

COMPILATION OF FEEDBACK GIVEN AT THE PROPERTY VISION TEAM AUGUST GATHERINGS

Comments specific to UT students & the UKIRK program, Parking Thoughts, & Young Adults & Families

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 or contact Stephanie Morris at stephanietmorris@sbcglobal.net or 512-415-9797.

COMMENTS SPECIFIC TO UT STUDENTS AND THE UKIRK PROGRAM:

- Uplift has one UT student volunteer but needs more
- UT is the second largest university in TX – we should be able to figure out what the students need/want that we can offer
- Reference to the Talanoah Study conducted by the Ukirk Committee several years ago that showed students don't want to be served but rather want to serve
- With a new facility we would have a new opportunity to connect with college students – creating space that works and is inviting for them
- Campus connection looks different than it did 50 years ago because kids are different now.
- Have a lounge area after the study hall time
- Could we have grad students offer tutoring times for students in the Fellowship Hall?
- Very interested in the programming for UKIRK this year and the possibility of a West Campus Student study hall in the UPC Fellowship Hall
- Former UPC pastor, Woody Berry, always commented that when he was a student at UT, it was always important that he could come in and sit on the back row.
- Consider having UPC as a “UT Outpost” site in the West Campus area. UT Outpost helps students who are food insecure by having a place that students know they can come and get non-perishable foods throughout the week
- Outreach to students to engage them in the sanctuary with service opportunities such as being ushers, playing a musical instrument for us, singing in the choir on certain Sundays (different from the paid sectional leaders), volunteering with Micah 6 and Uplift – creating a variety of ways students can engage with us and received something in return
- Could we reach out to other colleges in the Austin area and invite them
- College kids don't want to go to church, they are not interested in worship
- Teenagers these days care about many things that happen to be the same things that Jesus does....they (the students) just don't know this. EX: social justice issues, helping the hungry, etc.
- College students have a lot of time and energy. We used to have a lot more grad students at UPC and more faculty and staff here.
- We need to be in contact with the seminary as they have been inviting UT students to various programs (food included) to engage the students. This is a new initiative by the new president.
- The university is UPC's anchor. We need Carter to help out with this.
- In the past, students played pool between classes – had a recreational area. Would this be a good idea as a safe space?
- Want to better understand the endowment and how this money can be used to support campus ministry efforts
- Very interested in the possibility of a student study hall at UPC
- If funding is needed for programs, we could ask other Presbyterian churches who have students at UT if they might sponsor a meal or support a program
- A gym space for the students?
- Students need to be able to walk to us - coffee vendor, event space, food, physical activities (yoga, etc.)

CONT. UT STUDENTS & UKIRK PROGRAM:

- A long-time professor at UT said that the campus community is less faith based than it was in the past as there are more people attending from very different backgrounds for which Christianity doesn't fit. It's a very different place – campus.
- Westlake Presbyterian church has a college program with 37 students and a full-time person for this ministry
- Adopt-a-student gave students a connection to a family. Would that be good to do again? Some think this isn't what students want as they already have too many other things on their plates.
- Can we think about transcending our activities and programs? What resources do students need to address their needs? Let's ask them.
- Students are super-stressed – maybe we can be a place of “no questions asked”. A pause in their lives – drink lemonade, enjoy our space. Maybe 20 minutes of quiet in the A/C.
- Hiring Carter was a very concrete thing that can help address the college students. We need to ask what their needs are and meet them in their spaces, not expect them to come to us. What are the core problems of Ukirk we are trying to solve?
- Program ideas for UKIRK: Professors and pitchers? Bring your professor to church?
- Need a UKIRK welcome tent every morning
- Like the idea of a student study area at UPC
- Are students that pass by our church aware of the opportunities to serve at UPC? Need to advertise our opportunities better at the university
- Create opportunities for students to use the building – study hall, computer labs
- Are there spaces and opportunities for students to meet at our church for meetings, tutoring, study groups?
- Students want to be involved in service opportunities – how are letting them know of opportunities at UPC?
- We need to go out and ask college students what they need and figure this out so we will be able to plan for our future
- We should connect college students with mission trips
- Meet with student service at UT and see about needs
- Have focus groups with students
- We have the perfect launching pad to serve the campus
- UKIRK is more than “church”, it is also an avenue for community service
- UKIRK is hard with UT because we are a religious organization and the University is legislated so getting “ins” at UT is difficult

COMMENTS SPECIFIC TO PARKING:

- This is and will remain a problem we need to address (this was stated multiple times)
- Young people don't need/want parking as they use Uber & Lift more these days and have deliveries made that use robot cars. This is the wave of the future. Less cars. But can see UPC's situation as a destination church and a large percentage of people will still drive here for some time to come in our future.
- Electric car charging stations
- 3 years ago, creating one parking space underground was quoted at \$40,000. To create a parking space above - ground was quoted at \$20,000.
- Need to address the issues of parking and crossing SA Street and mobility impairments
- Parking in the garage can be impossible at times to find a spot
- It is hard to get across the street from the garage to our building for some
- Accessibility is an issue

COMMENTS SPECIFIC TO YOUNG ADULTS AND FAMILIES:

- UPC has a problem with connecting with young people/young families
- Could a daycare help with connecting families with our church?
- UPC needs to be more diverse in worship – musically and offer other worship opportunities (like praise dancing that UPC youth have done previously) – things that young people connect/associate with
- Students help draw young people into our church space as they “look like them” and are more relatable than a person 40 years+
- Not one of our entrances into our building or sanctuary looks inviting to children or families – we need to change this – the upper floor is more inviting but could it be better? What directs families to this space from the main entrances?
- Some churches have coffee shops in them with play areas for children so the kids are entertained and parents can socialize
- What about a pancake breakfast to start Sunday school off with – feed the kids – create Bible stories with the food?
- UPC parking garage is a deterrent for families with young children because of stairs, bad elevators, crossing San Antonio Street
- The future of the church is young people, but college students are not going to tithe and will be gone in a few years. The strength is getting young families involved.
- Zoom was not good for families and kids. They tuned out (because the kids couldn’t “tune in”) and then didn’t come back
- We need to figure out what is best for young families if we are to get them to come back to church or join our church
- Consider changing worship time to 10:00 AM so that families are home by noon and can feed their starving kids
- Don’t divide the services, just change the time. We need to look at churches that are doing well with young families – Covenant & Westlake
- A more open and modern church structure could be more appealing to young people
- We need a pastor for young families and make this a priority
- Young men are missing in our church – they don’t necessarily want to come – how can we address this?
- You have to have things for kids to do and an inviting place for them to be and their families. No entry point has this.
- The “grassy areas” or play areas of our church are isolated from the main area of activity (the central courtyard) and there is no connection between these spaces that offers a “flow”
- UPC students who participate in sports programs cannot get to 1:00 PM start times. Could we have worship at 10:00 AM
- Can we do two services?
- Need to attract new members with children. They would then continue to fill our other childhood programs as they age.
- Our building isn’t inviting to families with small children – nothing is interesting until you get to the second-floor classrooms. Let’s ask what they need/want. Maybe ask others why they left.
- The bags for worship are nice
- How many kids, given a choice want to be in worship? With the exception of the children’s sermon, it’s boring for them. Why do they have to be in worship?
- Mother’s Day Out and other childcare options could help our members and the UT professors and the community. It could also provide opportunities for UT students to intern or other job opportunities.
- Why do we have so many givens about our church? What should we keep and what needs to be re-invented – like worship time. VBS is getting smaller – maybe bringing kids to the church and picking them up during rush hour isn’t working any longer.
- Playground for children – young people are the future of our church