

**A Way Forward: What is Next for Sanctuary?
2018.11.18 Annual Congregational Visioning Meeting
Recommendations from the Leadership Circle**

1) Purpose of the Annual Visioning Meeting (from bylaws Article IV)

- a)** Review and assess Sanctuary UCC's mission, ministries, objectives, goals and sustainability;
- b)** Make adjustments as called for from the dialogue and discernment.

2) Role of the Leadership Circle (from bylaws Article V)

To provide strategic and tactical oversight of all the activities of the church, ensure that the mission and purpose of the church drives decision making, support the development of the ministry teams required for pursuit of the mission and purpose and plan for the church's future. This oversight shall include strategic planning, sustainability and stewardship, community outreach and engagement, marketing and branding, facilities and financial management.

As the duly-elected leadership body of Sanctuary UCC, we accept the joys and challenges of our responsibilities as defined by the bylaws, seeking to live into them to the best of our ability as volunteer leaders and people of faith. Throughout this time we have been in a prayerful discernment.

3) The recommendation to release Lakota YouthStay (LYS) as a program of Sanctuary UCC (as communicated to the LYS team on June 24, 2018)

The Leadership Circle has come to believe that Sanctuary is not able to support LYS's growing needs given Sanctuary's current volunteer capacity and ministry and staffing models.

This is due in part to LYS outgrowing Sanctuary's capacity for support. We have also been led to this recommendation in part due to

- LYS' inclination that the program needs to be wholly secular;
- a lack of two-way-covenantal commitment between the LYS program and Sanctuary;
- turmoil and mistrust in relationships;
- conflicting perspectives regarding the church's practices, operational policy, fiscal responsibility, authority, transparency;
- and a resistance to partnership and collaboration.

We find ourselves at a point where we believe that the church can no longer support LYS' goals and direction while achieving a future in which Sanctuary will survive.

4) How did we get here? (A time line regarding this recommendation)

- a) From November, 2017 through April, 2018 varied attempts were made to communicate the challenges identified above and improve the situation.
- b) In April, 2018 the Leadership Circle and Rev. Wendy sought to engage an MBA/UCC Committee on Ministerial Standing Situational Support Consultation (COMS) for assistance and invited LYS leadership to gather, with the support of COMS for an urgent dialogue, to address the LC's concerns and recommendation.

MBA/UCC COMS PRIMER

As defined by the UCC Manual on Ministry, a Situational Support Consultation is meant “to address and deal with a situation, concern, or problem that has arisen in relation to an authorized minister or ministry setting.”

The hope is that the consultation will lead to a new clarity about possible steps in a Plan of Action that will result in a resolution of the problem, impediment to effective ministry or situation.

- c) LYS declined a joint meeting.
- d) Several highly charged interactions ensued between LYS leadership, staff, LC and volunteers during the weeks leading up to and during the week of the youth visit and programs.
- e) LC determined to proceed with proposing the aforementioned recommendation and sought to schedule both a special congregational meeting and a meeting with COMS for LC and Pastor.
- f) LYS representative sought to report the pastor to the UCC for abusive and disrespectful behavior and mismanagement of the church; in so doing responded to COMS invitation to meet separately and gathered the members of Group One.
- g) August/September, 2018 - COMS met two times each with two groups and the pastor. COMS presented a reflection of their experience in a joint gathering of a subset of the aforementioned people.
- h) Having received the COMS feedback, with no additional specific feedback from Group One about claims or concerns (until the report provided on 11.14.2018), and with much prayer and reflection - the Leadership Circle continues to believe that Sanctuary does not have the capacity to achieve sustainability of the ministries to which the LC believes Sanctuary has been called in Medford, while sustaining the program that LYS has established and wishes to grow.

5) How would the recommendation to release LYS as a program of Sanctuary proceed if agreed to by the congregation?

- a) We would move forward in covenant with the best intentions and spirit. We would continue to have the hard conversations, speaking the truth in love. We would seek to hear the Holy Spirit's direction for this time and work together to insure LYS' success.
- b) The congregation would discern together how the LYS program might be released to its own future - the nature of which would be determined by the LYS Team.
- c) Assets that LC suggest be provided to LYS to support the transition include (but not limited to): LYS branding and all LYS collateral, website and social media, LYS data base, current assets in LYS restricted savings, 2018 revenue that exceeds expenses, one Sanctuary Tent and two tables/folding chairs; administrative support to implement the transition (such as issuing communication, non-disclosure/confidentiality agreements).

6) How would we proceed if the congregation does not support releasing LYS?

The Leadership Circle would attempt to lead the congregation in continued discernment regarding the future, the conflicts and the ministry and staffing model to which Sanctuary is being called. This discernment would naturally include the questions and concerns raised in the COMS consultation and in this recommendation; as well as the need to address pastoral and lay leadership and the vision and purpose of Sanctuary

7) What about the concerns expressed by Group One? These will be considered as the church proceeds with visioning in January.

- a) What is Sanctuary and what is Sanctuary's call, vision and purpose?
- b) Decernment around leadership
 - i) How can we uphold and honor UCC polity as we pursue Sanctuary's call?
 - ii) What structure, policies, and process do we need to create to ensure that all members and partners new and old have an equal voice?
 - iii) How do we become a more lay led ministry?
- c) How do we deal with conflict so that we engage one another in respectful and healthy ways?
- d) The gifts and graces for pastoral and lay leadership that are needed for Sanctuary's future

8) How can we get more people involved in leadership?

BY-LAWS (from Article III)

How does a member or partner become a member of the Leadership Circle?

By living into the responsibilities of membership/partnership:

Members and partners are expected to support the mission and purpose; to share in the life and work of Sanctuary UCC and its ministries and programs; contribute to its support and benevolences through commitments of time, talent and treasure; and to care for its spiritual welfare.

Be nominated by congregation, or appointed when there is an opening.

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE RECOMMENDATION

Attend and observe 2 consecutive LC meetings

Have capacity to participate in 2-3 meetings monthly and respond to multiple emails weekly.

9. Decision making actions to be presented by the Leadership Circle at this meeting

Motion to be presented in Nov 18 Congregational Meeting:

The Leadership Circle recommends the release of Lakota YouthStay Program (LYS) as a ministry of Sanctuary UCC by the end of calendar year 2018. The process and details of this release will be determined in collaboration with the Advisors and Leadership of LYS and will include support (to be determined) to insure LYS' future.

10. Immediate Next Steps

The Leadership Circle recommends a "What's Next for Sanctuary" meeting/retreat to take place on Saturday, January 5, 2019 (details to be determined) to continue the visioning process and in order to prepare for the February 03, 2019 Annual Business Meeting.