

Group Responses January 20, 2010

This document contains the instructions for and responses from the four small groups which worked on Wednesday night, January 20. This document is a companion to the handout document, which provides overall instructions regarding the visioning activities conducted on January 20. In each of the following four sections are the instructions to the small group and the group's responses. These documents are also found online. Instructions will soon be provided to those NV community members who desire to respond to these activities online. Please contact Scot Headley at sheadley@georgefox.edu for further information.

Prayer and Discernment Group

While all groups and all individuals are reminded to set aside personal agendas, this group in particular will be asked to focus on praying and listening to God. We expect that you will sit in the silence, seek direction, pray and be faithful to speak when led. We ask that you record the messages and share those with the larger group. **There is no hurry or need to conclude discernment in one session. Allow space and time for leadings.**

As you meet, try and view this work as a process of asking, of waiting, of listening and responding. Expect God to speak. Don't debate one another, yet be faithful to ask and speak what you hear.

Ways to think about asking questions:

- Questions that you could not possibly anticipate the answer to it.
- Questions aimed at helping yourself and others focus rather than at satisfying your curiosity.
- Questions that are brief and to the point rather than adding to them with background considerations and rationale.
- Questions that go to the person as well as the problem—for example, questions about feelings as well as about facts.

Consider the following questions generated by the Administrative Committee and discernment group

- Where have we seen God working at NVFC and is that the direction we should be moving in?
- Do we want a unified vision? Or do we like celebrating the variety of missions we engage in?

- How are we treating what has gone before? How does what has gone before inform the way we go forward?
- Who do we want to be?
- What are our ministry focuses?

Thoughts shared

1. God is a powerful place to start...as apposed to turning to God as a last resort. Too many times we can try to figure out what to do without seeking God's direction first.

2. It is difficult to tell where God is pointing when our perspective is out of whack. One person was reminiscing about how, when younger, problems seemed much bigger than they are in hindsight.

3. Someone wondered how much extra stress has been added to the planning process because of the stress of the budgeting process. Yet perhaps it would be much easier to make budgeting decisions after we discover who we are, what we want to be, and where we are going. When our values are clear, our decisions are easier.

Examining NVFC Mission

Examine the NV Mission (adopted in 2004) with the picture of NV that emerged from the Saturday, January 9, 2010 meeting. The Mission statement arose from a long and deliberate process of discernment. How does the work done on 1/9/10 align with or differ from the NVFC Mission? We ask that you record the discussion and share with the larger group. **It is not necessary that this entire task is done in one session. Thoroughly address what you believe to be the priorities.**

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Where applicable, consider the following and record:

- a) Questions and requests for additional information.
- b) Issues identified that need to be resolved.
- c) Key themes of the discussion and specific points.
- d) Resources needed or invested.
- e) Specific involvement of people either currently or in the future.
- f) Other points and concerns you deem to be important.

Consider the following questions generated by the Administrative Committee and discernment group

- Where have we seen God working at NVFC and is that the direction we should be moving in?
- Are the 6 “ministry goals” derived on the Saturday visioning session all worthy of being pursued? Based on what you know of NVFC and the experience of participating in the Saturday visioning session, how would you rank-order (i.e. prioritize) the ministry objectives?
- Has the list of the 6 ministry objectives changed since the Saturday visioning session?
- Is the picture of “the future of North Valley” more accurate than the list of 6 ministry goals?
- How are the ministry goals developed on Saturday different from the NVFC mission statement that was developed several years ago?
- Are the 6 Saturday targets different from what we’ve been in the past or is this just stuff we want to add on to what we already had?
- How are we treating what has gone before? How does what has gone before inform the way we go forward?

Responses:

We started by comparing the 2004 Mission Statement and the Visioning Saturday notes.

- “Loving environment regardless of who you are” (Mission 1) is similar to “diversity” in vision notes, but goal is better...beyond diversity being a goal, we want loving environment for diverse people to be the goal.
- “Intimate experience of Jesus” (Mission 2) connects with our discussion during visioning day of the need to have the Bible integrated and active in our lives
- “Many opportunities to lead” (Vision) is similar language to “community of Ministers” and “inviting gifts and talents” (Mission 3)
- “Creating loving environment” (M1) also speaks to “deep care and support” of vision notes

- Willingness to be “pushed beyond our comfort zone” language in vision parallels “peacemaking, justice, reconciliation” (M4)
- “Nurture and equip” (M2) fits with “teaching children” and “ministering now” of vision.
- “Nurture and equip” (M2) also fits with “bucket filling” concerns of vision day
- We noticed that in the Mission Statement, #'s 4 and 5 really are parallel... justice and reconciliation / meeting needs in newberg and world
- “Meeting practical/spiritual needs of Newberg” (M5) parallels vision’s wording of reaching a hand out to our community”
- Need for biblically based teaching in vision fits with M5 . offering spiritual support to community.

We felt the brainstorming we did on the visioning day was completely compatible with the indepth work that created the Mission Statement in 2004. We feel we still have the same hopes and leadings as a community.

Differences we noted in the two:

- Mission statement is very focused on “following Jesus faithfully.” This implies biblical interaction and foundation, but is not explicitly stated. Perhaps this is something we are freshly aware of, where it was merely assumed before.
- “New faces” is implied in Mission but is not stated as a “goal.” Mission Statement makes “loving environment” the goal...which would hopefully result in new faces.
- Specific “relationship with another culture” of vision brainstorming unpacks “loving environment” in a concrete way... a concrete example.

We felt the visioning day brainstorming tended to emphasize the “fruit” of what we hoped the larger attitudes of the Mission Statement would produce.

We looked at the 6 bullet points that came out as possible initial steps for 2010:

- They feel more like brainstorming than statements that have the same weight as the Mission Statement.
- “Awareness” (2) and “gifts and talents” (3) point to our Mission concern of being a “community of ministers”
- “clearer biblical teaching/ deeper discipling” (3) fits with the *introduction* to our Mission Statement and is foundational to our reaching out, and being a loving community.
- These two points seems to reemphasize our hunger for Mission #2: “nurturing and equipping”
- #4 could be two different points: A) matching money and resources, B) releasing our staff.
- “Releasing staff” was not covered at all in the Mission statement. Perhaps it is a fresh concern, coming out of our current experience. We should pay attention to what is behind that phrase.

We had an opening into a new conversation about what it means to “release” ministers.

- Are we releasing them to pursue *their* call or the *meeting’s* call?
- Sometimes minister’s calls and meeting’s calls diverge over time. Then what?
- Do we bury a minister’s call in our attempts to maintain “programming”?
- Do we deplete their energy in our attempts to maintain the programming? (even when their calls are parallel to the meeting’s call... are we all distracted from the call by programming?)
 - How do we evaluate our programming to see if it detracts from or expresses our call TODAY?
 - How do we use non-staff resources to run programming we deem important but which we don’t want to distract the staff from what only they can do?
 - How do we lay programs down that no longer express our sense of call?

Generally:

- *The vision brainstorming is compatible with the Mission Statement... therefore the Mission Statement seems to still be expressing our desires.*
- *Some issues that were implied in the Mission Statement became explicit in the vision discussion, most likely signifying that they are not being accomplished to our satisfaction. Perhaps this focus on specific fruit (in the visioning brainstorming) implies that we do not see them occurring as naturally as we thought they would, even though the foundation for them is laid in the Mission Statement.*
 - *“new faces”*
 - *“biblical foundation”*
 - *“released ministers”*
 - *“outreach to community”*
 - *“relationships with another culture.”*

We noted there was no wording or encouragement to actually “invite” people to worship or to fellowship in God. We admonish ourselves to be welcoming and loving if they show up, but not to reach out to them in appropriate ways to bring them into that loving environment. “If they show up, we promise to be nice.”

Systematic Naming and Describing

Describe the current NVFC program, activities, and ministries. What are we doing as a community and as individuals and groups within the community? How do we allocate our resources, our attention, and our time as NVFC? We ask that you record the messages and share those with the larger group. Consider the rolls and functions of paid staff and volunteers as well. Define program in as broad a way as possible. We ask that you record the discussion and share with the larger group. **It is not necessary that this entire task is done in one session. Thoroughly address what you believe to be the priorities.**

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Consider the following questions generated by the Administrative Committee and discernment group

- Where have we seen God working at NVFC and is that the direction we should be moving in?
- It is difficult and time consuming to jettison what we've done before and start anew. It is difficult to turn away from that. How can we communicate and bring along a group of people have expectations based upon past experiences of ministry?
- How can we manage the prospective losses associated with changes in our ministry, if indeed there are any?

- Compare a list of programs we have now and examine how the Saturday objectives or the big picture view of NV suggests how those programs should change.
- Should the conversation include a list of current programs and proposed changes to programs and ask people to approve of the changes?
- How will we manage changes and the losses that might be associated with them?
- Do we want a unified vision? Or do we like celebrating the variety of missions we engage in?

Responses:

Notes of 1/20/2010

(Participants: Bill Rourke, Keith Baker, Beth Woolsey, Heidi Pender, Adina McConaughy, Lynn Holt)

Corporate Ministries

Partner Ministries

Love INC

Faith in Action

Clothes Closet

Habitat for Humanity

Fish

Senior Meals

CPC

Right Sharing of World's Resources

Eagles Wings

Christian Peacemaker Teams

Relationship to be explored

Veritas Christian School

Chehalem Park and Recreation District

Twin Rocks Camp – Boards

Middle School Camp Director

GAGA

Yearly Meeting Boards

Other

Community Garden - Sustainable Food Co-op

Eldering: Different age groups, attendance, exit interviews, retreat, membership classes

Stewarding

Gifts and Leading: nominating

Education: Sunday School, children's church, Kids Alive, MS HS Movie Night, Tilikum, Twin Rocks, Adult SS and Wednesday night, Small groups, GFU student scholarships

Mentoring: Samuel School, youth, training

Social Concerns: CPT, Peace Testimony, ?Adoption, Social Issues such as immigration and torture minute, Homeless bags, Christmas gifts, Samaritan's Purse, peace education, peace trail

Missions: keep in contact with domestic and foreign missionaries (email, cards, letters, care packages, prayer), facilitate home visits, financial support, YCEW, GAGA, individual short term missions

Fellowship: connections, hospitality, baby showers, memorial dinners, respite meals, potlucks, BBQs

Staff (Corporate): counseling-premarital, pastoral care-hospitalizations, funeral, grief, weddings, planning, worship, preaching, teaching, special events, attend committee meetings, help people feel connected, Administrative functions- website, communication, information development, networking, inviting into ministry, coordinating volunteers

Use of facilities: house, trail, gym, building usage, Boy Scouts, CYFS, Second Street

Individual Ministries needy neighbor kids, vocations- teachers, business people, parents, professors; lots of individuals: survey of inventory of personnel ministries, what is missing is all the others that individuals are involved with

Passion- Food Co-op

Be more aware of individual ministries, ministry areas outside of the church: an outside ministry focus (New Orleans group cited as example)

How can it be presented, named, honored, recognized? Recording of gifts/ministries: pulling together this information. How to allocate our time, percentage of our time in church, partner and ministries?

What about staff time, what are they doing, in regard to these responsibilities?

How much energy do we put into a _____ ministry? Prioritizing, how many are involved in ministry?

When are folks coordinating for outside groups

Difference of opinion about relationship with some ministries: explore the relationship between NV and Veritas, between NV and Habitat, between NV and CPC, clarify, are these business connections or ministry connections?

What level of involvement must we have in order to call it a partner ministry, a business ministry?

Exploring Resource Allocation

Realizing that we have finite financial resources as a community, how do we prioritize, and what process do we use for determining budget? We ask that you record the messages and share those with the larger group. **It is not necessary that this entire task is done in one session. Thoroughly address what you believe to be the priorities.**

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Consider the following questions generated by the Administrative Committee and discernment group

- How is the vision process related to/ different from the budget process? How will we allocate our resources to meet these goals (who we want to be)?
- Is it clear that the vision process may result in a change in staff?
- Is the goal of this process to “manage a budget” or is it to “clarify who we are and then build a budget from that?”
- If required, how can we communicate and bring people who have expectations based upon past experiences of ministry? How can we deal with the prospective losses associated with changes in our ministry?
- Are we looking to prioritize our vision statement for the next two years, for the purpose of budgeting?
- How is the past influencing our inability to envision change in staffing and budget?

Responses

Notes of 1/20/2010

Visioning process is clouded by the staff we love.

Would like to separate emotion we feel for staff versus what the church wants.

Bigger problem has been exposed by the budget.

Church is family, when money is tight, you get rid of extras, not people.

Our church is rich in kids. They are our heart. You can't cut people who work with them.

There are a lot of programs people are passionate about. How can we do things cheaper?

Staff reorganization is for the greater good. Need to match staff with the passion of the church.

Need to prioritize programs: some paid, some volunteer.

Is it either paid staff and community outreach or not?

Resource: MMA book: Developing Church Budget that reflects your Priorities

Do we have staff that are looking in another direction?

Are we trying to solve a short or long term problem?

Are people willing to step in as volunteers for less staff?

Cutting programs is too emotional. Cutting staff is too emotional. How do we have these conversations?

Many people feel strongly and it is hard to think outside of the box.

In regards to working with volunteers, we need an administrator.

Cutting programs equals cutting staff.

What environment do we need to have in order to have a creative discussion? We aren't in that place.

Can we get beyond talking about money? What about our spiritual goals?

Find the gap, fill them.

Need to be sure that everyone is spiritually fed.