

WESTLAKE UMC—HEALTHY CHURCH INITIATIVE

CONSULTATION REPORT FAQ'S (Frequently Asked Questions)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q1 – Why did we do this project? Are we a “bad” church?

A – By no means are we a “bad” church. In fact, our Pastor Lynn has been in a 2 year process called the Healthy Church Initiative, reading some 16 books and going to monthly meetings with other pastors. This was the next step to take in order to improve our reaching our mission field and bringing others to Christ as per the United Methodist Church mission and our congregation’s vision.

Q2 – What is the mission of the United Methodist Church?

A – The UMC mission statement and therefore, the mission of our church is “To make disciples for Jesus Christ, for the transformation of the world.” This comes from Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:18-20.

Q3 – What is our church’s current mission/vision?

A – “Following One, Serving All” is our vision statement. The consultation team is asking us to review this statement as found in Prescription #1.

Q4 – Can we vote to do only part of the prescriptions?

A – No. The vote at the church conference by all present will be to accept the entire proposal (i.e., all of the prescriptions) or to reject the entire proposal. To reject the report would mean that we would not have the benefit of working with the coach provided by the Conference as our congregation moves forward to better position our church to reach more for Jesus Christ.

Q5 – This seems like a lot of change and a lot of potential expense. Can we really do this?

A – We cannot do this on our own. Only God, working through our congregation, can accomplish God’s mission in this place. Therefore, we are dependent upon God to provide for us the resources and opportunity to successfully implement these prescriptions. The good news is that God provides for those who love Him and seek to do His will. God is calling us to “jump out of the boat” in faith. If we choose to accept the 5 prescriptions, we will receive a “coach” (another UM pastor), who will be paid for by the Southwest Texas Conference of the UMC.

Q6 – What Does our Pastor and the Leadership Team think of this proposal?

A –Pastor Lynn and 3 laypersons started the Healthy Church Initiative process 2 years ago. Several changes have already begun because of it. The book, Simple Church, led our congregation to reduce our church council (leadership team) from over 30 members down to 12. Reflection on church staffing led us to engage in a Partners in Ministry workshop to hasten communication, conflict resolution, and trust-building. In May of 2013, our church council voted to invite the Consultation Weekend team here as the next logical step in the process.

Pastor Lynn says, “It is time for the congregation to discern God’s movement in this process or not. If you choose to adopt the prescriptions, I enthusiastically want to lead you there.”

PRESCRIPTION QUESTIONS

PRESCRIPTION 1—MISSION, VISION, AND PLANNING

Q1. What is the mission statement of the United Methodist Church?

A- “to make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”

Q2. What is the difference between mission and vision

A- A vision is a statement of a preferred future that an organization aspires to be. A mission is a statement that defines why and organization exists.

Q3. WUMC has a vision. Why do we need to change it?

A- Parts of our vision were supported by the consultants. However their advice was to rethink our vision so that it does not spread us so thin that we can meet our mission.

PRESCRIPTION 2 – STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

Q 2-1 Isn’t the staff evaluated now?

A-- SPRC has met with all paid staff to discuss their job description, to provide an evaluation of their performance, and to discuss insurance and compensation issues. This prescription will create a system that is not now in place at WUMC, to ensure that all staff are aligned with the mission, vision, goals and financial resources of the church.

Q 2-2 Is our budget sufficient to cover the cost of the “all staff retreat” lead by an outside professional?

A-- Yes. Although we have not identified a consultant for a staff retreat at this time, we will ensure that the cost fits within our approved budget.

PRESCRIPTION 3—ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Q1. Doesn't the Book of Discipline set forth the organization?

A- Yes but it also has a provision that allows for simplification at the discretion of the church leadership.

Q2. Didn't we just change the size of the Council at the beginning of the year?

A- Yes, but further simplification and effectiveness can be achieved by a "Single Board" structure which we will integrate if these prescriptions are adopted.

PRESCRIPTION 4 – CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Q. 4-1 Will implementing improvements to our children and youth programs mean some of them will be dropped and others changed?

A-- This prescription *may* result in changes which will be purposeful, and allow us to reach more children, youth and families. This process will also identify the strengths of our current children and youth ministries so that we can build on those.

Q. 4-2 Will the team of 3-5 people named by Pastor Lynn to develop an intentional outreach paradigm that targets unchurched children, youth and their families be made up of our staff?

A-- The team will be selected by Lynn in consultation with the coach and will include lay persons, as well as staff, who are devoted to growing our outreach to children, youth and families that we do not yet know.

Q. 4-3 What exactly will the 2 outwardly focused children/youth events in which the whole church is expected to participate involve?

A-- The details for the children/youth/family events will be planned as part of the year and one-half long process. At this point, we are asking you to discern if you are ready to take the leap of faith to become a more compelling and mission-driven church.

PRESCRIPTION 5—CONNECTING AND DISCIPLING

Q1 I am not comfortable inviting and discipling. Why can't the pastors do that for us?

A- Our pastors do that for the church but the data is clear that congregational members are more effective in building the relationship and paving the way to connectedness to make disciples.