

March 27, 2025

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees at UUSD,

I am writing with wonderful news—our **Children’s Faith Exploration (CFE) program is thriving!** As of today, our Breeze database includes **68 minors under 18**, and **34 families** have completed registrations for CFE.

Our attendance numbers illustrate this incredible growth from 2024-2025:

- **February: 85% increase** (weekly average attendance rose from 10 to 18.5)
- **March: 60% increase** (weekly average attendance rose from 15 to 24)

Families attending have anywhere from one to four children, and this spring, two families are expecting new babies. Additionally, many children are brought to UUSD by great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other guardians—our village is growing!

A Space Challenge

While this growth is cause for celebration, it also presents a significant challenge—we are simply **running out of space**.

- Our **nursery** is at full capacity, with sometimes nine children and two adults in a very tight area.
- The **FE room** is overflowing, with children crammed around tables—this past Sunday, we ran out of chairs and table space, forcing some children to sit on the floor or stand.

To address this, we will be **splitting into three age groups** this fall:

1. **Nursery (Pre-K–1st grade)**
2. **Grades 2–5**
3. **Grades 6–HS**

We will utilize the **Nursery, CFE Room, and the Annex**, but while the Annex serves as a temporary solution, it is clear that **we will eventually require more permanent space to accommodate our growth**. Please note, I and all the youth appreciate you creating a new space for them, and others, in the shed/Annex as a temporary solution. Thank you.

Looking Ahead: The Need for a Long-Term Plan

With continued development in Sussex, DE, more families are moving to the area, and we can expect **even more growth** in the coming years. We need to be proactive, not reactive, in planning for the future—**and the future is now**.

I am here to assist in this discussion. You may not know, but I have been involved in two successful church building renovation projects in Westport, CT. These projects were challenging

but incredibly rewarding, ultimately paying for themselves by **expanding program capacity, increasing community engagement, and generating additional revenue.**

I deeply appreciate all that you do for UUSD. From the early days of Toddy's to our current building and now preparing for another exciting chapter, our congregation continues to grow and flourish. I look forward to working together to ensure we have the space we need to continue welcoming and nurturing our children and families.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather H." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Heather Hamilton

Children's Faith Exploration Director

UUSD