



Transformation Journey Skyland United Methodist Church Recommendation 1

Preamble: This report is to document the efforts of Task Force 1 Recommendation 1 created from the document “Transformation Journey-Skyland United Methodist Church --March 29, 31 and April 2, 2022” As that document has been discussed and approved by Skyland United Methodist Church, the history of getting to the Transformation Journey will not be presented here.

Below is the recommendation for the first task

“Action recommended: The pastor with the Nominations and Leadership Committee will nominate a task leadership group of Vision and Alignment who will work with a trained Transformation Journey Guide. They will assess the assets of all kinds at Skyland, and the parish you serve, to gain clarity about the best uses of those assets and align them with the Vision of how God wants Skyland to LOVE, GROW, and SERVE in our current world. Imagine and plan for what it will look like to be a church where people experience LOVE; GROW in spiritual depth and reach new people; and where they can SERVE their church, community, and the world as disciples of Jesus Christ.”

“This Vision and Alignment task group will receive training in Asset Based Community Development; explore new ways to reach new people through Fresh Expressions, Dinner Church, and Both/And Worship. They will consider ways to redesign their governing structure, staffing, and allocation of resources to better align with their Vision and free more people for service and spiritual growth. This clarity around Vision will inform the decisions the church needs to make about their current facilities and any future building projects. The Vision and Alignment Task group will take their recommendations for these areas to the Administrative Board/Council on Ministries for approval and implementation.”

Discussion:

The Transformation Journey Task Force (TJTF) team initially comprised of 10 congregational members, the Pastor, the Administrative Board Chair & the Lay Leader, with the last 3 having input capabilities, but not a vote. The congregational section lost 3 members during the process. (Members included at end are noted at end of this report). While the team was designated in May 2022, the actual process took place from around September 2022 (after Pastor J Tarpley had his introductions to SUMC done) through October 2023.

The team focused on Assets, Missions, and Governance. Discussions on assets centered on people, community, and our facilities. The team concluded that we have significant human assets who want to serve within the church, the community, and the world. We evaluated how and where to use our assets and after many iterations decided that most of our current efforts were productive and supporting of our mission statement of “Love, Grow, Serve. In looking to expand those missions’ efforts, the 2 possible areas that were currently being discussed (Wild Goose Café and Beers & Hymns) could continue under their own effort. In developing the governance model as described below, missions play an important part of that structure.

The Task Force turned their attention to governance, realizing that the current structure was overburdened and complex. Several governance concepts were evaluated, including keeping what we already have. The concept of single board was selected as the process we should implement. After months of discernment and evaluation of other Methodist Churches that implemented that model, “The Guiding Principles of Governance--Skyland United Methodist Church” was developed. Many town hall meetings were held giving all the opportunity to input. Many ideas and comments were fruitfully and joyfully incorporated into the final document. Three key points are imbedded in the document: 1) streamlining the basic governance to a Board of Stewards, 2) the importance of transparency, and 3) distinctive focus by the Board of Stewards on missions. The document directs that Trustees, Staff Parish Relations, Finance & Council on Ministries are incorporated into a single group called the Board of Stewards.

In an effort to align our staff with our mission, the Staff Parish Relations Committee modified the role of the Administrative Assistant to become a part time role. While this was not a major response to the original “area 1” recommendations, it served as a “test” for the kinds of things the church (overall) needs to address in years to come.

Circling back to the topic of “assets and missions,” it is to be noted that working on the ministry action plans for this church has been addressed and will continue to be addressed in months/years to come. This effort will aid ministry leaders in aligning their work with our mission statement to “love, grow, and serve.” This effort will need to be adopted by our new Board of Stewards in the coming year.

With all of the above the TJTF 1 states that its work is done. We hope that SUMC will continue the Transformation Journey process and establish Task Force 2 to work on that recommendation.

Members:

Anne Decarufel, Donna Galloway, Candace Hall, Jack Harrison, Norm Kanaklides, Patty Olbrantz, Cindy Reed

The Administrative Board Chair and the Lay Leader served as Ex-officio members on the Task Force along with the Pastor. Charles Frederick, Sandy Frederick, Rev. Joe Tarpley