Foundation** for the Ecumenical Campus feasibility study.
- May 2008** University Christian and University Presbyterian Churches join other neighbors in submitting rezone application to City to enable the development of affordable housing on church-owned properties.
- June 7, 2008** **Lutheran Campus Ministry** joins UDECC as the 8th voting member organization.  
UDECC board approves **\$75,000 zero-interest, unsecured loan from Impact Capital**, a nonprofit funder of community development projects, to pay for professional fees for the Ecumenical Campus feasibility study.



After lengthy architect selection process, UDECC board approves contract with Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects for conceptual design phase.

- June 11, 2008** UDECC receives **\$25,000 grant from Seattle Foundation** for the Ecumenical Campus feasibility study.
- June 15, 2008** **Ultimate Potluck X**; Includes a “Pew Exchange” in which members of UDEP congregations attend each others’ Sunday morning worship services.
- July-Oct 2008** UDECC conducts series of five “**Focus Sessions**” to further develop Ecumenical Campus building program outline, with lay leaders and clergy from all participating congregations and campus ministries discussing details of their programs in worship, education, fellowship, campus ministry, etc.
- September 2008** Publication of first edition of **The Labyrinth**, UDECC’s bi-monthly newsletter.
- The proposed Ecumenical Campus is featured in Anthony Robinson’s new book, “Changing the Conversation; a Third Way for Congregations.”
- Sept 22, 2008** **WorldChanging**, an international online publication focused on building a sustainable future for the world, features the Ecumenical Campus project as a “world changing idea,” and commends its “progressive approach to resources and land-use planning” as a “truly next-generation solution.”
- October 4, 2008** UDECC board retreat to review attorneys’ further development of draft Ownership & Governance Plan.
- October 20, 2008** **University District Ecumenical Parish (UDEP)** is incorporated as a Washington State nonprofit corporation.
- October 25, 2008** **Leadership Retreat**, with over 70 members of governance groups of UDECC member organizations. Presentations and discussions of draft Ownership & Governance Plan and Building Program Outline.
- Oct-Dec 2008** UDECC member congregations and campus ministries conduct numerous congregational meetings and small-group gatherings to discuss draft Ownership and Governance Plan and Building Program outline. Hundreds of questions and comments are generated, to be addressed in further development of those documents.
- December 2, 2008** **The Christian Century** features the Ecumenical Campus project in a 3-page feature article, published nationally.
- Sept-Feb 2009** Despite official City of Seattle opposition, University Christian Church hosts “**Nickelsville**” **tent encampment** on their parking lot for 3 months.



University Congregational Church then hosts the encampment on their parking lot for an additional 3 months. Although encampment residents don't regard themselves as "homeless," poverty, homelessness, and the social impact of the deep recession become foreground issues throughout the U District community.

- January 10, 2009**      **Episcopal Campus Ministry UW** joins UDECC as the 9<sup>th</sup> voting member organization.
- January 22, 2009**      **Michael Kinnamon**, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, is guest of U District churches. At a dinner event, Kinnamon receives briefing on UDECC and UDEP, and encourages participating congregations to continue in their efforts. In his comments, Kinnamon states that "you have gone well beyond the effective and efficient use of resources, to an understanding of the ecumenical movement as a renewal movement of the churches through the sharing of gifts."
- February 5, 2009**      First "**Ecumenical Conversation on Homelessness**" is convened at University Congregational UCC. Participants include dozens of stakeholders from the neighborhood, U District churches, the University of Washington, the City, County, and service providers. The event is the first in a continuing series of monthly gatherings.
- February 21, 2009**      **University Congregational United Church of Christ** joins UDECC as the 10<sup>th</sup> voting member organization.
- February 22, 2009**      **Ultimate Potluck XI**; with Pew Exchange. Focus of program is housing, with attendance by about 150 people, including several visitors from the tent encampment.
- April 2009**              Ecumenical Holy Week worship services include open-air Palm Sunday gathering on University Ave, Good Friday noon service at University Temple UMC, and Easter Sunrise service at U Lutheran Church.
- June 28, 2009**        UDEP congregations together sponsor float for Seattle Gay Pride Parade.
- July 12, 2009**        Clergy and lay leaders from the UDECC congregations convene the first meeting of the **Mission Envisioning Team**. Their 4-month long series of semi-weekly meetings focuses on a discussion of the participating congregations' joint mission on the basis of being in one location.