"THE WORLD IS MY PARISH."

REV. JOHN WESLEY
A group of Open Door leaders gathered on Saturday, June 9 to talk about the ministry plan for the fiscal year beginning July 1. We had a rich discussion about where we are as a congregation, and asked introspective questions about our resources and assets as a community. We focused our attention on where we are being called as a congregation in the areas of outreach and evangelism, worship, children’s ministry, and discipleship.

The outreach and evangelism conversation overlapped with service & witness, and congregational care. There was broad affirmation of existing ministries, including volunteerism with Kairos Ministries, GRIP and Souper Center. It was suggested that we might build upon the work we’re already doing by, for instance, inviting new volunteers to the Souper Center and increasing our involvement with the Richmond Emergency Food Pantry. New areas of ministry emerged, including: finding ways to support immigrants in our communities; reaching out to the children of incarcerated, and helping formerly incarcerated persons to re-integrate. The desire for a formalized congregational care plan was acknowledged; particularly in relation to ministry with our brothers and sisters in declining health and those with disabilities. It was thought that Open Door could do a better job of evangelism, and ideas were raised to support that need.

The planning group affirmed many aspects of our worship life and suggested the following: brighten up the sanctuary with lighting and paraments/ liturgical colors. The music team hopes that the engagement of a new Music Director will support their aims of expanding the music ministry team, scheduling regular rehearsals, and renewing the bell choir. The group affirmed our practice of observing UMC “Special Sundays” without taking a special offering, but extending an invitation to those who want to donate. We agreed that it would enhance our welcome if we install a teams of greeters and create pew cards to capture visitor information and prayer requests. It has also been suggested that a visitor “welcome table” would improve the visitor experience; and better signage would help visitors get around.

What emerged from the conversation around Children and Youth was a desire to be more inclusive: to synchronize Godly Play with worship, to include children’s art in the sanctuary, and to include children in worship as much as possible. The group hoped to continue our partnership with Heifer International in coordination with back-to-school and Blessing of the Animals. The group also affirmed our efforts to provide childcare for all church-related events. Other aims will include fully implementing Safe Sanctuaries, hosting a Godly Play Training, and planning quarterly All-Church/Family events like movie or game nights.

The discipleship committee recognizes the need for input from the congregation to formulate their aims. To this end, the discipleship team will develop a survey to garner feedback on a host of topics, including: what kind of support can we offer parents; should we separate the worship and Sunday school hour into two parts; and what are the best venues for small group meetings. We will continue to offer existing small groups, “All-Church” and the Bible Study, but will ask for feedback on timing and location. The group also expressed a desire to send participants to upcoming Emmaus Walks; and to establish a Young Adult small group for the circuit. A calendar of small group timeframes and offerings will be included in the final ministry plan.

In addition to the program areas, goals have been developed for Trustees, Staff/Parish Relations, Finance/Administration, and Communications. They are included here as well.
**Worship & Music**

*Our Intention: To create a worship experience that is invitational, accessible, and relatable; and that deepens faith and builds community*

Aim 1: Brighten the sanctuary with paraments, seasonal colors, and altar/worship space design

Aim 2: Observe the “Special Sundays” of the United Methodist Church (and include acknowledgement of “advance specials”)

Aim 3: With the help of a new music director, expand the music ministry team, schedule regular rehearsals, renew the bell choir, and incorporate children’s music in worship

Aim 4: Convene the worship planning team seasonally (February, May, and October) to plan Lent, Pentecost, and Advent worship themes

**Hospitality & Congregational Care**

*Our Intention: To provide congregational care for those in our community; and to improve our welcome to visitors*

Aim 1: Implement a greeters program for worship, with individuals trained to welcome visitors

Aim 2: Streamline and simplify coffee hour teams and processes

Aim 3: Explore systems of congregational care

Aim 4: Set up a visitor/guest welcome packet and/or welcome table with information and first-time visitor gift

Aim 5: Create a plan of hospitality and welcome that includes greeters and provides a means for capturing visitor contact information

**Children & Youth**

*Our Intention: To provide children’s ministry that is fun and engaging, encouraging discipleship and spiritual growth of our children and families*

Aim 1: Coordinate Godly Play lessons with Worship themes and scriptures, beginning in the Fall

Aim 2: Offer at least one Godly Play training event for parents/storytellers (August/September)

Aim 3: Incorporate childcare into all church-related events

Aim 4: Fully implement Safe Sanctuaries, including training and screening for all volunteers

*Participation in Heifer International, related to food insecurity, is included in our aims associated with Global Witness*
**Immigration | Incarceration | Racial Justice**

Our Intention: To educate ourselves and our community on issues of immigration, incarceration, and racial justice. To stand in solidarity with the marginalized, and to bear witness in concrete, practical ways

Aim 1: Participate in two Kairos Ministry Weekends this year, through volunteerism; at least two first-time attendees at each graduation ceremony

Aim 2: Send at least five members to be trained as ICE observers through Stand Together Contra Costa and to report back to the congregation

Aim 3: Support LGBTQ prisoners with at least two Open Door members writing to prisoners from blackandpink.org regularly

Aim 4: Participate in immigration witness opportunities at West County Detention Facility

**Food Insecurity**

Our intention: To educate ourselves on issues of hunger and food insecurity and to find practical ways of addressing the issue locally

Aim 1: Continue to serve at GRIP Souper Center, with at least two new volunteers this year

Aim 2: Continue 5th Sunday (quarterly) food drive for Richmond Emergency Food Pantry; explore ways of deepening relationship with REFP

Aim 3: Explore the idea of a free/barter farmers market and/or subscription to a produce box to share among the community/congregation

*Heifer International is included in our aims associated with Global Witness*

**Global Witness**

Our Intention: To recognize and honor the global nature of the Church through volunteerism and relationship-building, cross-culturally and internationally

Aim 1: Continue to engage in issues related to Israel/Palestine and Wadi Foquin by encouraging at least one person to take a Holy Land trip; and requesting a report-back; and continuing to support Conference efforts/events for Israel/Palestine

Aim 2: Participate in at least one UMCOR Volunteers in Mission trip in the coming year

Aim 3: Support Heifer International through our children’s ministry by education and fundraising, in coordination with our annual Blessing of the Animals (September/October)
**Finance & Administration**

*Our Intention: To attend to the administrative and financial life of the church by improving processes, increasing transparency, and encouraging sustainability.*

Aim 1: Continue to improve finance policies and procedures, including the implementation of reimbursement forms and process

Aim 2: Fully implement and utilize PowerChurch

Aim 3: Work with Trustees to establish and implement facility use policies and procedures, including: a standardized rental agreement, pre/post checklist, schedule of fees, and Safe Sanctuaries addendum

Aim 4: Creatively address 2018-19 budget gap by generating new income sources, including fundraisers and other events

Aim 5: Follow up and implement changes related to all audit findings

**Trustees**

*Our Intention: To provide good stewardship of our capital resources, including campus and parsonages; and to mitigate risk/liability to the congregation*

Aim 1: Work with Finance/Administration to establish and and implement facility use policies and procedures, including: a standardized rental agreement, pre/post checklist, schedule of fees, and Safe Sanctuaries addendum

Aim 2: Improve the accessibility of our campus by installing handicap accessible ramp from sanctuary to Friendship Hall

Aim 3: Complete a full accessibility audit ahead of fall charge conference (October) and improve campus signage.

Aim 4: Fully implement Safe Sanctuary guidelines

**Staff-Parish Relations Committee**

*Our Intention: To “build a strong positive relationship between staff and congregation so that the congregation makes disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world;” and attend to the legal and ethical responsibilities related to staff.*

Aim 1: Recruit, interview, and hire a music director

Aim 2: Revise and re-distribute Staff Handbook

Aim 3: Work with the pastor to identify and encourage new leadership in the congregation
**Discipleship**

*Our Intention:* To deepen the discipleship of the members of Open Door UMC; and to provide opportunities for spiritual education including entry points for newcomers

Aim 1: Create and conduct a survey of the congregation on discipleship, including the proposal to separate worship and Sunday School into separate hours

Aim 2: Send at least two people on *Emmaus Walks* in the coming year (1 male, 1 female)

Aim 3: Begin a Young Adult small group for the West Contra Costa Circuit

Aim 4: Create a calendar of proposed small group offerings for the year

Aim 5: Work with UMW to produce a quarterly educational event on a topic of interest

Aim 6: Develop an intentional plan to recruit new members

**Communications & Evangelism**

*Our Intention:* To better communicate our mission and ministry to members of the community at large; to better inform the congregation of church news and events; and to communicate effectively and evangelically the Good News of God’s love.

Aim 1: Engage social media with new content daily

Aim 2: Produce quarterly print/electronic newsletter (February, May, August, November)

Aim 3: Maintain a website that is visitor-focused, informative, and up-to-date

Aim 4: Explore SMS/text messaging technology to stay in touch with congregation

Aim 5: Continue to build on our reputation as an inclusive welcoming, Reconciling community

**West Contra Costa Community Ministry**

*Our Intention:* To bear witness to the work of God in our neighborhood, city, county, and school district; to show up as a unified United Methodist voice for justice

Aim 1: Participate regularly in WCCUSD school board meetings and events

Aim 2: Continue to host and participate in Municipal Advisory Council meetings

Aim 3: Provide space and volunteer hours elections polling
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<th>August 2018</th>
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<td>31st, 5th Sun Hymn Sing &amp; REFP Collection</td>
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<td>14th, Blessing of the Animals</td>
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<td>Back-to-School</td>
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<td>20th, Charge Conference</td>
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<td>Blessing of the Backpacks</td>
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<td>Bible presented to 3rd graders</td>
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<td>4th, All Saints Day</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
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<td>Kairos Men's Weekend</td>
<td>2nd, Advent Begins</td>
<td>14th, Human Relations Sunday</td>
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<td>24th, UM Student Sunday</td>
<td>24th, Christmas Eve</td>
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<td>30th, 5th Sun Hymn Sing &amp; REFP Collection</td>
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<td>6th, Ash Weds.</td>
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<td>31st, UMCOR Sunday</td>
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<td>31st, 5th Sun Hymn Sing &amp; REFP Collection</td>
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<td>26th, Heritage Sunday</td>
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