

Whatcoat UMC Visioning Task Force gathering on Feb. 28, 2016

22 Members present

Drew Boyce	Ann Spence	Doyle Tiller
Bob Contino	Bo Gordy-Stith	Tim Stark
Patti Contino	Don Fry	Heather Childers
Julie Lewicki	Rita Fry	Tom Cahall
Dee Waud	Sondra Satterfield	Margaret Cahall
Dorothy Warren Shelton	Jane Griesa	Chris Glenn
Pat Dyer	Jane Maroon	
Bonnie Dyer	Kris Knarr	

Agenda:

1. Review/formal ratification of Mission Statement.
 2. Putting together our Vision
 3. Announcements – schedule moving forward (part 2) and reminder for Town Meeting
- Handouts (attached) – Vision Statements from the Team and Dee Waud's synopsis

1. We opened with prayer from Psalm 139

2. We discussed the Mission Statement we settled on at the end of our Feb. 14 meeting. Bob Contino read from the Malphur's book a statement that defined a Vision Statement as more of a snapshot or picture of the future, rather than a phrase – which can be stated as a Mission Statement. After some discussion, we agreed to amend our former statement to read:

To welcome all to passionately pursue Jesus and share God's love with others.

We voted unanimously to adopt this statement as our recommendation to the church for a Mission Statement.

3. Bob Contino asked for clarification of our process moving forward. We will be meeting every three weeks for our remaining three meetings – with a fourth Saturday morning Retreat on May 14 if we need it. Offline work between meetings will be critical to keep the process moving – the second part of our deliberations will focus on the implementation plan we will propose to the church for getting from where we are to God's Vision of where we want to be.

Our main topics will be Assimilation and Discipleship; Leadership (Dream Team); Ministry Setting (Facilities); and Finances.

Our Administrative Board will formally vote on our recommendations for Core Values, and Mission and Vision Statements on March 22, 2016. We will hold a town meeting to get congregational feedback on March 5, 2016. We plan a special Church Conference in June (tentatively set for June 19, 2016) for a formal presentation and adoption of our Core Values, Mission and Vision Statements, and implementation plan.

4. Vision Statement work

We began by spending 15 minutes in silence, individually reviewing the vision submissions of 16 team members over the past two weeks and identifying words or phrases which struck us as powerfully expressing the will of God for Whatcoat UMC.

Then we gathered into four groups of five persons and each person shared the most important word or phrase that we had identified from reviewing all of the vision statement submissions. We added other rounds of sharing to identify secondary and lower priority words or phrases.

We gathered back together as a group to share in turn each of our top priority concepts. At our meeting, we shared only words or phrases. What follows is the context of these words and phrases, along with the original author in our Vision Statement Proposal document (attached), in order to better convey the concepts we were lifting up. Pastor Bo did not participate in the process, and one of our members did not share, so that our 21 participants identified the following 20 words or phrases:

1. Passionate commitment - The pursuit team which will passionately pursue Jesus must be dedicated and truly passionate. (Tom Cahall)

2. Community (see also below, 13. **Ecumenical**)

- Outside the walls we should look into all **community** activities which we can support and participate as helpers and volunteers. (Tom Cahall)
- Going out into the **community** to meet people where they are at. (Julie Lewicki)
- I see all kinds of groups centered around their passions and interests. I see these groups living life together, not only growing Spiritually but also serving the **community** together. ...I also see us sharing God's love with others in new ways. I see many things happening in our facilities as well as the surrounding **community**. I see before school and after school programs in the Simpson Center and in the church. I see classes on finance being offered for the **community**. I see short term mission trips being housed in the Simpson center to help with construction projects in the **community**. Partner with the town on old Camden days and Christmas caroling, homecoming parade. **Community** worship service. I see the church and our facilities becoming a focal point for town activities. ... I see an expansion to every day of the week between [the Simpson Center and in the church]. I see this as Whatcoat's connection with the **community** and our contribution to the larger church network. (Drew Christian)
- To be of one body created by God through his spirit and faith in Jesus Christ, every member will be empowered to fulfill their own personal life mission for Christ and in doing so will transform the surrounding **community** of Camden. (Doyle Tiller)
- We expand our Library into a Prayer Chapel; prayer warriors cover our church and **community** without ceasing. ...We find ways to reach out to those in recovery - serving as hosts and inviting them into contributing roles (Habitat for Humanity, serving other hurting people in our **community**). ... Whatcoat becomes a leader in **community** partnerships and volunteer "matchmaking" (Bo Gordy-Stith)
- This is an outreach that hopefully would be a witness to others in our **community** as to how we do love and take care of each other.... (Kris Knarr)
- God has called us to share God's love with the unchurched of our **community** by providing

- diversity in worship, recovery ministries, and small caring groups. (Rita Fry)
3. We will be **committed to innovation, creativity, and excellence** with forms of **dynamic worship** that will **capture the attention of our youth** but will be **well-grounded on the cornerstones of our faith** that are so important to our elders of faith. (Doyle Tiller) (See also below, 19. **Youth**.)
 4. **Joyfully** engage in Christian action and spiritual growth (Bob Contino)
 5. To be **aware of the needs of our community**. I know we cannot help every single soul, throughout all the earth, yet we could be a part of reaching many in some way, as we become **aware of the needs**. (Sondra Satterfield) ((see below, Ecumenical, Drew Boyce)
 5. **Outreach**
 - Outside the walls we should look into all community activities which we can support and participate as helpers and volunteers. I feel this should be a local Kent County **outreach**. (Tom Cahall)
 - I see a more focused **outreach** for VBS where we partner with the preschool to share God's love. (Drew Christian)
 - On Monday morning...early-'ish....8-9:00 with coffee... a prayer group gets together to ask for God's leading in their outreach...then they brainstorm who was in church and needs a "hand-up" this week? This is an **outreach** that hopefully would be a witness to others in our community as to how we do love and take care of each other.... (Kris Knarr)
 - **Outreach** and fellowship for 20-30 year olds (Chris Glenn)
 - We would also be a family who realizes that anyone and everyone is our neighbor. Passionately pursuing Jesus means being His disciple, learning from Him, following Him and doing as He did. For me, I see that as continuing to grow and develop **outreach** to whoever is identified as "the least of these" – the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the prisoner, the orphan, the widow, the downtrodden, the low of spirit, etc. anyone who is in need of food, clothing, shelter, a sense of belonging/acceptance and the love of Jesus. (Sondra Satterfield)
 6. **Others being taken under the shelter of our wings** that are outstretched wide. (Julie Lewicki)
 7. **We would take on the best parts of a healthy family**, allowing others to join the family and be grafted in, as all of us once were when we accepted Christ. We would enjoy unconditional love and acceptance, a place of physical and emotional safety where we are free to be our imperfect Christian selves as we grow in Christ and to be able to work out differences of opinion and expressions of faith. (Sondra Satterfield)
 8. **Communication is the major factor in the future of this church**. We get weekly small newspapers that have church info in them and they are free to receive. The Bridge radio channel has programs sponsored by different churches and reaches a lot of people in the area. Postcard mailings for special activities could be sent. There also needs to be information on all groups that is available to church attendees. (Dee Waud)
 9. **Transforming**
 - The admin board will be **transformed** to meet these new ideas. (Tom Cahall)
 - Being **transformed** from the inside out – identifying spiritual gifts in others and how they can use them. (Julie Lewicki)
 - To be of one body created by God through his spirit and faith in Jesus Christ, every member will be empowered to fulfill their own personal life mission for Christ and in doing so will **transform** the surrounding community of Camden. (Doyle Tiller)

10. The **doors of the church flung wide open** with sunlight and wind streaming in and out....
(Julie Lewicki)
11. ...then the doors/ walls disappear as we go out into the community reaching out in a **grass roots way**. (Julie Lewicki)
12. We will **minister and counsel the troubled souls that may enter our path and turn no one away**. (Doyle Tiller)
13. **Ecumenical** (see above, 2. **Community**)
 - ...We are **active in working with other Camden/Dover Christians**, concerned neighbors, and area educators, police, elected officials and other public servants in addressing community issues. (Bo Gordy-Stith)
 - ...I see this as Whatcoat's connection with the community and our contribution to the **larger church network**.
...Building a stronger church community. I see improved **partnerships and coordination with the other local churches** so that each one's strengths can be leveraged for the whole community. Food? Clothes? Services? Addictions? Financial support? Each church has strengths that can be utilized to meet the needs of the community. (Drew Boyce)
14. **Mentoring**
 - We are **mentors** and follow others identifying new people even from the parking lots, door.
... picture of a plug/ cord going into a socket- getting people plugged in- **mentoring** and teaching others - guiding them to become more involved.... (Julie Lewicki)
 - There needs to be a focus on building a core group of leaders that are willing to pour themselves into others. As part of the process I see **mentors** and disciples, a Paul and Timothy scenario. (Drew Christian)
15. **Pass it on**
 - A picture of candlelight service on Christmas Eve- we each pass on the light. Flame grows brighter and stronger and spreads light wildfire, burning brightly and consuming us as we share his love. The song "**Pass it On**" was a part of this vision.... (Julie Lewicki)
 - Teachers [of children] are encouraged to send postcards, emails, texts, whatever to keep in touch with individual children to encourage them to understand the love of Christ and then "**pass it on!**" (Kris Knarr)
16. **Biblical**
 - More opportunities for **bible** studies, groups, activities to reach out to the youngest to the oldest. (Julie Lewicki)
 - **Bible** studies (pursuing Jesus) (Ann Spence)
 - On different days and times... **Bible** Studies... Men's... Women's... Couples... Parents.... (Kris Knarr)
 - Telling the old, old **story of Jesus** and His love (Bonnie Dyer)
 - Small groups and regular **Bible** study classes...for spiritual growth, accepting, relational (Jane Maroon)
17. **Active**
 - We practice an **active** partnership between our youth and young people and our older Boomers and elders, in which young and old share in wisdom (new and old), mutual encouragement and support, and inspiration. (Bo Gordy-Stith)
 - More activities in both adult and children's Sunday school, **active** growing youth group involved with spiritual and serving projects. (Jane Maroon)

18. **Connect**

- I see a real focus on family where there are opportunities for families to **connect** and share life.
... I also see us looking at the Preschool as more of a ministry. I see us involving them more in the worship service and looking for other ways that they can **connect** with the Church. (Drew Boyce)
- Our VBS-like children's discipleship formation program **connects** with the Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Preschool (reading support, adopt-a-grandparent).
... Our worship is profoundly **connected** to God and to our daily life. (Bo Gordy-Stith)

19. **Youth** (see also number 3 above)

- The older **youth** are found filling the front room of the Simpson Center. The technology for the older **youth** is overwhelming to most of the congregation, but is super cool for the older **youth**. They can experience Christ in the state of the art world of sight and sound delivering a profound message of God's Love. (Tom Cahall)
- Focus on older **youth** (13-20) activities for them, cooperate with Young Life, Christian Athletes, other churches, have a facility and staff. (Ann Spence)
- Mission projects within our church, locally and out of state for **youth** and adults. (Jane Maroon)

20. **Discipleship**

- Our VBS-like children's **discipleship** formation program connects with the Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Preschool (reading support, adopt-a-grandparent).
... We offer ongoing classes/groups in all aspects of **Discipleship** Training (Spiritual gifts identification and development, spiritual disciplines, servant leadership, mission and ministry, evangelism, training and teaching, worship, community involvement/investment, mentoring/coaching, caring ministry). (Bo Gordy-Stith)

At the close of our session, we agreed to have Pastor Bo Gordy-Stith draft a Vision Statement proposal from the above statements we identified as most important, and distribute it to the VTF members by Wednesday, close of business. The members will then review the draft and give feedback to all of the members (reply to all) by Friday, so that we will be able to present a proposal for our Vision Statement to those who participate in our Town Meeting on Sunday, March 6, 2016.

We discussed plans for the Town Meeting Sunday, reiterating the objective of listening without defense in order to get a sense of how our Vision Statement proposal resonates and communicates with members and friends of our congregation.

Next Meeting: Sunday, March 13, 2016 - **Revisit, reshape Core Values, Vision and Mission Statements** in light of congregational input - **Assimilation & Discipleship:**

Making Mature Disciples: Chapter 9 – Strategy Activity 2

What are we trying to do for the community? ID the characteristics of a mature disciple and a process which helps people assimilate and mature in discipleship (primary and secondary activities). Less is more. SMART progress indicators.

Offline – Please read/review Chapters 7 and 9. Staff composition (job descriptions), leadership structure and present assimilation, discipling and leadership development process.