

# COMPILATION OF FEEDBACK GIVEN AT THE PROPERTY VISION TEAM AUGUST GATHERINGS

## Comments specific to UPC's Mission Statement and Inclusivity Statement

All comments at the gatherings were recorded as part of this document, therefore you may see similar if not exact comments made by different members of UPC. One hundred members offered their comments. It was important to record all comments to show the importance felt on a particular topic. If you have questions or comments about this material, please email us at [UPCpropertyvisionteam@gmail.com](mailto:UPCpropertyvisionteam@gmail.com) or contact Stephanie Morris at [stephanietmorris@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stephanietmorris@sbcglobal.net) or 512-415-9797.

### COMMENTS ON OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*Rooted in Worship, Growing through Education and Service, Connecting to Campus and Community.*

- Great at the worship part
- Weak on the Connecting to campus & community
- "University" is part of our name – therefore we need to work on this area
- Parts of this statement seem to be more aspirational than current descriptions
- Feel as this statement is a rote response that we don't think about when we say it and what it means. As we grow and change we need to consider if this statement is still true or do we need to make some changes?
- We know what we are, but our MS doesn't say what we can be in the future
- Words can become old and dusty
- Maybe there could be a sermon series on each of the parts of the mission statement
- Basically, any idea we have can fall under these words. We could have an exercise to fill in the blank to each of these parts to offer ideas of how we can live into this statement, but we need to say exactly what we are going to be doing
- Yes, feels this statement "rings true"
- The MS is good, but the church needs to change to fit these statements
  - o The church needs to reflect more in the way of service
  - o We don't connect to campus & community as we should
  - o The worship part is good though
- "Campus" – don't feel strong about this – should we be connected? If we look at our history the answer would be "yes" and do feel there is a role for UPC & Campus
- Add "vibrant" before the word "community"
- Like the statement because it is simple, easy to remember and likes a succinct statement
- "community" is a vague word – what community are we connecting to? The university? Clients at Uplift?
- We struggle with our UKIRK ministries
- The MS is focused on UPC (me) and does not reflect the larger mission of God's preference for his church and his universe. The MS reflects right now. We are ordained by God to be his representatives in the world. What is the church today? We are not an ancient grandma church. The MS angle is focused more on who we are rather than God's purpose. It is not big enough.
- We need another verb in this statement – healing or addressing the wounded nature of our world – PROCLAIM! We need to look at the redemptive work of God in the world – a bigger notion. Where is God calling us? The future?
- The early church saw itself as sending agents into the world. Today the number of people who haven't heard the gospel is the same as in the beginning. The problem now is the distortion of what religion is in our world. People think of religion as power & control of people, that we are rigid. It is perceived as negative.
- We need a different perspective of how we show we are Christian. A new understanding of what Jesus taught. We are afraid to sound evangelical. This word is not considered positive. "Church" – what does this mean?

## CONT. MISSION STATEMENT

- This statement rings true as to our values but we are not being diverse and connecting to campus and community
- Connecting to community stands out. UPC was able to do this with Uplift during the pandemic.
- This statement is written in the order that we do it well first and then on down the line
- Are we living this statement? Do we need to enlarge it?
- Needs to be more done with Connecting to Campus
- May need to view our success more on how we can impact the community in their own space and not expecting them to come to ours – change our mindset
- Hearing the MS at every worship service would feel a bit like an info-mercial
- MS does connect to our logo
- Still true – campus has been tough to connect with – we still have work to do
- Service – how do we combine the student connection with putting out hands to work in the community
- Feels good, pleasant
- Not descriptive enough
- Should include a spiritual home – a place to explore our spirituality and soulfulness – a space to hear our call
- We are struggling in the campus & community area – there are so many poor university students
- Would like to include something about sustainable – healing the earth (i.e. help with climate change)
- What is our aspiration in the three areas of our mission statement? We should cast forward into what we want to be in those three areas. Which will give us something measurable to aspire for?
- Push firmly with this church on the issues that are important to us. Put it on the table to the congregation
- My hope is that we will refine our UPC mission statement, based on a meaningful study of congregational values. Those values should guide us in determining what we intend to do with the new space.

## COMMENTS ON OUR INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

*UPC strives to embody God's love for the diversity of creation by affirming the dignity of all persons as created in God's image. We welcome people of all races, cultures, sexual orientations, gender expressions, and socioeconomic status in all ministries of the church.*

- We seem to do well accepting race, cultures, sexual orientations
- We are less good at gender expression and socio-economic (this may have been a reference to our bldg. monitor)
- With regards to the words – socio-economic – don't feel our church congregants are in a broad socioeconomic situation
- Wanted to included the following ideas in this statement:
  - o "all ages"
  - o Consider mobility issues, "differing physical and mental capabilities" (vs. disabilities)
  - o Not all disabilities are visible, some are unseen
- Think we should state the inclusivity statement as part of worship – once a month? Once a quarter? Or look at stating parts more frequently. Centering ourselves in worship and hearing these words makes the statement come alive so that we can live into it
- This statement is critical and stand by these words. Thinks the worship bulletin needs to have this statement included in it each week like it used to
- Need to add that we welcome adults, families and children
- Need to add "multi-cultured" in front of "church"
- Thinks the statement is lovely but doesn't feel like all our members think so

## CONT. INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

- With all the changes in the world these days, can appreciate this statement
- Proud to be a member of UPC because of this statement
- Our church is in the process of welcoming all people, but we are not fully there yet
- We need to learn new ways of welcoming people as cultures have changed in the way we do or accept things
- We are moving toward diversity but slower than we would like
- Proud we have the inclusion statement – it's part of why many of us want to go to church here
- Change welcome to belonging language
- Should address students from multiple schools
- What are our values as a church?
- West Campus is not as diverse as it used to be so the term socioeconomically doesn't fit as well with either wealthy students or homeless
- How could we help West Campus become more diverse?
- Love this statement
- This statement was originally created as a way for students to know that they are safe – that we are open and affirming at this church
- Perhaps add that we are called by God to make this world a better place