

MUMC Connectionalism Strategy Team

08/26/2021

In Person: Linda Horodenski, Will Koehl, Barb Stevens, Becky Strickland, Liz Shuberte, Dick Vreeland, Andy Bryan, Mary Beth Harper

Zoom: Jim Lange, Ethan Massey, Roxanne Miller

Absent: Chessey Brenton

Introductions

Reviewed four current groups developing strategic plan: Evangelism, Generosity, Mission/Social Justice, Connectionalism

Each person invited to share 3-5 things MUMC has to offer related to Connectionalism:

- 1) MUMC is not afraid to try something new – how dealt with Covid; Faith in action Sunday; streaming worship services before Covid; original Good Sheperd program and recent Good Sheperd on-line; children’s ministry easter egg scavenger hunt by car; on-line sermon study groups; hybrid group offerings; developed large information desk; Prayground in both services; young adult groups outside the church; hosting social justice presentations; reconciling ministry events; meals in ministry new when developed; (Linda)
- 2) FAITH - Friendly and compassionate; Abundance of opportunities to volunteer; Inclusion – welcoming; Talented music program; High caliber of sermons – help practice Christianity in everyday life (Barb)
- 3) Inviting/welcoming – social justice, pipe squeaks; Christmas market; Sermons challenge to think – not how to think; social justice forum – open doors to conversation beyond Christian focus draws in larger audience; listen to the needs and see how we can do better (Will)
- 4) Draw in people even if not Christian or connected to the church – kids; not afraid to go out into the community (Liz)
- 5) Accepting ideas of individuals: Who would have thought that a bicycle would be a way to connect with the community?; New shoes for over a thousand people in the community; Bridge Bread – development of that service became engaging and transformative; Lifewise – Youth Opportunity Fund – State will give ½ of funds back – benefit to Lifewise for full amount given (Dick)
- 6) Photography analogy – quietly doing quality work consistently is a draw; go about our work and be open to share; (Jim)
- 7) Intentionality – supporting the surrounding community; highly visible in the community with a service minded approach; intentionality in the language of the

- worship planning, such as - “opportunities to respond” after sermon, talk of serving after a baptism; worship planning skill – puts together quality “product” (Becky)
- 8) MUMC focuses inward and outward – church taking a stand on issues in country and community – not afraid to take a stand – MUMC can lead as an example of hope to speak boldly “beacon of hope on the hill”; (Ethan)
 - 9) Recognition of evolutions of communication efforts in the church; educational events – panelists, forums and use of social media to reach out to the community; shut-ins – Stephen Ministers – are there further ways to engage in the on-line presence – elderly difficulty using technology; are there more ways to expand coordinated on-line engagement (Roxanne)
 - 10) MB – highlighted growth of Fall Festival in past 5yrs; enjoyment of bringing non church members into the building with the Holiday Brass concerts; Reiterated idea of best marketing is doing programs/services well; risk of spreading focus and resources too thin

Definition of Connectionalism – doing work together that we could not just do on our own, such as – UMC system of appointment of ministers; UMCOR – funded by special offerings that all UMC churches give; Agencies – Cokesbury, Epworth, Lifewise, etc; lobbyists for UMC; UMC seminaries

Discussed areas of connection MUMC can or does interface:

- a. Denomination
- b. Agencies – support to not recreate ministries
- c. Interfaith - other religious groups in the community

How do we communicate how ministries are happening? Where is our reach? (possible goal – raise awareness of how we are connected)

- 1) Encourage considering ways to make connection at human level versus financial – more people interweaving their lives – connection at the heart (Jim)
- 2) UMCOR – admin costs low – suggestion to clarify to the congregation where funds go and how spent (Linda)
- 3) Awareness that UMCOR not funded by church apportionments – clarifying this to the church could raise awareness of the reach of the denomination (Andy)
- 4) MUMC Visibility – recognize that MUMC is 200 years; large; wealthy; active; what do we do with that/how leverage the visibility? – what do we do with our privilege? (Andy)
- 5) How do we partner together – how not scatter too far (Barb)

- 6) How do we take our talents deeper? (Jim)
- 7) Walk Justly is example to other churches of how to grow their social justice ministries (Ethan)
- 8) Intentionality behind what we do that leads to alignment – maximize energy/resources ;Is there a common intentionality at MUMC? (Andy)
- 9) Everything goes through the mission statement or are we looking to change our mission statement? (Will)
- 10) Plan in the fall to summarize the current strategic plan and what was accomplished. (Andy)

Assignment:

Go to www.ManchesterUMC.org/about and www.ManchesterUMC.org/2021-plan

Review the welcome, vision, mission, values statements – how are these embodied in what we do? Do the things we do support the welcome/vision/mission/values?

Next meeting TBA - respond to Doodle request