

VCM UPDATE

Issue 6 - October 2019



In this issue:

- A Word from Pastor Joy
- Team Updates
- Announcements

A Word from Pastor Joy

"Lord, what do you want to do through me?"

This was our prayer as a congregation throughout 2014, as we were discerning God's direction with the sanctuary and renovation possibilities. Our intentional discernment and prayer allowed God to work through us in significant ways.

Soon after completing the sanctuary renovation in November 2015, we began to ask anew, *"Lord, what do you want to do through me/us?"* We knew that renovating the sanctuary was not the culmination of God's work in us. It was a step to a greater purpose – to reach more people with the life-affirming love of God, to welcome and shepherd people into a deeper relationship with God in Christ.

We fumbled a bit, and finally discerned that God was opening doors for us through the Vital Church Initiative. The Phase One team spent a year in reading, group learning and reflection. We then plunged into Phase Two: a year of self-study leading up to a consultation team visit and "prescriptions." We affirmed those recommendations as our ministry plan in May 2018, with a resounding majority of support from our congregation. And we began implementing those plans.

More teams were created, more voices joined in the conversations...questions were asked, discussions ensued, some things changed, more still to come.... There has been clarity and confusion, times we're easily on the same page and times we are at polar-opposite places; we have experienced successes and failures and new possibilities. In all of it, we keep holding to the question, *"Lord, what do you want to do through me/through us?"*

At this point, Holy Spirit-inspired wisdom is encouraging us to slow down...not to stop, but simply slow down. Our ministry plan challenges us to some deep change that cannot happen if we simply race through to check boxes and meet calendar deadlines. Important change never happens simply because we wish it to. We need more time to talk, pray, discuss, even wrestle – with God and each other, as we find our way forward. Changes in our world and uncertainties in our denomination further challenge us. Who is God calling us to be? What witness are we called to make?

I cannot tell you exactly what form this will take. I do invite you to be involved. You are important in the life of this church. Your voice and perspective matter. God has given you insight that will make a difference.

Recently, church consultant Sarai Rice reflected on the need for congregations to push the pause button periodically. She wrote,

"As congregations, we become too focused on the day-to-day and the need to survive, as if we've been mesmerized by our responsibilities and cannot look away. Sometimes we need to have the institutional audacity to take three deep breaths and come to a full stop...for when we are completely wound up about something and we pause, our natural intelligence clicks in and we have a sense of the right thing to do. When Christians pause, we leave room for the Holy Spirit to work and for ourselves to notice."

These words make sense to me and serve as encouragement and inspiration as we continue the journey....for the glory of God and the lifting up of God's people.

Sincerely, Christ's and yours, *Pastor Joy*

Chelsea First United Methodist Church

128 Park St, Chelsea MI 48118 • (734) 475-8119 • chelseaumc.org

First Impressions Team

The Lobby Re-configuration and Welcome Center committee. Teresa Steklac and her committee members, Deb Drow, Lynne Gould and Janet Alford, made several recommendations for the lobby updates, including adding an electric sign board for announcements, updating some lighting, and de-cluttering some of the furniture. They have replaced and reupholstered some of the furniture, painted walls, and updated the coat rack hallway. Another VCM Committee, the Communications Team, will be leading the work of putting up the electronic sign (where the white boards currently are,) updating the literature that is made available to all of our members, and creating new literature to provide to new church visitors. This team has truly enhanced the space and created a more welcoming environment in the lobby area.

The CFUMC Ambassadors. One area the FIT is still working on fine-tuning is the new church Ambassador program. This program has 2 phases:

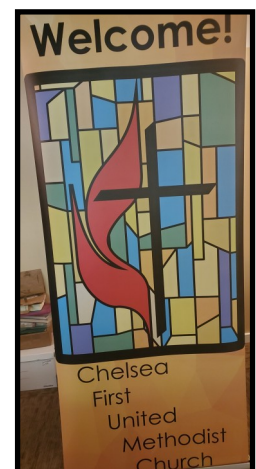
Phase 1 involves church members serving as Ambassadors by reaching out to first-time visitors (and others) during the Sunday morning coffee hour. Ambassadors will wear an AMBASSADOR name tag and will circulate around during the Sunday morning Coffee Hour, conversing and making connections. Our committee nominated several people to serve in this capacity and over 25 of our church members have answered the call! You should see our new Ambassadors serving during coffee hour.

If you are interested in serving as a Sunday morning Ambassador, please e-mail Julie Deppner at jdeppner@gmail.com.



Phase 2 is still in progress. Our vision is to have the church AMBASSADORS reach out to first-time visitors via text, e-mail, phone, and in-person visits to welcome them to our church and help make connections to our church family. As well as provide them with a small welcome gift on behalf of our church. The church staff will be implementing new software to track and identify first time visitors. This will help us create an efficient system for our Ambassadors to reach out to our guests.

Exterior/Interior Signage Committee. Emily Kuo from the FIT, along with Sherri Plank, Dave Gilbert and Tim Sweeny, have done a great job implementing new church signage, both inside and outside. This new signage includes: vinyl lettering on the main entrance doors to provide clear direction on where to enter the church, lettering on the Bell Tower Doors, to direct church goers to the main entrance, sandwich board signs with interchangeable inserts, to provide clear direction about available parking on Sunday mornings, a new, updated directional map in the main lobby, and other signs on doorways and hallways to provide clarification on where to drop off and pick up children, as well as to provide consistent terminology, using room numbers instead of “names” of rooms. FIT also purchased a “Welcome” retractable banner, which will be used to clearly communicate to first time visitors the location of the Welcome Center when it is constructed. As you can image, this work took much coordination and communication!



Worship Design Team

1. WDT hosted a site visit by consultant Cathy Townley from [Townley Coaching - Changing Lives Through Worship](#). Cathy will be providing recommendations for our team, and possibly other teams such as First Impressions, Communication and Hospitality, in a few weeks.
2. WDT is in the process of designing a new worship series that runs for 4 weeks, starting on Sunday, October 27. This includes selecting music, incorporating drama & video, prayers & readings in the service.

Communications Team

We need photographers! As we continue to enhance our website to tell the stories of who we are and what we believe, we need to expand our photography gallery – a picture tells a thousand words, right? We'd like to show smiling faces in and out of our church to help our community see our relationships and the joy of learning more about how to be like Jesus. Pictures can be taken with a cell phone or a digital camera.

Submit your pictures via email: media@chelseaumc.org. Provide names for everyone in the picture whenever possible.



Ad Council Town Hall Meeting & Potluck

November 17, 5-7 pm

Please bring something to share (yes, store-bought is A-OK!). Also bring sufficient plates, flatware, beverage holders for your household. The church will provide cold and hot beverages.

After we eat, the town hall will begin with an overall update regarding our vital church ministry plan. Representatives of the Worship Design Team will then present some of the insights generated by the recent visit of worship consultant Cathy Townley. They will also lead discussion about Cathy's consultation report.

Please contact Michelle King - mking@chelseaumc.org
or the church office 475-8119 by Wednesday, November 13
if you will need childcare during the meeting.

As multiple VCM Teams have completed their tasks or are re-organizing into next phases, future VCM Team updates will be incorporated into our new weekly digital Path Finder newsletter. If you are not yet receiving the Path Finder via e-mail, please contact the office 475-8119 or media@chelseaumc.org to be added to the mailing list.

Reminder: all church program & event information can be found on the website: www.chelseaumc.org

For more CFUMC VCM Resources, and to access our full VCI Consultation Report, please be sure to visit the website:

<https://bit.ly/2My29DI>