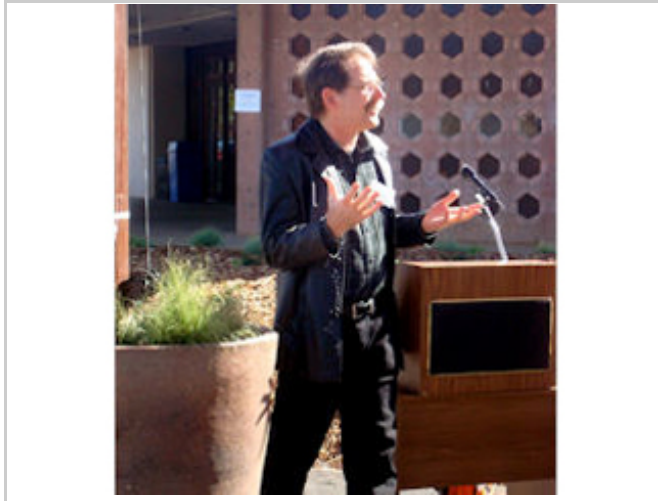




# TEMPORARY ARCHIVE OF OLD UUSS SITE

## Entryway Dedication March 14, 2010



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Mike explaining design process

Photos by Barbara Hopkins

Welcome to the dedication of our new entryway!

This is a project that began gestating several years ago, but which really began to take shape about 2 years ago, soon after we had our Searching for the Future (SFTF) workshop.

During the SFTF w/s, there was a groundswell of interest and energy which focused on 2 major themes.

One was a concern about our environment, about things green, that we be good environmental stewards of our community.

The second theme related to issues on our campus regarding our buildings and grounds, and how we might need to make adaptations to our buildings and grounds to deal with our aging campus, and with the growing and changing needs of our congregation.

However, underlying all of this was a concern about whether or not we had the resources to actually make the needed changes.

And beneath that was an unspoken fear that, issues of resources aside, that this was too complex and problematic a process. That there might be too much to tackle. And that it might be a whole lot easier to continue to muddle along, addressing issues in a piecemeal fashion, and not trying to divert what seemed like a very powerful river of the status quo.

So – this entryway project is an answer to those fears and concerns.

This entryway is the embodiment of change. And a tangible reminder that relatively small alterations can go a long way in changing how we think and feel about a place.

It is the work of a multitude of people in the congregation who have committed their time, vision, energy, talents, and money to make this happen.

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It has had its literal and figurative ups and downs, and stands today as a testament to our perseverance and community.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed in anyway to this project. In fact, the list is long enough, and my allotted time short enough, that I am afraid to try to make a list where I might inadvertently leave someone out. But you know who you are! And even if you haven't thought it was a good idea — voicing your concerns contributes in a positive way to the process.

And now, despite what I just said, I would like to heartily thank Bob Oyafuso – who worked as the project manager — for everything he has done to husband this project along. He has selflessly given his time and energy to see this project to completion.

Barbara has stated that this project is an embodiment of change and we have just demonstrated that we have the wherewithall to tackle a significant project and bring it to fruition. I see this as a confidence builder and proof as we plan for the next 50 years we can say, we have been there and done that.

We originally planned this dedication last year in Nov but you may recall we had heavy rains just days before the planned dedication. And the rain did not flow off the edge of the canopy like we expected. Instead the water collected up there until it looked like it may be a danger to anyone walking beneath the canopy. As an engineer I was disappointed, but I know that designing a large canopy is not an exact science, sometimes they fail, bridges fall and Toyota cars have brake problems. So this was a setback, but I think it's more important to remember how quickly this problem was fixed.

I sat in on a meeting with Bob Konjkav from Green Source who built this structure Ross Gilleland from Goodwin Cole who installed the canopy and our Architect Mike Malinowski. At no time in their discussions was there any talk of blame or money, the focus was all about fixing the canopy to our satisfaction. Some of you told me the new canopy looks even better than the old one.

This project had its groundbreaking July 5th of last year and over this 8 month period as the project manager I have had the opportunity to interface with all of them many times. Yes, we had some ups and downs which is typical of projects of this complexity but at no time was I discouraged because they were responsive, courteous and very professional. It was a pleasure to work with Bob, Ross and Mike.

This place has a richness of space, people and stories; and I'd like to add a story to that mix about the design of this entry sculpture. The *process* of the design – now that was complicated, as was the *construction* and the fundraising – we DON'T have time for THOSE stories today ... I only have time for a simple story, so I'd like to share MY story about YOUR design.

The design itself – in my story — it's simple - it has just two parts. There is a **feeling** part; and a **thinking** part. The steel in my story is the feeling part – it seems complex, but it's really simple, and honest about what it is and what it's doing. It just stands there, open, honest ... simple!

The canvas – well that's the thinking part in my story. Complex – oh my ... it turned out to be full of surprises, and was the source of headaches and delays and more. The thinking part – while it looks simple – it's really very complex and unpredictable.

The feeling part – the steel – on it's own its strong – but incomplete. The thinking part has a richness - but on its own would just blow away. But put the thinking part, on top of the feeling part ... now that's something ... something like me ... like you ... perhaps its something like a Unitarian!

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