

AINSWORTH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SUMMARY FEEDBACK TO THE JUBILEE TEAM

FOCUS AREA: BUILDING/PROPERTY USE

1. What we are doing well:

- Use of building to host organizations & groups, especially HIV Day Center
- Property well kept

2. Areas for improvement:

- More maintenance needed
- Earthquake resistance work
- ADA regulations compliance
- Addition of ceiling fans in sanctuary
- Built in screen in sanctuary
- Sound and lighting upgrade (sound controls upstairs)
- Remodel Sunday School area to provide individual classrooms (+sound abatement)
- Kitchen (downstairs) remodel
- Storage needed

3. Other suggestions

Use of Burnham House:

- low income housing
- Community & church use

- Homeless Shelter
- Providing Sanctuary
- Tear down & build something new
- Continue use for rental property
- Sell property for funds

Use of Church Building:

- Offer free meeting space
- Get rid of pews have chairs instead

Property Development:

- Solar Panels
- Build granny flat or other for providing:
 - sanctuary
 - Warming shelter
- Teen Center space
- Family Resource Center
- Shed replaced

Grounds:

- Community garden
- Rebuild play structure
- Earth-friendly lawn care

FOCUS AREA: WORSHIP

1. What we are doing well:

- Worship service
- Varied Communion styles
- Variety of worship experience
- Music
 - Praise music
 - Piano Music (Dan)
 - Great music talent
 - Organ music
- Spiritual & Theological grounding
- Sermons
 - Sermons from other voices
- Prayer concerns raised
- Testimonies during sermon
- Ushers
- Space
- Greeting/welcome
- Traditions
 - Blend of rituals & casual
- Rev. Cecil
- Celebration
- Announcements

2. Areas for improvement:

- Children and Youth in Worship
 - Sharing the Story takes too long, not engaging children enough
 - More youth involvement
 - More involvement and attention to children's needs, esp. on 1st Sunday
- Service Structure

- Service is too long
 - Announcements- too long
 - Start service on time
 - Start announcements before service
 - More interactive worship
 - Use of mic by others for prayer concerns (back to once a month)
 - More spiritually-focused worship
 - More praise & worship music,
 - More diverse music
 - Less music
 - Sermons from more voices
 - Music sometimes goes too long
 - More preaching from Rev. Cecil
 - Balance between spiritual & politics
 - Not liking preacher & music director commenting on response of congregation –ie. are you awake? Come on Church. More enthusiasm..
 - Continue to find reasons for celebration in worship
- More consistent choir members.
 - More focus on God

3. Other suggestions

Homebound Worship:

- Recordings of sermons available for homebound folks
- Worship bulletins sent to homebound or missing members

Other:

- Provide opportunities for Dan to play on Sunday nights or other times

FOCUS AREA: MEMBERSHIP

1. What we are doing well:

- Friendly ushers
- Foundational members
- Membership class
- Inviting to fellowship

2. Areas for improvement:

- Coffee time – more intentional
- Find out why people are leaving
- People cannot bring their authentic selves
- Only events are fundraisers
- Community inside and not outside of the church
- More events
- Visitors sheets in the pews
- Cliquish – mini socialization groups
- Educational – Sunday and commissions
- Norma should not be the only person welcoming members to everything AUCC
- Adds in the ethnic papers
- Transparency with behind the scenes
- Wear name tags, visitor name tags

3. Other suggestions

Membership Goals:

- 350 – 450 regular attendees
- Add 10 regular attendees yearly
- Average retention 90%
- 50% under 35
- 50% children under 18

Membership Snapshot:

- People of Color (POC)
- Young people (18 – 35 and under 35)
- Students – Concordia
- Young families with small children
- Immigrants and refugees
- Young males
- High School Students

- Ushers
- Diversity

Actions We Can Take:

- During Service
 - Liturgist welcome visitors
 - Welcoming responsibility all congregants
 - Bring back the membership pads
 - Name tags - Temp for visitors
 - Intros
- Website
 - Online directory
 - Link to “how to join” our church
- Membership Support
 - A membership council
 - Mentor matching
 - Follow up check ins, especially with members who are not at church
 - Member’s class
 - Take photos for directory
- New Member Celebration/Introduction
 - Fellowship receptions with new members
 - Greeting line Bio on each new member
 - Special day to invite friends
- Church Life Structure
 - Events
 - Fun activities
 - Small church gatherings (regional)
 - Small group structure
 - Facebook live Post service usher welcoming visitors to fellowship
- Membership Outreach
 - Branding ourselves
 - Publicize our history
 - Recruiting
- Other
 - Listening among ourselves
 - Inclusive

FOCUS AREA: COMMUNICATION

1. What we are doing well:

- Daily devotional on Facebook page is good
- The timely emails as reminders, updates and news are greatly appreciated. The periodic video presentations are an added bonus.
- E-mails, bulletin inserts, council updates
- Pastor Lynne communicates well via email prayer requests.
- The church website conveys our values to outsiders.
- Directory is super great
- Bulletin inserts
- Council updates
- They always seem to be at least one step ahead of me in the technology area

2. Areas for improvement:

- Pull down screen in the sanctuary
- Use communications that young people are receptive to
- Website needs to be updated more frequently
- Make AUCC's rules, culture, and doings easier to understand, especially for visitors and new members
- Our Facebook and website
- Share the burden – more than Pastor Lynne sharing
- Pastor Lynne communicates well via email prayer requests.
- Master Calendar should be digitized. Digital access available in church and through web.

- Simultaneous translation service- earphones as needed promoted
- Would like more social media presence for youth group
- E-mail per week for standard news. More for things like deaths. Use Facebook for prays in the week.

3. Other suggestions

Objectives:

- Community and Tech team doing church Facebook posts
- Commission is in charge of internal communication
- Media target – appeal to 25 year olds
- Forms such as scholarship applications should be accessible on the website.
- Facebook page and website that are well designed and kept up to date

Actions We Can Take:

- Community task force
- Weekly e – letter only
- Private place on the web – password control
- Virtual drive space (Google Drive)
- Computer monitor in sanctuary
- Online methods for volunteers – fellowship and flowers
- Calendar on the web
- Outdoor signage
- Create a communication team/Commission
- More printed info for various places of business i.e. Kennedy School

FOCUS AREA: JUSTICE

1. What we are doing well:

- Many people in the church work on justice issues and there are many interests
- Focus on justice issues during service and sermons
- Racial diversity
- Stewards of our property (recycle, energy efficient lighting, green chemicals etc.)
- Do fairly well informing people of current events and current issues.
- Book studies, guest speakers
- Participation in marches, donation drives
- Ricky's participation in worship services with smudging, drumming in native dress.
- AUCC shows up in a variety of ways (\$, people, sign petitions, discuss challenging topics).
- Connection with Interfaith Power and Light
- Employing people of color
- Pastor Lynne leads in multicultural greetings, prayers, and sermons
- Cohort members of IMIrJ, leadership training
- Member of Albina Ministerial Alliance and interfaith alliances
- Partnerships and friendships with Muslims

2. Areas for improvement:

- Concern that Justice Commission is not driving force of the justice work being done
- Justice commission seems to lack focus and just post numerous opportunities for people to get involved
- Too many topics with a wide variety of focuses
- Have more people empowered to be present in local organizations- Pastor Lynne does an excellent job of this, but more of us should share that role as the body of the church
- Solar panels on our new roof
- Need to decrease pesticides and other poisons.
- Provide programs to teach people how to have courageous conversations with people who have different opinions from us- I want people to start

realizing there are liberal Christians who welcome LGBT, immigrants, all races and abilities

- Have a greater focus on each issue, perhaps each month we look into an issue in depth
- Environmental - use sustainable, organic gardening practices for lawn and garden maintenance, eliminate the use of non-organic pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers
- Environmental- Renew connection to Interfaith Power and Light; pay for renewable energy use with Pacific Power
- Environmental- use dishes and utensils for fellowship hour and wash
- Environmental- create composting system
- Environmental- create permaculture demonstration garden
- Do more to promote environmental justice
- Continue growing our work on racial justice
- More awareness on how to get involved with immigrant issues
- Provide financial assistance to another church that serves as a sanctuary
- AUCC needs to think globally, but act locally- Efforts should be focused on what we can concretely do to make a difference within Portland Metro
- More purposeful church activities in justice actions
- Develop a text messaging system to alert people of last-minute justice opportunities where they can join other church members
- We aren't currently walking our talk on justice as much as we should
- Developing a service project in which all the church can engage would be a wonderful opportunity
- Racial justice must be the lens through which all other injustices are understood.
- More support for immigrants who are afraid to go to work or school
- A warming shelter in the winter would be important

- More reading groups, being bolder- writing and contacting elected officials on AUCC's behalf, studying how Jesus was
- Study and action to face & heal gentrification (ethnic cleansing) & out of control rental/housing profiteering
- Be a mega-church for social action
- Foster care children advocate
- Better understanding and awareness of role as sanctuary church
- Balance between politics and spirituality
- Reaching out to larger community regarding human rights issues how and what our church does promote
- Concern that most new people joining the church are white
- Get help understanding the differences between moral/ethical justice and legal justice (help from larger church)
- Provide space for pro bono lawyers to provide support to undocumented and other POC in criminal justice system
- More perspectives from POC on leadership, not just the same people time and again
- Continue or do second round of book group on race in church. Drew Hart, Trouble I've Seen.
- More songs in other languages
- More partnership with Muslims. Host dinners where we host people of other faiths. Attend cultural or interfaith events together.
- Partner with diverse high schools- have their choir come and sing and perform spoken word, etc.
- Work against gun violence and police violence
- Prison work- engage with those in prison or transitioning out
- Host support group for POC who feel beaten down and defeated (Lisa Gates would like to facilitate)

- Support petition to include racism in CDC definition of community health crisis (could have Leslie Gregory come speak to us about it; Lisa Gates has contact)
- Continue conversations of how we can support the sanctuary movement. IF we don't house, how do we support undocumented people, sanctuary churches or the movement in general. Cook meals, provide accompaniment, be connected. Train ourselves on rights; stay updated on current events; learn about the emotional impact of accompanying.

3. Other suggestions

- There are multiple Justice related causes the church is involved with. The involvement in Justice is seen as a positive overall, but there is concern about too many causes and too little focus for each.
- Jubilee team recommends having Communications Team create a Justice portion of website to post information about different issues (i.e. environment, racial justice, economic, LGBTQ) and use Facebook / email blast for announcements.
- Jubilee Team notes there are three ways to get involved: education, public action (showing up), public policy change (advocacy). Recommend having task forces that focus on passions that people have.
- Jubilee Team recommends that Justice work be incorporated across all Teams, with the Community Ministries Team service as a coordinating body for justice activities (work with Faith Formation for education opportunities; organize action and advocacy on specific topics)

Types of Justice Highlighted in Results:

- Racial
- Immigrant
- Environmental
- Social

FOCUS AREA: LEADERSHIP

1. What we are doing well:

- Many clear leaders, serving and honored in many ways
- Diversity
- Inclusive structure
- Traci is a very organized moderator
- Dedicated and inclusive leaders

2. Areas for improvement:

- Use annual time and talent card pledges
- Restructure and rename commissions
- Separate fundraising commission
- Separate communications commission
- Many people do not know the roles or understand the purpose of the various commissions
- Have 1 sentence mission statements for each commission
- Conflicts of interest in leadership
- Leadership seems cliquish
- Burnout concerns
- Shorter terms- 1 year commitment for commissions
- More updates/reports from commissions to the congregation more frequently
- Need to be more engaging
- 20% continue to do 80% of the work (or maybe 30%, 70%)

- Find more leaders for various roles within the church
- Same people seem to be leaders over and over
- Financial leadership- books are not adding up and we need an audit
- "This is how we've always done things" attitude of leadership

3. Other suggestions

- Church Council elected entirely by the congregation for their skills and abilities with each council member serving as a liaison to one of the commissions
- Two year council terms
- Restructure the commissions to support people following their passions
- Clearly defined roles for the commissions/teams to allow clear understanding, possibly having a one sentence mission statement for each team
- Teams to have one-year action plans that they submit to council and congregation regarding how often they meet and goals for the year
- No limits on how many people can be on a commission
- One year pledge/commitment to the team
- Include Justice explicitly within the bylaws (similar to what was done with racial justice)
- Consider using more of a community organizing approach to keep enhancing our share leadership model

FOCUS AREA: FAITH FORMATION

1. What we are doing well:

- Sunday School/Children's Ministry:
 - Programs Offered
 - Dedicated teachers who connect well with the children
 - Children's sermon time
 - High quality Sunday School curriculum
 - Great Christmas Pageant leaders
- Youth Group
 - Kaylie's leadership
- Adult Education
 - Lenten and Advent series: well put together
 - Guest speakers
 - Book groups

2. Areas for improvement:

- Sunday School/Children's Ministry:
 - More Sunday School teachers
 - Communication with the congregation about what the kids are learning
 - Critique the curriculum we are using
 - Have a Sunday School focused worship service
- Youth Group

- More active programming and education
- Have a paid youth minister
- Combine our youth group with other youth groups
- Create a job/role for the youth to play in the church
- More participants in the middle school Sunday School class

• Adult Education

- More guest speakers
- Justice focus
- More book groups
- Keep trying different formats
- More options of days/times
- Adult Sunday School or formal faith formation is needed
- Classes on Living the Questions; Biblical Study; meditation; early Christians; liberation theology
- Book studies and discussions after church: Interracial healing

3. Other suggestions

- Regional small church gatherings based on where we live
- Parent support group for different aged kids
- More book/Bible studies

FOCUS AREA: SERVICE

1. What we are doing well:

- Northeast Emergency Food Program
- Special UCC offerings
- Providing space for gatherings
- Support for local schools

2. Areas for improvement:

- Unsure what we are doing with service commission; more communication with congregation needed
- Providing scholarships to organizations doesn't seem like service
- Create online system to swap donated goods, meals, labor

- Each year, organize periodic group service projects
- Congregation should increase Service budget
- Service projects for youth and young adults based on their interest
- Develop partnership with school with low socio-economic status to support them
- Soup kitchen

3. Other suggestions

- More information to the congregation about what Service does, how money is used
- Have congregation involvement in periodic group service projects

FOCUS AREA: MINISTRY

1. What we are doing well:

- Young Adults:
 - Quarterly Young Adult group meets
 - Young adults are very involved-serve on commissions, are Sunday School teachers
 - Music and sense of community are a draw
- Mental Health Ministry
- Care Team
- Aging Well Group
- Prayer Team
- Health Ministries
- Healing and taking care of the poor

2. Areas for improvement:

- Young Adults- recruitment and retention
- Invite young adults to have a more active role in worship
- Invite young adults to join commissions
- Make services accessible to young people
- Connect more with justice related organizations- Black Lives Matter; Don't Shoot PDX; EMO, etc.
- Mental Health Ministry:
 - Provide announcements/invitations during worship for Mental Health Ministry meetings
 - How to get the Care Team involved for Mental Health Ministry

- Find a way to present that is more inclusive for Mental Health Ministry
- Discuss the possibility of one to one contact

- Copies of Sunday bulletins sent out or dropped off to shut-ins, missing members
- Movie night
- Parent support group for different aged kids
- Commission to keep members aware of what is happening with other members
- Small church gatherings based on where we live
- Regularly scheduled cultural, interfaith events/activities (studies, meals, services)

3. Other suggestions

- Recruitment and retention of young adults
 - Be sensitive to how many have been hurt by churches
 - Have events outside of church; game night, eat out, etc.
 - Outreach to Concordia
 - Create a formal way to keep in touch with high schoolers who transition to college
 - Adult mentors for Young Adults
- Open the church to community music events