

WIN Team Meeting Minutes
April 28, 2018

Attendees: Winter Hamilton, Nicki Reinhardt-Swierk, Chessey Brenton, Heather Kellenberger, Phil Wiseman, Emily Gauvain, Jeremy Wonn, Sarah Healy.

Absent: Jim Peich, Christy Fareel, Nick McGeehon

Goal: By 2021, 40% of Manchester United Methodist Church will be people ages 25-35.

Purpose of meeting: To get to know one another, familiarize ourselves with the roles, responsibilities, and objectives of this team, and to begin gathering information to inform this initiative.

1. Introductions

Each group member shared a little bit of their religious history and their motivation for joining the team.

2. Review roles, responsibilities and reporting

Winter reviewed the goals and responsibilities of this team

- We've decided that communication will be through email
- We are all responsible for attending monthly meetings and to do a little homework between gatherings

3. Why is this goal important to Jesus? Our Church? You?

The group brainstormed answers to these questions. In summary, Jesus reached out to all ages and those on the margins. All people are in need of God's love, and we are called to live out our faith, reaching beyond the walls of the church.

- Jesus ministered to all ages. We want to reach this unreached group.
- this age group grew up in a time period full of hurt/fear/lack of safety—9/11, Columbine, etc. This generation needs to experience God's love.
- A lot of individuals have been hurt by the church and its policies or inaction on issues of race, gender, sexuality, mental health etc.
- Media portrayls of Christianity as highly conservative. Push against/targeting of the Christian left. Jesus has been claimed by systems of power/conservative forces
- The aisle is so wide right now. There is a lot of division, and someone needs to start reaching across.
- This generation is ready to take Christianity out of boxes of identification. We need to take it to the people. Why go to church? Why can't church be here?
- This is NOT a new problem. But it is exciting that we are thinking about it and working on it. We need to get out of the boomerang routine of leaving church as a young adult to return later as kids age.
- If we want a building, we need to have people- a base to support mission and outreach
- We're Costco for God- there is space all over for so many people. Building a safe space and community

4. Why do you think we have not yet achieved this goal?

Young people have a new, post-modern way of thinking and asking questions. They aren't afraid to step outside what has been deemed acceptable to ask. We have not been listening to young voices that have less money, power, and influence in church (and other) institutions. Views of millennials have been frustrating and limiting. The church has not been effectively ministering to young adults for a long time. Additionally, this goal of 40% people 25-35 does not match the demographic of Manchester (larger community).

Winter added: Who do we need to reach out to/who are we trying to reach?

- families. People with young children
- Married couples. Folks who get married here. How do we follow up and build relationships with them?
- fringe church people (people who attend every once in a while. Folks who are already connected)- they can bring in connections. Christmas and Easter folks.
- students. Kids who graduate out of our youth. College aged students
- singles—folks who don't fit into other categories.
- People outside of West Country- 30 mile radius. South City residents.
- “unconnected” people
- People looking for intentional community/moral development
- Those seeking intersectional spaces, shared resources and knowledge—we need to go there.

Important note:

We can be Manchester anywhere. We should be aiming to reach people who might not (or will not) come into the church.

5. What data/information/insights do we need to gather to inform our efforts?

- More information on young adults outside of church
 - *How We Gather*, study from Harvard that looks at religious “nones,” and millennials.
 - Asset Mapping: What's out there? What are people looking for?
 - We each need to have coffee with one person whose been hurt by the church. Just listen to their experience.
- Information on what works well
 - Visiting Churches that have young adults and families.
 - connect with Church of the Resurrection
 - Research hospitality that works! What churches are doing good? What do they have?
- Learning from people who are in the periphery
 - What are the perspectives/experiences from college-aged students who grew up here?
 - Who has had a first time experience? Who has been here that we can reconnect with?
 - Attendance pad could ask for age and zip code. Research attendance gathering techniques. Craft a script/message for use in the service. Include why we need this info.
- What are some existing S. City family oriented organizations? Who is already working with parents? Parenting organization/fellowship groups exist—how can we tie in?

****What do we mean by first time experience?***

- The conference struggles to track new church trends. We currently tack membership and attendance. We need to reimagine how we track data.
- Where do all of our first time experiences currently happen?

- Does social media count? No—sacraments can't happen online. That can be participating, but not first experience/connection.

We were unable to address the following at this time:

6. What trends/lessons/facts do we know today that will work in our favor?
7. What trends/lessons/facts do we know today that will provide challenges for us?
8. What internal resources/people can we engage for insights/experience/wisdom?
9. What outside resources/people can we engage for insights/experience/wisdom?

10. Homework Assignments

Nicki: Community Asset Map—What do young adults want/need? Why are they not “churched”?

Jeremy: Research good hospitality practices. Ask folks what they've experienced that makes them feel welcome.

Winter: Contact Church of the Resurrection.

Heather: Create google doc to record feedback/progress from group

Chessey: create list of existing first time experiences.

Chessey, Winter, Nicki: find parenting-related fellowship that already exists in S City.

Emily: Research attendance gathering techniques. Craft script for service.

ALL: Come up with list of churches that we can learn from (just do some asking around of a quick google search). Get coffee with 1 person who has been hurt by church.

Heather: Create google doc to record feedback/progress from group. Visit another church (go to the gathering). Create survey for college students. Maybe survey monkey over social media?

Phil: What tags should we use? Look at targetings- what can we do on social media?