

St. John's Small Group Sharing Sessions Summary Report

July, 2019

_____The Transition Team sponsored four meetings during the second half of July for congregational members to offer their input to a series of questions focusing on the congregation's past, present and future. Two of the meetings were on Wednesday evenings, and two were following worship on Sunday mornings. The meetings ranged in time from 95 to 120 minutes. There was a break midway in the meeting schedule -- pizza was served at the Sunday meetings, and root beer floats were served at the Wednesday meetings.

Numbers attending

Leaders include Pastor, members of Council and Transition Team, some of whom attended two or more meetings. Counting leaders once, there were a total of 45 members who attended a meeting.

July 17: 12 members, 3 leaders
July 21: 14 members, 5 leaders
July 24: 8 members, 5 leaders
July 28: 6 members, 4 leaders

Reflecting on the past and assessing the present

1. Reflect: what has been especially good about the past? and what has been challenging/troubling about the past?

July 17	<p><u>Good:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- church family encouraged each other- members hung around and talked- prayerful- Prayer Group -- Women's groups --felt that God answered prayer- a lot of life- Youth group strong- dedication to ministry at St. John's <p><u>Challenging/troubling:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We don't know how to be disagreeable- Nasty things were sometimes said- Been a challenge to move forward- We don't always live out our faith
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July 21	<p><u>Good:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 40 years of St. John's Preschool - Sunday school packed - lots of good fellowship and friendship <p><u>Challenging/troubling:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Losing older members - Economic losses in Bellevue - Turnover of pastors - Still in grief process over death of Pastor Kay - Undercurrent of pot stirring - Volunteering down
July 24	<p><u>Good:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dinners - Music <p><u>Challenging/troubling:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whispering campaigns
July 28	<p><u>Good:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dinners brought others from community - ice cream socials - Key leaders who could rally others around them - Advent/Lenten services - sing-alongs <p><u>Challenging/troubling:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacking in visits to shut ins - Wonderful things not happening - Lost too many good members - Need to be more welcoming - Economic decline in Bellevue - Financial stability needed

2. Consensus: identify the positive things from the past that you would like to continue in the future and list the things that you would like to change

July 17	<p><u>Continue:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Confirmation Program</i>- <i>High School Youth Group</i>- <i>Christian Education Director</i>- <i>Lenten Service with meal, all in Fellowship Hall</i> <p><u>Change:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>More fellowship during worship services</i>- <i>Perhaps make snacks/refreshments available before or after</i>- <i>Bring back name badges</i>
July 21	<p><u>Continue:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Preschool</i>- <i>Sunday School</i>- <i>Vacation Bible School</i>- <i>Women's study groups</i>- <i>Other small groups</i>- <i>Improvement projects like parking lot and boiler</i> <p><u>Change:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>More outreach</i>

July 24	<p><u>Continue:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth programs - Preschool - Fish and Loaves and Pass it On connections - Closeness and care expressed for members - Sympathy cards to sign - Connection Cards - Evangelism Outreach Cards - Good participation for work days and funds for big repairs - funeral dinners - Youth activities - Fellowship Committee - Involvement of Sunday School kids in worship - Facebook prayer group - Facebook posts by Kristen <p><u>Change:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More fellowship before/after worship - More fellowship events - Mindset changes - Need person power for programs and activities
July 28	<p><u>Continue:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High School Sunday School - Incorporate College kids - Dinners <p><u>Change:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach to young adults - Ice cream social, potlucks and fellowship events - Need person power for programs and activities

3. Brainstorm: what are the resources/ministries/programs/opportunities that the congregation has?

July 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Senior Celebration (July lunch/entertainment event)</i> - <i>Preschool</i> - <i>Sunday School</i> - <i>Vacation Bible School</i> - <i>Prayer Groups</i> - <i>Dartball</i> - <i>Christmas Dinners</i> - <i>Music program -- choirs, organ</i> - <i>Fish and Loaves</i> - <i>Back to School (school supplies vouchers through Ministerial)</i>
July 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Preschool</i> - <i>Bell ringing for Salvation Army</i> - <i>Christmas Eve dinners delivered</i> - <i>Support of Fish and Loaves and Pass it On clothing closet</i> - <i>Dartball</i> - <i>AA and Al-Anon</i> - <i>Baton group</i>
July 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Space in our large building</i> - <i>Al-Anon, AA</i> - <i>Dartball</i> - <i>quilters</i> - <i>Fish and Loaves and Pass it On</i> - <i>Christmas Dinner for shut-ins</i> - <i>Easter Breakfast</i> - <i>Advent worship, Lenten suppers/worship</i> - <i>Holy Communion for shut-ins</i> - <i>Hospital and nursing home visits</i> - <i>Confirmation program</i> - <i>Bible Classes (Sunday and Thursday)</i> - <i>Spark Newsletter</i> - <i>High School youth gathering</i> - <i>Sunday School</i> - <i>VBS</i> - <i>Mission Endowment Fund</i>

July 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>St. John's Preschool</i> - <i>Christmas Eve Dinners</i> - <i>Fish and Loaves participation</i> - <i>Lenten Services</i> - <i>Ministerial Association Baccalaureate</i> - <i>Prayer partners</i> - <i>Prayer group</i> - <i>Adult Bible Study</i> - <i>Confirmation, VBS, Sunday School</i> - <i>Youth Program</i> - <i>Church Building</i> - <i>Organ</i>
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Planning for the future: visions and dreams

1. **Brainstorm**: What words would you like to be used to describe the congregation in ten years? (listed in order of voting for top three from gathered list - a numerical value of 3 was assigned for first choice, 2 for 2nd choice, and 1 for third choice_

July 17	<i>Spirit filled, flourishing, stable, vibrant, biblically literate, forgiving, thankful, welcoming, loving, warm, outreaching, family, serving, exciting</i>
July 21	<i>Spirit led, inclusive, still here, welcoming, prayerful, strong leadership, diverse, friendships, loving, solvent, thriving, full house, positivity, family oriented, outward focused, giving, excitement, younger</i>
July 24	<i>Spirit filled, Christ-like, growing, increased participation, family oriented, love filled, giving, strong, communication</i>
July 28	<i>Thriving, solvent, outreaching, peaceful, spirit filled, kids!!, transformative, welcoming, comforting, active, alive, loving, exciting</i>

2. **Reflect/Dream**: What needs to happen for these words to become a reality?

July 17	<i>Prayer, positive leadership, forward thinking, good leadership, trust, observe boundaries, willingness to learn, willingness to change, have faith in our abilities</i>
July 21	<i>Teamwork, prayer, goals/objectives, mission statement, leadership, participation</i>
July 24	<i>Action, vision/mission statement, more community outreach, pastoral stability</i>
July 28	<i>Find right leader, motivation, teamwork, prayer, hedging(?), vision, short sweet vision/mission statement</i>

3. Brainstorm: what qualities would you look for in a pastor to be a partner in this future?

July 17	<i>Positive, uplifting, patient, Type B, non-judgmental, open to change, out of comfort zone, willing to say "I was wrong", no hidden baggage, visits regularly, relates to all age levels, be a problem solver, have a sense of humor; male</i>
July 21	<i>Tech-savvy, empathetic, friendly, people person, hard-working, balanced, evangelistic, ecumenical, good listener, partner</i>
July 24	<i>facilitator, Type B, uplifting, interesting, caring, tech savvy, role model, listener</i>
July 28	<i>Transformation, relational, listener, understanding, defuse conflict, relate to all ages, emotional intelligence, spiritual, translate Bible/theology to daily life, transcendent</i>