

The background of the slide is a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across it. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text is centered on the slide.

WELCOME TO SANCTUARY 2020 VISIONING MEETING

[CALL TO MEETING](#)

The SNEUCC Behavioral Covenant

- **Speak for Self.** Share from our individual perspectives, avoiding statements like, “everybody knows...” or “I think we can all agree...” and, “Some people are saying...”.
- **Share the Air.** Pay attention to how much time/space we take. If we have spoken already, or someone else has given voice to our viewpoint, we will consider making room for others. If we have remained silent, we will consider sharing our perspective.
- **Communicate with Care.** Choose words that are respectful and inclusive. Use language to build up, not break down. Attend to the impact of our words and actions, and when harm is identified, we will listen and respond with care and respect.
- **Turn to Wonder.** If we find ourselves inclined to make a snap judgement or dismiss another person’s perspective, we will get curious. We will wonder (or ask) why they think the way they do and be open to what we might have to learn from one another.
- **Lean on Spirit.** Remember that God is present in our conversation and be intentional about listening for that voice. We will presume the best in the intentions of others.

THE PURPOSE OF SANCTUARY

Mission Statement As Established in 2014

We are action-oriented followers of Jesus, who humbly strive through worship, faith formation and the practice of Jesus' teachings to love God and our neighbors as God loves us. God calls us to care for and meet people where they are; share a life of prayer and joyful service with all; and together--worship, rest in, and serve God. We are seekers of justice and lovers of all of God's creation. Through the community formed by the Holy Spirit, we are consoled, forgiven, refreshed and inspired. We extravagantly welcome all people; believers, non-believers, doubters, questioners, no matter who they love, their gender identity or expression, their race, culture, ability, or economic circumstance. All are a blessing to our journey of faith and we seek to share God's love and grace with all.

[FOR REFERENCE: VISION FOR NEW MODEL OF MINISTRY - MISSION AND VISION](#)

[FOR REFERENCE: DREAM A LITTLE DREAM PRESENTATION \(4/13/2014\)](#)

PURPOSE OF ANNUAL VISIONING MEETING

[For Reference: CCWM DBA Sanctuary UCC - Bylaws](#)

Article IV. Meetings of the Governing Body of Sanctuary UCC

Item C. The Annual Visioning Meeting shall be held between March and June, the purpose of which is to:

1. Review and assess Sanctuary UCC's mission, ministries, objectives, goals and sustainability;
2. Make adjustments as called for from the dialogue and discernment.

The Sanctuary Ministry Plan has been adjusted annually – based on outcomes of the experiment and new opportunities.

CURRENT MINISTRIES

Worship and Prayer

- Weekly Joint Sunday Meditation
- Weekly Joint Sunday Worship
- Children in Worship (pandemic/joint worship)
- Weekday Meditation (Tues noon)
- Music – combine Messy and Classic

Communication

- All Content branded (Youtube and fb)
- Weekly One Minute Word and other social media engagement
- Weekly Worship and Word News
- Weekly Mission and Ministry News

Arts

- ARTChurch built into Worship & Antiracist Themes
- Faith and Film
 - Black History and Culture Series
 - Renew Film w/Chad and Anna (this fall)
 - Add Documentaries – Election, Social Experiment, etc.
- Gallery (on hold)

Adult Formation

- Sermon Series Themed Bible Self-Study
- Regular Book Group
- Antiracist Sermon Series, Study Groups and more...

Children/Youth Formation

- Messy Church (on hold)
- Our Whole Lives Sex Education (on hold)
- am2pm Youth Community Service (on hold)

Mission and Justice

- Meal Packing and Food Distribution - Outreach
- (14) Micropantries in Medford
- Fresh Vegetable Distribution @ Sanctuary
- Bread of Life
- Fiduciary for Safe Medford, Medford Overcoming Addiction. Mobilize Medford
- Social Justice/Moral Leadership via pastor

BACKGROUND

- 2020.01.11 All-Church Listening Session: Collective Call for a Deep Consideration of the Sanctuary Experiment; [Meeting Minutes](#)
- Feb: LC Voted to put together a Discernment Team
 - Invitation to all members and partners asking for volunteers
 - All who volunteered or agreed are members of the Discernment Team; sought to reflect long time and new members, and LC
- Feb/March: Discernment Team begins to research approaches to discernment, consultants to lead, and context for The Church as an institution
- March 2020: Pandemic Shutdown with Community-Wide Pause to Pivot

BACKGROUND, CONTINUED

- April/May LC/Discernment Team: Meets to Pray and Discern a Way Forward
- [2020.05.31 Minutes](#) Special Congregational Meeting Votes to Extend Budget, Leadership, and Cong. Meeting Obligations by 6 months
- June, July, August - Discernment Team Practices Contemplative Prayer
- Discernment Team's and Church's Pandemic Experience Leads to Proposal for Congregational Discernment through June 2021(as proposed today)

CONTEXT THAT LED TO DISCERNMENT TEAM'S PROPOSAL

- Considerations (both post-modern & post-pandemic)
 - Sanctuary (like all institutions) is in A Liminal Time – between what was and what is to unfold (between Crossroads and the Future)
 - Liminality – is a really hard place for human beings to be
 - Guidance from UCC – there is no going back. The change in ministry models will continue to unfold and will be “permanent”
 - Pandemic Worship has been successful - Hillside partnership and joint worship is inspirational, affirming, both classic and new, all generations
 - Success of Ministry Response to New Need: Food Ministry; Racial Reckoning; Equitable Response to Remote School
 - New Normal Unknown – New Needs will continue long after vaccine

RECOMMENDATION FOR A DIFFERENT MODEL IN THIS CONTEXT

Make a conscious move from Decision Making to Discernment

A Deciding Approach	A Discerning Approach
<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problems can be solved if approached carefully and with logic• We can understand and solve our own problems and embrace our own opportunities• Maximizing use of resources is paramount• Maintaining (or restoring) order is important	<p>Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• God is not neutral about our mission or our choices• God is self-disclosing• The Holy Spirit is with us and guides us - always• Requires open spirit, attitude, and heart• God's will is revealed in community
<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining the problem• Looking for root causes• Gathering the data• Interpreting the data• Brainstorming alternatives/options• Establishing decision criteria• Assessing risk and return• Selecting an optimal solution	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Framing the issue for discernment• Grounding it in core values and guiding principles• Shedding ego and biases• Listening for the promptings of Spirit• Exploring our options• Moving toward selection• Testing the decision with rest

TEAM RECOMMENDATION, CONTINUED

A Deciding Approach	A Discerning Approach
Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Majority rule• Root cause analysis• Decision trees• Simulations	Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consensus• Prayer/silence• Scripture• Listening circles
Who does the work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorized leaders on behalf of the whole	Who does the work? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All invested parties

This invites us all into a spiritual shift that moves from...

- Knowing to Unknowing
- Advocating to Attending
- Striving to Surrender

● The Pandemic provided us an opportunity to pause!

- Began researching and reaching out to gather information on various forms of discernment.
- Paused mid-March
- Upon reconvening, it became clear we had limited capacity (emotional, spiritual, mental, etc.)
- We recognized the need to be in prayer with and for each other
- Were introduced to the Contemplative Prayer Practice
- We quickly felt the impact and importance of this quiet reflection and wanted to SHARE IT WITH YOU!

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER PRACTICE (AFRICAN/LAMBETH MODEL)

[FOR REFERENCE: PDF OF THE MODEL](#)

Three translations/versions of the same Psalm

First Reading

Each identifies and shares the **word or phrase that catches their attention** (no discussion)

Second Reading

Each identifies and shares where this passage **touches their life today** (no discussion)

Third Reading

Each answers "**From what I've heard and shared, what do I believe God wants our church to do or be? Is God inviting Sanctuary to change in any way?**" (no discussion)

Close with each Praying for the next one in the prayer circle; conclude with The Lord's Prayer and brief period of silence



• Testimonials

- Tom
- Carvina
- Erin
- Others?

CURRENT PROPOSAL - APPROVED BY LC IN AUGUST

- Fall 2020 - Use 2020 Annual Visioning Meeting to Begin Discernment about the success of the experiment and the future of Sanctuary
 - 09/27 - 10/24: Phase 1, Part 1: Looking Up to God
 - 10/25 - 11/29: Phase 1, Part 2: Looking Out to Community
- Dec. 06: 2020 Annual Congregational Meeting to Extend Budget, Ministry, and Leadership “as Is” through Fiscal Year (*date tentative*)
- Winter/Spring, Discernment Continues into Annual Visioning 2021
 - *Models for these phases to be determined, but prayer continues*
 - Phase 3: Looking Inward - God’s Vision for Sanctuary
 - Phase 4: Next Steps - Carrying Out God’s Vision/Developing Sanctuary Mission and Ministry in response to discernment and the new context
- June, 2021: Annual Congregational Meeting (Ministry Plan, Budget, Leadership)

• **HOW DOES THIS MODEL MEET US AND OUR GOALS?**

This discernment process leads us to a deeper dive about our purpose/call (Vision and Mission) as a church - taking the time to listen to God; especially in the midst of this time of uncertainty and pandemic.

SEEKING ANSWERS:

Where and how does God want Sanctuary to serve, lead, minister, and grow?

WHAT ARE SOME OPTIONS IN SANCTUARY'S FUTURE?

- End the Sanctuary experiment
- Stay the course with adjustments in the ministry plan based on the discernment process
- Consider alternative models of ministry
 - Partnership(s)
 - Merger
 - Other?

WHAT ARE WE ASKING OF YOU?

Commit to:

- joining a group OF 4-5 OTHERS
- spending one hour per week FOR 6-8 WEEKS
- in prayer and contemplation about sanctuary's future

GO AND PRAY!

- SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT SESSIONS NOW TO EXPERIENCE THE PRACTICE