

**Whatcoat Visioning Task Force Meeting Minutes - Sunday, January 17, 2016**  
Second Team Meeting – Core Values Review and Community Profile/SWOT Analysis

Members present:

Becky Caswell-Wade, Heather Childers, Kay Conaway, Mimi Conner, Bob and Patti Contino, Charlotte Fraser, Don and Rita Fry, Bo Gordy-Stith, Jane Griesa, Kris Knarr, Julie Lewicki, Jane Maroon, Sondra Satterfield, Anne Spence, Tim Stark, Doyle Tiller, Fred Truitt, Dee Waud

Pastor Bo opened the meeting with prayer – using Exodus 33:15-19; 34:5-8, 29 (Show Me Your Glory).

**We reviewed the list of core values that came from our stories** (of when we experienced God's presence at Whatcoat in a powerful way), and compared it to the list of core values generated by the 10 completed Malphurs' surveys.

**Values that come from our stories**

Accepting (Romans 15:7)  
Growing (2 Thessalonians 1:3)  
Welcoming (Mark 9:37)  
Relational (Philippians 2:5)  
Spiritual (1 Peter 2:5)

**Values identified in the 10 surveys**

Bible preaching/teaching  
Scripture  
Prayer  
Community  
Relationships

We saw connections between the lists of values (growing and spiritual encompass Bible preaching/teaching, scripture and prayer; accepting, welcoming, and relational encompass community and relationships). We also noted that the survey list reverses the order in which we chose words/values from our stories.

We talked about a missing component from our value list – missions/outreach, which we defined as living our faith by serving others in Christ's name. While we practice this value/aspect of faith in Christ, our extended time of healing for the past eight years may have contributed to a focus on ourselves – not at the expense of serving others, but as more of a priority.

We also talked about the ways in which missions/outreach are related to evangelism (sharing our faith in Christ to bring others into relationship with him). Some in the group expressed a need for a new understanding of evangelism, beyond scare tactics (i.e., telling someone they are going to Hell), or the reduction of salvation to a transaction rather than a relationship and lifelong process. Several agreed that the best form of evangelism happens when people witness Christ in our lives and tell us, "I want what you have."

**Action Item:** We agreed to discern and pray together about the order in which we chose the values from our stories, and think about a word that expresses the value (perhaps more aspirational than actual at this point in the life of our church) of missions/outreach/evangelism. Fred Truitt suggested "servanthood" at the close of the meeting, and certainly our conversation supported the notion of serving others with Christ. Anyone who completes the Malphurs' survey will be included in future reports.

**For the second half of the meeting**, we reviewed the summary page from our demographic report, along with the two primary groups of people in the area Malphurs calls, “the geographic area of spiritual influence [of Whatcoat UMC].” We closed the meeting with a brainstorm of Strengths, Weaknesses (both internal factors), and Opportunities and Threats (both external factors), or a SWOT Analysis.

**The overview of our surrounding community/neighborhoods:**

- Predominantly white
- Higher educational attainment (when compared with the rest of the state)
- Half of our population is either older (empty nest) Boomers or Older (65-85+) retired persons
  - these populations correspond to our two present worship services/congregations
- Very low church attendance/affiliation
- Significant grown projections
- This overview prompts us to ask: “Where does ministry happen?” and “Where is Church located?”

**SWOT Analysis**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Relational Continuity/structure Faith-based Financially sound Recovery ministries Compassionate Generous/giving Large Emmaus contingent Non-judgmental Free for joyful obedience Strong lay leadership</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Population growth Retail growth Great school district Potential relationship with local government Military Other area churches Recovery ministry in area We’re in the midst of several communities Pope Francis</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dwindling children’s ministry Money for missions (off-budget) Some inflexibility about change Communication between two congregations Adult classes and Sunday School Cliquish – “family” Wounded identity – complacent/comfortable Judgmental</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Spiritual vs. religious Social media marketing Atheism Terrorism – Culture of fear Anti-religious Growth of the “Nones” Time competition Other churches</p>

**The next meeting on our schedule is February 15, but that does not include an opportunity to meet in two weeks, on January 31, 2016, to continue our conversation about our Core Values and the Community we serve.** The intersection of our Core Values (our spiritual gifts) and our Community Profile (the needs/opportunities around us) will be the basis of our Mission and Vision. Bo mentioned two books on our spiritual-but-not-religious culture, Phyllis Tickle’s *The Great Emergence*, and Diana Butler Bass’ *Christianity After Religion*.