

RESHAPE “REVEAL” EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction—Why ReShape?

Pre-2020 Conditions

Attendance in Worship dropping

Church Family Aging

Financial Constraints on our ministries

Our Major VUCA Events

VUCA Events – Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity

Two events are truly VUCA events:

- Pandemic caused by Covid 19 virus and mutations
- EF-3 Tornado in April 2020

Additional Disruptions

Internal Changes

- New staffing because of retirements, hiring
- Paying off the remainder of our church mortgage in February 2021

External Changes

- Growing socio-economic and racial divides in America
- Polarization of America’s major political parties
- What is a meaningful, Christ-based response that address injustice while helping to promote healing and unity?

Denominational Influences – General conference and division in the United Methodist Church

The Response – ReShape

A process for gathering and structuring our thoughts

Provide a framework for growth – not fall back into “church as usual”

Seeking out God and His will for our church

What Has our Experience with VUCA Events taught us about Pathways Forward?

We acknowledged that there are things in our faith that do NOT change

God will always be there; God does not change

While we may not understand, God is working all things out for good

We are called to be examples of Christian love in all circumstances

We are called to seek God’s will

Our Mission Mantra – “Be and Make Disciples of Jesus Christ” – generally accepted as capturing our greatest desires for St. Mark and what God is calling our church to do

By debriefing our experience with VUCA events, we came to understand better:

How important our church and family connections really are when they are denied

While our hurts were personal, we could see our experience in others’ stories

The tornado gave us a unifying focus

We are not alone – we have God and each other

HOPE IS EVERYTHING

How do we see ourselves as a church?

Adaptable

Responsive to needs when we see them

Aging as a church family

A church that offers true connection

A church that offers opportunities to grow in faith

What are we good at today that we want to continue?

Social opportunities for older people (Elderberries)

Sunday School for all ages

Ministry opportunities based on interest and needs

Music that is inspiring

We believe we are welcoming to those who come through the doors

Our outreach ministries do show other people God's love

There is a place for two styles of live worship

Providing opportunities for Spiritual Development

What could we do more of and/or be better at?

Caring for each other

Caring in the community

Spiritual Growth opportunities

Inviting people and promoting church in the community"

More effective communication

Livestreaming worship – quality of the product and opportunities to use it

Contemporary worship

The Main Message -- We Are Looking For Connection

With our God – Worship, Disciple Development, Bible Study

With Each other – Disciple Care, Small Groups based on interest

With our community – Outreach

Intergenerational Opportunities

Possible ReShape Pathways for St. Mark

(See one-page summary of pathways and table of responsibilities)

Areas where we have agreement – a pathway exists

Connecting with God through Reimagined Worship

- Worship Fundamentals
- Music Ministry
- Developing Excellent Hybrid (In-person and On-line) worship

Connecting with God through Spiritual Growth

Connecting with Each Other

- Communication
- Disciple Care
- Continued emphasis on providing fellowship opportunities for all disciples/groups

Connecting with the Community

- Communication as Evangelism
- Mission Engagement – showing our love in the community

Anticipating / Facilitating Growth

- Children/Youth/Young Adults
- Sunday School/Small Groups
- Leadership Development and Succession Planning
- Education and Preparation for General Conference

(cont.)

Possible Pathways -- Issues still seeking Consensus

Reconsider CDC

Reconsider Wednesday Night Programs

Reconsider Sunday morning Schedule

Church Organization Structure

Consensus on Our Identity

What Can ReShape tell us about a Growth Strategy for St. Mark?

Growth strategy is not a product of ReShape by itself:

- Provides opportunities for disciples to (re)connect
- Provides leadership with a sense of what to focus on
- Provides many ideas from our disciples
- Provides a sense of priority – what to address **first**
- DOES NOT PROVIDE A BUSINESS PLAN – the previously listed items are only part of what should go into developing a growth plan

Proposed Growth Plan by Coordination Team

- “Build It” – keep improving on the things we do well, they are things that will attract people (particularly “newly retired people”)
- “Go Tell It on the Mountain” – share our story with the community through activity, publicity, innovative technology channels – it is a good story!
- “Try Us – You’ll Like Us!” – look for ways to identify new people in the community, and make visitors feel welcome when they come
- “The Personal Touch – We all have a Story to Tell” – all disciples need to learn to see opportunities to invite others to church; we need to be better at personally witnessing to our faith
- We Must Learn How to Attract Young Families
 - Educate our disciples – this is EVERYONE’S calling
 - Recognize we are currently biased toward older population
 - Evaluate what it will take to offer programs for young families
 - Work with Maria Bowers and Family Ministries
 - Start the education of our church family NOW – but this is a longer-term solution to growth

Accountability for ReShape Actions

- COS manages the process
- Assignments are made by COS based on ReShape guidance
- Assignment progress is review at COS meetings
- COS makes final decision on whether an assignment is completed
- ReShape team supports COS and responsible committees with finding material in the ReShape small group meeting notes that is useful for specific issues

Final Thoughts

- The work is only beginning
- The pathways may change as we move down them
- Hopefully the conversation has started
- The church family is hopeful
- LET’S GET STARTED!