

# MUMC Connectionalism Strategy Team

03/16/2022

Zoom: Dick Vreeland, Andy Bryan, Becky Strickland, Will Koehl, Jim Lange, Mary Beth Harper, Linda Horodeski, Roxanne Miller, Ethan Massey

Absent: Barb Stevens

Andy – Shared updates about delay of General Conference to 2024 and traditionalist focused churches moving forward with their new/separate denomination Global Methodist Church (GMC) in May 2022, other churches taking legal steps to leave UMC on their own terms versus the terms set forth by the UMC.

Leadership Board – Andy shared proposed Connectionalism group goals to the LB, which requested to take a month to review.

Becky and Will – Shared their first draft of survey proposed in February meeting.

## Discussion:

- What is the value of knowing whether responders to the survey are members?
- Suggested using parallel language with Connect Card
- How to capture useful demographics of responders
- Importance of referring to UMC, Methodism, and MUMC consistently
- Questions about content and what hope to gain from the survey
- Questions of whether we are looking for pre/post- test of congregant awareness of Methodist tenets – what is the goal of that?
- Concern about the survey content and timing not being sensitive to the current turmoil about denominational changes and political climate
- How best to continue planning forward in the midst of denominational change/uncertainty

## Discussion from meeting Feb 2022:

### **How do we establish baseline of measuring follow through?**

- 1) What information do we want to gain from the congregation to measure how we are growing?
- 2) Establish a baseline of the congregation's level of agreement with statements and goals
- 3) Last time gathered congregation input Fall of 2020 – small group conversations – notes taken not quantified
- 4) How comfortable are congregants with knowledge of Methodist history, theology, awareness of church mission/vision/value statements

- 5) Does congregation align what they know with how much they agree with those statements
- 6) Ask questions that directly include the words included in the goals – use key words and phrases – Will and Becky will develop draft of questionnaire
- 7) Ensure inclusiveness of how and to whom distribute assessment

### **Connectionalism Goals:**

1) By 2026, Manchester UMC will clarify and align our mission, our vision, and our values so that each ministry will authentically reflect the identity of the congregation and each member will be equipped to share Manchester UMC's story among our community and across our connection.

A) The Leadership Board will convene a Vision Task Force that will include staff, board members, and laity. This task force will

1. Assess the current public statements of the congregation (Mission, Vision, Welcome) to discern their sufficiency in clearly expressing the mission, vision, values, and identity of Manchester UMC.
2. Reframe and/or recreate these statements as needed, so that they accurately and effectively communicate the congregation's story.
3. Complete their work by January, 2023.

B) As the task force completes their work, the Connectionalism Strategy Team will work with staff to develop a plan for communicating the reframed or recreated statements throughout the congregation, the community, and across the connection.

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. As the denomination divides, Manchester UMC will embrace our role as a leading United Methodist congregation, and affirm our commitment to a hopeful, vibrant, fully inclusive, and thoroughly Methodist ethos in our life together. 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.

**7:30 4/20 next meeting, try to keep pattern of 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed of the month for regular meetings**