

MUMC Connectionalism Strategy Team

09/21/2022

In Person: Andy Bryan, Dick Vreeland, Mary Beth Harper

Zoom: Jim Lange, Linda Horodenski, Roxanne Miller, Will Koehl

Absent: Ethan Massey, Barb Stevens, Becky Strickland

Andy shared updates about status of survey related to Goal #1. It will be disseminated 9/22 to approx. 200

Discussion of established Goal #2 of Connectionalism team:

2. By 2026, it is likely that the United Methodist Church will experience a formal division over the issue of full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people. In this uncertain time, Manchester UMC will embrace the responsibility of servant leadership, and affirm its commitment to a hopeful, vibrant, fully inclusive, and thoroughly Methodist ethos within the denomination. In doing so, Manchester UMC will

- A) Provide learning opportunities, led by the faith formation staff, so the congregation deepens our understanding of our Wesleyan heritage and theology, the work of the general agencies of the United Methodist Church, the significance of the apportionment, and other United Methodist beliefs and practices.
- B) Strengthen relationships with United Methodist congregations in our area by regularly convening social, educational, artistic, and other connectional gatherings.
- C) Remain faithful to the mission, vision, and values of the congregation as the denomination reforms, to ensure that all are not only welcome but celebrated as members of the Body of Christ.

Examples of intentional programs/messages offering focus on Connection and informing:

- Recent sermon series and related sermon studies titled Live in Love and Welcome Home – focused on present and future of UMC and denomination
- Backstage Pass presentation by Andy talking about current state of UMC and Conference and disaffiliations occurring in the Conference
- Walk Justly Oct 2022 – educational connectional gathering

Discussion about phrase “where our church is going/headed” to clarify what that means.

- Andy shared examples of efforts within our church to become more aware of needs like space for people who have sensory struggles, hearing or vision decline or inability.
- Mary Beth shared feedback about member of adult class saying felt discriminated against when she was asked to verify her pronouns on an event registration.
- General positive discussion from the Sermon Study Guides about the recent sermon series

How are we/can we as a church listening?

- Continuing to offer on-line availability of meetings and services
- Offering intentional staff office hours available to get together

Could Leadership Board make themselves more available at events as a presence – train LB members to clarify what their role would be
Training various groups on hospitality
Provide suggestion box?

Anxiety about Global Methodist Church and disaffiliations: What is the congregations awareness?

Recognized various degrees of engagement relating to levels of awareness
Overlap with concerns about financial giving/status – talked about ways we communicate financial status
Andy shared common trends that occur with decreased giving levels such as during the pandemic, during presidential election years, less giving by those who watch services on Facebook
Referenced recent sermon 9/4/22 focusing on hope with generosity as good example of conveying confidence and affirmation for our ministries and UMC

7:30 06/15 next meeting, try to keep pattern of 3rd Wed of the month for regular meetings

Oct 19, 2022 07:30 PM
Nov 16, 2022 07:30 PM
Dec 21, 2022 07:30 PM
Jan 18, 2023 07:30 PM
Feb 15, 2023 07:30 PM