

ENVISIONING A NEW PATH FORWARD

A Report to the Prairie Unitarian
Universalist Church Congregation
June 2, 2019



Appreciative Inquiry Process for Prairie

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Executive Summary

The Process and Report in Brief

This report to the Prairie Unitarian Universalist Church (Prairie) congregation encapsulates the findings of a process begun with the Priairie congregation in September of 2018 to envision its future. It is not a strategic plan, nor is it the end of the process, but rather the beginning. The results of this effort entailed here provides the Congregation a foundation for our path forward.

Five primary areas of great interest were chosen by the Congregation at the outset of the effort to focus on throughout the stages of the Appreciative Inquiry process that followed. These topics include:

1. Thriving and Engaged Community
2. Spiritual Growth
3. Engaged Youth
4. Impactful Social Justice
5. Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own

These topics were then studied over a 10-month long process in a series of facilitated meetings and questionnaires. The ideas and dreams for these five topics gleaned from this process are the basis for this report.

How this Report is to be Used

This report should be used by the Board and it's committees and members when planning activities and a path forward for the coming year(s). The Social Justice Committee may want to focus on that topic in the report in their planning meetings. The Leadership Team may want to focus on Engaged Youth and Spiritual Growth. The Associates may want to focus on the Community chapter. The Board may want to work with the congregation on Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own.

To keep this effort going, to realize the vision for our church set forward by the Congregation, this report must be made a living document. The Visioning Committee that facilitated this process recommends that the results of this report guide planning activities at the beginning of the church year (in the summer or September), and that a report be made to the Congregation at its two annual meetings (January and June), relaying how the vision is being implemented in their area of focus.

An Overview of the Appreciative Inquiry Process

How this All Started

In February of 2018, a couple dozen members of Prairie gathered over a day-long retreat at First Universalist to learn about Appreciative Inquiry, an approach to organizational change. This process is based on questions and dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, and dreams for an organization. It was our minister, Jann Halloran and Board President at that time, Joe Francis, who learned of the value of an Appreciative Process, and organized and facilitated the day-long effort, with the leadership of Spud Van de Water from First Universalist and from James Snell from a Unitarian Universalist Church in Dallas.

In our February gathering, we heard first hand how this Appreciative Inquiry approach had led to transformative change for their communities. From organizations stymied by frustrations, including lack of funding and volunteers, leadership burnout, to thriving, positive organizations that reinvented themselves. Over that Saturday we explored together in a mini Appreciative Inquiry process: who we are; who we are called to serve; what our gifts, strengths, and blessings are; what we must change.

Members of Prairie that attended were so inspired by the speakers and the process that people stepped forward to form a Vision Team for Prairie. Since March of 2018 and through the 18-month process that followed, some team members dropped away, others were added. The core group has met 1-2 times monthly to understand more about the process of Appreciative Inquiry by reading and discussing a book on the subject by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom, and to take the congregation through what would be a 10-month process.

The Team presented an overview of the Appreciative Inquiry Process at a Congregational Meeting on June 3, 2018. After explaining the concept, and leading the members through a mini Appreciative session, members voted unanimously to undertake the process.

In that 10-month process, we decided through facilitated workshops, interviews, and surveys, what Topics to explore; we discovered and appreciated the best of Prairie; we dreamed and imagined what might be; and determined and designed what should be. Now it's up to the leadership of the church and it's members and committees to use the results of this process to create our destiny and what will be.

A Note of Thanks

Minister Jann Halloran and 2018 Board President Joe Francis are credited with the generating the idea and sparking interest in the Appreciative Inquiry process. Vision Team members that stayed throughout the process and whose work is credited with the outcome of this report include: Bill Baird, Jennifer Drybread, Paul and Susan Ermisch, and Jan Spooner. Susan Ermisch and Jennifer Drybread volunteered to cofacilitate the meetings. Amanda Nelson came on board later and provided needed assistance and insight. 2019 Board President, Janet Stevens, stayed informed and involved, and encouraged the Vision Team through the process. Kim Rebecca Murray and Maurice Murray provide invaluable help in summarizing the data and leading the Dream Sunday process. Samera Baird stepped in to synthesize the masses of input from the Discovery Process. A big thanks is also in order to Susan and Paul Ermisch who warmly hosted all of the Vision Team meetings at their home throughout the process, and to Paul Ermisch who guided us with Tech Support and for his work documenting the process in meeting notes and recordings. Jim Rogo is also mentioned for documenting with photos and film some of the facilitated steps through the process. It has been a remarkable group of people pulling this together and the thanks we desire is that it be used for many years to come by the leadership, the churches committees and members in charting our future course.

A Bit about Appreciative Inquiry

The following is a summary with added notes explaining the intent and some of the basics of Appreciative Inquiry from the book, *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry; A practical Guide to Positive Change*, by Diane Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom. This book was recommended by Spud Van de Water from First Universalist, our mentor in this process, who used the book and it's process to successfully lead the effort at his church.

What is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)?

AI is the study and exploration of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best. This approach to personal change and organizational change is based on the assumption that questions and dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, and dreams are themselves transformational. It is not a deficit approach to organizational analysis (a study of failures, threats, barriers, etc); instead it is a relational process of inquiry, grounded in affirmation and appreciation.

Why does AI work?

According to surveys, AI works because it liberates power. It unleashes both individual and organizational power. It brings out the best of people, encourages them to see and support the best of others, and generates unprecedented cooperation and innovation.

Process in Summary Process (the Prairie Vision Team accomplished the first 4 steps in the process, the results of which, are outlined in this report):

1. Affirmative Topic Choice – an important discussion and decision for the congregation, as humans move in the direction of what they study.
2. Discovery (a focus on the best of what is and what has been)
3. Dream (A discussion of what might be – hopes and dreams. It is a time to envision possibilities that are big, bold, and beyond the boundaries of what has been in the past)
4. Design (Statements describing the ideal organization – what should be)
5. Destiny (What will be – personal and organization commitments and paths forward)

What about Problems?

AI does not dismiss accounts of conflict, problems or stress, but they are not used as the basis of analysis or action. Instead Vision Team members are counseled to listen when such arise, validate them as lived experience and seek to reframe problems into affirmative topics.

Principles of AI:

Words Create Worlds – Change occurs through language, storytelling, and human communication. It brings people together to collaborate and discover, dream and design the organization they most value and desire.

Inquiry Creates Change – Inquiry is intervention; the moment we ask a question, we begin to create a change. It implies a quest for new possibilities, being in a state of unknowing, wonder, and a willingness to learn. It implies an openness to change.

We Can Choose What We Study – Organizations are endless sources of study and learning. What we choose to study makes a difference. It describes, even creates, the world as we know it.

Image Inspires Action – Human systems move in the direction of their images of the future. The more positive and hopeful the image of the future, the more positive the present-day action.

Wholeness Brings Out the Best – Bringing all stakeholders together in large group allows people to hear, witness, and make sense of each other's differing views, perspectives, and interpretations of shared events. Such forums stimulates creativity and builds collective capacity.

Acting "As If" is Self-Fulfilling – To really make a change, we must "be the change we want to see."

Free Choice Liberates Power – People perform better and are more committed when they have freedom to choose how and what they contribute. It stimulates organizational excellence and positive change.

What should be the Change Agenda at Prairie?

Prairie Vision Team established an overall Change Agenda statement in the initial months of study and preparation, in order to guide our efforts. The result was general while at the same time targeted:

Develop a vision for Prairie that discovers and helps us realize our highest potential.

This statement recognized that Vision Team members were not to tell the congregation what should be, but to allow the process to unfold through listening and dialogue.



Final Thoughts

It was and is the hope of our Vision Team that, with the involvement and support of Prairie members, our team could guide our church community through a process whose outcome would serve as a catalyst for discovering our community vision and lead to positive, transformative change for Prairie. May it be so.

TOPIC CHOICE

The Process Begins

Topic Choice The Process Begins September 23, 2018

A group of Vision Team and volunteer facilitators met at Prairie on September 23, 2018, where in lieu of a church service, the group worked with the Congregation over a 4-hour period to uncover their feelings and wishes for Prairie. The objective was to identify 3 to 5 compelling and inspirational topics that answer what we want more of at Prairie and; what we want to grow and flourish in our church community.

In that process we conducted:

- 1:1 interviews
- Small group discussion
- Full group discussion where facilitators clustered the results in 5 topics

Facilitators Shared Characteristics of Good Affirmative Topics:

- Topics are positive
- Topics are desirable (what does the congregation want to grow and enhance)
- Topics stimulate learning (what does the congregation want to become more knowledgeable and proficient in)
- Topics stimulate conversations about desired futures (takes the congregation where it wants to go)

Facilitators relayed that topics are fateful decisions – you grow in the direction of what you study

The results of this effort are found on the following pages.

The Results of Three Questions asked in Small Groups

These questions were asked in small groups and recorded on large tablet sheets. They were then summarized and tallied.

1. What are the three things that keep you connected to Prairie?

- Community/support/connectedness 26
- Social Justice 11
- Music 10
- Candles of community 6
- Minister/sermons 6
- Welcoming feeling 5
- Special interest groups (book club, stitchers, circle suppers, etc.) 4
- Spiritual connection 4
- Religious Education 4
- YRUU Group 3
- Fellowship hour 2
- Acceptance/inclusiveness of children and youth, even those with special needs, into all aspects of worship 2
- Auction 1

2. What is a special memory you have about your time at Prairie?

- Care from Caring Circle/congregation when going through difficulties 5
- Coming of Age Ceremony 5
- Joe's welcome /Official welcome to church/new member ceremony 5
- Any and all activities that include the youth 4
- Returning after being ill/injured and feeling the love of the congregation 3
- Children growing up at Prairie 3
- OWL program 3
- Water and fire ceremonies 3
- Children's participation in service 2
- Youth camp 2
- Spiritual retreat 2
- Friends 2
- First encounter/greeting 1
- Habitat for Humanity builds 1
- Time when child really "got" something from attending church 1
- Times when service is unexpectedly touching 1
- Interim minister Kelly Digman's last service 1
- Auctions 1
- Halloween parade 1
- 2017 Jan-July time of death – lots of deaths in congregation, young and old alike – hard but meaningful 1
- Singing "Hound Dog" 1
- Circle for Scott Barr 1

- Social justice activities 1
- Baseball games 1
- Singing 1
- Universal design of services 1
- Reading sermons from Barbara Brown Taylor, Cornell West, John Dominic Crosson, Paul Tillich 1
- Christmas services 1
- Men's retreat 1

3. What three wishes would you grant Prairie with magic wand?

- More permanent home/alternative space/building/ little white church w bell tower/lots of meeting space/circular with windows 18
- Larger, more permanent (less transient) membership 10
- Full time, well compensated staffing, including but not limited to FT minister who takes sabbaticals, FT RE Director, child care 9
- More families/youth/children 8
- Good financial health/unlimited resources/endowment/direct giving 7
- Forward-looking/dynamic /spiritually attentive minister/who can help retain character, passion, and bonds 5
- Spiritual development/RE programming for all ages 5
- Broader community connection/community hub for arts, justice education, sanctuary, community meetings 2
- Social justice 2
- Young adult (after high school) programming 2
- More supported/organized fellowship hour with healthy and plentiful variety of foods 2
- More returning visitors 1
- Lots of eager volunteers 1
- Successful transition of minister(s) 1
- More comfortable seating 1
- More efficient candles of community 1
- Kristen Famula as minister 1
- Mental health ministry 1
- More welcoming to people of all ages with different abilities – special needs, mental illness 1
- That all members grow truly aware of benefits of who foods, plant-based diet to prevent/reverse illness 1
- That we acknowledge the enormous suffering caused on our animal brothers/sisters by factory farming and that social justice can extend beyond our species 1
- That we see truth behind solving global warming will have to include massive reduction in animal farming 1
- Community outreach via social media to let more people know about Prairie 1
- Variety of events – 3 to 4 things to do per week 1
- Community garden with monthly feasts in the summer for food and fellowship 1
- Weekly community meetings for fellowship/prayer/spiritual growth/support 1

The Results of the Previous Questions were Summarized by Groups on Yellow Summary Sheets that were tacked on the gym and grouped together by Topic

Community

- Caring Circle
- Welcoming feeling
- Candles of Community
- Diverse congregation

Community

- Internal/external
- Commitment to social justice
- Grow & Support Membership (welcoming)
- Growing and supporting our welcoming community from caring for our existing members to working with the outside world through our commitment to social justice.

Community

- Membership growth
 - Finances
 - Diversity
 - Families/kids
- Connectedness
 - Spiritual/emotional/intellectual
 - Geographic circles
 - Justice work

Community

- Growing (Financial Abundant)
- Welcoming (Diversity)
- Caring (Social Justice)

Dedicated Space for Intentional Community Building

Membership Growth

- More, diverse members
- Eager Volunteers
- Financially Committed

Social Justice

- UU Values

Spiritual Growth

- Education (RE) (Sermons)
- Music
- Safe Place

Spiritual Engagement

- Music
- Education
- Ceremony/Traditions
- Sermons
- (Our own growth)???

Inspirational Service

- Music
- Sermons
- Candles of Community

Worship

- Sanctuary Space/Atmosphere
 - Lighting
 - Building
- Music/Dancing
- Minister
 - Awesome
- Lifespan Education
 - Adult
 - Youth

Stable Home of Our Own

- Larger membership
- Stable budget
- Outstanding Staff (Minister, RE & Choir Director, Administrator)

Youth

- Ongoing engagement
- Organized Programs & Activities that are FUN
- Enthusiastic Leadership
- Retention

Youth & Adult RE

- Youth programs (Coming of age/ OWL)

The yellow sheets were grouped together on the gym walls by groups and facilitators into 5 general topic categories: Community, Social Justice, Spiritual Growth, Stable Home of Our Own, and Youth. These would be the topics going forward that the congregation would go into more depth on in the next steps of the Appreciative Inquiry process. The chapters of this report are organized by these topic choices for ease by committees and members that want to target a specific subject, such as Social Justice.

The Vision Group Further Refined the Results of the Previous Topic Session in October 2018 into the Five Topic Choices

Thriving and Engaged Community

- Welcoming and caring
- Candles of community
- Caring circle
- Committed and connected
- Social justice
- More and diverse members
- Eager volunteers
- Financially committed

Spiritual Growth

- Inspirational services
- Music
- Sermons
- Candles of Community
- Lifespan education (RE)

Impactful Social Justice

- Meaningful participation
- Partnerships/alliances with other organizations and communities

Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own

- Adequate facility space
- Space that inspires

Engaged Youth

- Retention
- Enthusiastic leadership
- Organized programs
- Fun Activities
- Participating with full community

Thriving and Engaged Community



THRIVING AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY AT PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Prairie is a community of people of all backgrounds and beliefs that thrives by providing everyone a warm, welcoming experience. Our community provides a space where all people will be cared for with compassion and they are valued, included, seen, and heard. There is a space for each person's story and personal journey, and we are not afraid to discuss and learn from our differences. Our relationships in our community encourage our growth and fill our hearts and souls with love and joy as we work together to improve our world.

The above statement for Thriving and Engaged Community is one outcome of a 10-month Appreciative Inquiry process conducted at Prairie in 2018-2019, and facilitated by the Prairie Vision Team and volunteers. The information in the pages that follow comes from three steps of this process and are called the Discovery, Dream, and Design stages. Team members were guided in this process by the book *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry; A practical Guide to Positive Change* by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom.

The outcome of the Discovery, Dream, and Design stage that follows is intended to be used as a resource and guide for members of Prairie and the Leadership Core and other committees as they chart our future course and activities around Community at Prairie.

It should be noted that Community was mentioned more times than any other Topic in the initial Topic Choice session. Many members expressed the Church Community as essential to Prairie, and a primary reason that continues to draw them to the church.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONNAIRE UNSYNTHESIZED RESULTS FOR THRIVING AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

The following Discovery results came out of a questionnaire prepared by the Vision Team and given to church members and used in facilitated group sessions on each of the Topics over the course of a 3-month process. Vision Team member Amanda Nelson refined the topic concept as follows:

Thriving and Engaged Community - When faith communities are at their best they enjoy coming together in a place that is welcoming, has a spiritual aesthetic for services and other programming, is safe, has adequate facility space, is affordable for the congregation, and can be counted on for the long term.

Two questions were asked to uncover the best of what is and has been with regard to Thriving and Engaged Community. Here are the unsynthesized results compiled by Kim Rebecca-Murray:

Question 1. What do you see as Prairie's strengths related to our Thriving and Engaged Community?

ANSWERS

- Great leaders - lay stuff
- Strong sense of community
- Welcoming congregation to all
- Caring committee/circle (4)
- We care for each other - e.g. when someone needs help, others are there. When I broke my leg and was home bound for six weeks, people came over with food and shared a meal with me.
- Social/Fellowship hour is truly social time for connection - it does not feel like "cliques"
- Get w visual confirmation when members come to Prairie again and again - that our collective - with our similarities and differences - matters
- Group energy in Service Sundays - all ages - like Laundry, lunch picnic, stable learning, caroling - (2)
- Group energy at fundraising events like ball games, auction, auctioned events (dinners, etc.) - (2)
- Group energy at puppet making
- Member/friends being vulnerable and willing to ask for a give support
- Handling internal stresses with respect and dignity for all
- Friendships
- Small groups - book club has been going on for a long time
- Christmas coming together for decorations
- Water and waves
- Strong sense of commitment (lately)
- RE - lots of groups and classes

- Enthusiastic musicians
- Building Your Own Theology
- Events with big, intergenerational turnouts - auction, Rockies, Justice Sundays at horse ranch and AWTN and Habitat Builds (in former years)
- Feels like we have a solid, resonating purpose and that we are a big, close family.
- Summer camp and OWL have enormous enthusiastic participation
- My first Habitat build has 10 builders, including youth
- High engagement in core groups like Justice League, choir, etc.
- Willingness to experiment, like “prayground” and middle hour
- Many opportunities to participate at Church and in the community
- Involvement with others in our church community who are passionate and caring
- Friendliness and openness
- Music
- Choir
- Various leaders and topics
- People engaged not just in the Sundays services but beyond
- Willingness to experiment
- Taking a covered dish to someone who really needs to know that we care
- Being with Norm McQueen and his family through his dying process
- Communicating that we’re here for each other over and over again - this is what makes me proud to be a member of our caring community. We should all be proud of how we come together to help each other - it makes us special
- I am a very strong believer in the benefits of forming deep “community” with the members of our church. Once that happens, we all work better together, we are able to support each other better, and we celebrate together ... better than with only more shallow relationships. There have been many activities at Prairie over the past 4 to 5 years, since I became a member that have contributed to the development of these kinds of deep “community” relationships between many of us: Circles of Trust, Candles of Community, Centered Heart, Circle Suppers, Caring Circles, Adult and Child Education classes, and various clubs and activities. I have more close friends now than I've ever had in my life. Because of these various commits building/maintaining activities, we have always been able to support each other no matter how wonderful, or how very difficult the situations have been in each of our lives. I believe that because of this, our Prairie community will only survive the challenges of our future, but we will thrive in continuing to grow, spiritually, together.
- We must recognize and celebrate the things that bind us into community and expand on these - Caring Circle, Circle Dinners, social and study groups, meaningful service activities in the community and music. Rather than just waiting for members to volunteer and participate, we need to ask more. Commitment and involvement in groups and activities may also help the community in the ongoing problem of inadequate funding of Prairie. If members support Prairie financially to best of their abilities, they will feel more ownership and connection to the community.

- I am a very strong believer in the benefits of forming deep 'community' with the members of our church. Once that happens, we all work better together, we are able to support each other better, and we celebrate better together...better than with only more shallow relationships. There have been many activities at Prairie over the past 4-5 years, since I became a member, that have contributed to development of these kinds of deep 'community' relationships between many of us: Circles of Trust, Candles of Community, Centered Heart, Circle Suppers, Caring Circles, Adult and Child education classes, and various clubs and activities. I have more close friends now, than I've ever had in my life. Because of these various community building/maintaining activities, we have always been able to support each other no matter how wonderful, or how very difficult the situations have been in each of our lives. I believe that, because of this, our Prairie community will not only survive the challenges of the future, but we will thrive in continuing to grow, spiritually, together.
- When I broke my leg, this caring community brought meals and are with me. Others brought flowers and sent cards. I was even taken out to a concert in my wheelchair. It was very hard for me to be mostly home alone for two months.
- Taking a covered dish to someone who really needs to know that we care. Being with Norm McQueen and his family through his dying process. Communicating that we are here for each other - over and over again. This is what makes me proud to be a member of our caring community. We all should be proud of how we have come together to help each other. This makes us special.
- My family were afraid about moving because the last time we had moved we had had many losses and had been very emotionally and physically ill and just the idea of moving was excruciating. When we had to move again, Prairie showed up in droves with their vehicles and helped us move picking up every little thing we had. Brenda especially helped my wife and was tremendously supportive to her and us before during and after the move. When our grandchildren were visiting us during a family crisis, prairie was highly supportive - the youth babysat for us and gave us reprieve. The Ermisch family invited us into their home for the Fourth of July. The caring circle has been there for us when I had major surgery on my neck - people brought over soup nearly daily for two weeks. The outpouring of cards, calls, and emails. Also, on my 60th birthday so many prairie folks showed up and helped into this new phase of my life. Before prairie I was totally isolated,
- Prairie has single handedly helped me manage my depression without meds or therapists, and is considerably more affordable than either one of those. When I joined I was incapacitated with grief, having lost many, many things, but most profoundly my mother. Prairie people not only comforted me, they welcomed me and engaged me in other activities to get me outside of myself. And when I have asked for help, Prairie has always been there for me - from helping me move, to helping me care for my sick husband, too. Through candles of community and the caring circle, I could not be more cared for.
- When I broke my leg and was homebound, people I barely knew brought meals and visited with me. I have built friendships with some of those people. I also love

running into people at other places e.g. grocery store, library etc. Auction dinner events are another way to build community.

- When I moved to Colorado, I was delighted to find a church home at Prairie so close to my home. I was a full time caregiver for my husband and very much needed a faith community. Prairie members reached out, made me feel at home and some became friends. When my husband died two years later, many members attended the service and helped distribute programs, serve the lunch, sing in the choir, play music and Rev Jann was there as a support person throughout the long road to death. My visiting family thought I had the most supportive church and said "she is going to be alright"! Members are very tuned in and there for the many who have personal challenges. Caring is something you can count on at Prairie UU.

Question 2. What additional work can be done to reaffirm and increase these strengths in our community?

- Need more leaders and doers
- Leadership classes (2)
- How to bring back visitors - increase numbers but not too much
- Figure out how to show our gifts
- Help hospitality and follow through - prevent burnout and in absence of Cindy
- RE
- Try something different - outside activities
- Recommit
- Get cards ready - have on hand stamped (not sure on this - from Brenda - maybe ask for clarification)
- Somehow inspire more volunteers - efforts are too concentrated
- Engaged and coordinated fundraising
- Iterative appreciative inquiry - address some small steps "low hanging fruit" immediately first so people feel heard
- Conflict resolution team
- Continue to accept level of involvement/commitment each person is capable of giving with gratitude and no guilt
- Welcoming of regulars and irregulars
- Identify opportunities to aid small groups
- More public events
- More interaction during services
- Continue to deal openly with controversy
- Experience and be willing to learn more from failures
- Support group leadership when there are challenges - the auction has needed more Board and other support at times
- More diversity racially and with regards to sexual orientation - although we have done a lot and are still with racial justice and awareness, we aren't diverse
- Actively groom leaders to take over so current leaders can rest
- Engage with other organizations in our community to have a greater impact locally
- Better organization with paid administration

- Canvass - reach out to church members and new members to see how they want to get involved (over coffee)
- Increase membership
- Have a stronger mentorship program
- Support the volunteers
- Allow for succession of leaders
- Be out in public with T shirts
- Can DCSB help (?)
- Invite existing and new members to participate over the phone
- Follow up surveys with new member surveys - good entrance
- Get news coverage
- If you do a good job with the kids, you can get their parents/families to come
- Continued encouragement of involvement
- Continue to support leadership and growth leaders
- Support/funding of retreats
- Structure and process with spiritual piece so not a job (from Melissa- maybe reach out for clarification)
- Continue hot topic and increase tolerance for discomfort, disagreement and learning
- Targeted work
- Reach out to those who are often ignored - like homeless folks, transgender folks. Make it clear with our website and out actions that we welcome all to join our circle. It should be our hallmark that we join together in this welcoming circle.
- Meeting with people outside of church services - building connections
- We should continue to emphasize the value of strong community-building and community-maintaining programs and activities in the future. I suggest that, in addition to what has been done in the past, some additional community-building programs should be added ... especially among the various staff and church leaders. These additional programs should be done on a regular basis, because one true "community" is achieved among a group of people, that "community" must be maintained over time. A one-time event isn't enough to last any significant length of time.
- We need to emphasize active involvement and try to minimize the passive involvement. We need to allow people to express feelings and ideas and try to give people reinforcement and thanks. If members appreciate that their financial commitment to Prairie is supporting dynamic activities, they will possibly increase their support. Members need to feel that they are getting "their money's worth." The membership must be expanded - having a higher profile in the Parker areas, having talks and events that might attract people, inviting friends and neighbors to Prairie events, having more publicity and an excellent up-to-date website and having a minister active locally will help.
- We should continue to emphasize the value of strong community-building and community-maintaining programs and activities into the future. I suggest that, in addition to what has been done in the past, some additional community-building programs should be added...especially among the various staff and other church leaders. These additional programs should be done on a regular basis, because

once true 'community' is achieved among a group of people, that 'community' must be maintained over time. A one-time event isn't enough to last any significant length of time.

- Meeting with people outside of church services. Building connections. Reach out to those who are often ignored - like homeless folks, transgender, folks. Make it clear with our web site and our actions that we welcome all to join our circle. It should be our hallmark that we join together in this welcoming circle.
- The support and love is spontaneous - it is in the character of prairie and we need to capture it and made visible in some way. It is the kind of thing that has value that you cannot put money on and therefore could be overlooked but we cannot let that happen. The camaraderie and caring comes with no price tag. It is truly a caring circle.
- I think that if we can nurture those people who manage caring circles and candles of community so that they can keep doing the fabulous job they are doing and/or attract more people to help in those areas, that would be awesome. I think our new minister can bring loving kindness to these activities as well. Boosting the community fund with more fundraisers, etc., so we can continue to help folks who are going through financial difficulties would be great as well.
- Get a place of our own so we can have a place to meet for meetings, dinners, learning events.
- More members to help this mission.

**DISCOVERY RESULTS SYNTHESIZED FOR
THRIVING AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY
Synthesized by Samera Baird**

Summary of Prairie's Greatest Strengths:

Prairie's greatest strengths relating to Thriving and Engaged Community are our inspired leaders including our associates; our intense communal kinship that encourages people to listen and care for one another and our community; and our demonstrated ability to openly and transparently deal with conflict.

Additional Work:

- Growth – more leaders and doers/volunteers, new volunteers, new people, visitors;
- Consider whether Prairie is attempting to take on too many projects;
- Re-think complex projects;
- Focus on projects that have been successful and help the most people – projects that match the passion of the volunteers;
- When the movers and shakers of specific projects tire, finding others who have similar passions to take their place can be a challenge (let some projects go?);
- Continue to deal with controversy openly;
- More diversity racially, sexual orientation, etc.;
- Strengthen leadership training and mentorship; and
- Maximize active involvement.



DREAM RESULTS SUMMARIZED FOR THRIVING AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

People at Prairie define their vision of their ideal Thriving and Engaged Community in word and through pictures in the following ways:

- Restorative experiences
- Inspirational Sermons
- Music that warms our souls
- A chance for rebirth
- Welcoming/Open Doors
- Inclusive
- Compassion
- Empathy and deep listening to others
- Caring deeply for others
- Candles of Community
- Outreach to our friends in need
- Learning together
- Curiosity
- Open minds
- Education
- Hot Topic Discussions
- Diversity
- Cultural Respect
- Interconnectedness
- Working together
- We are one
- Our differences are our strengths

Imagery Used:

- One Plant, Many Different Blooms
- Eyes – we see everyone
- Rainbows
- Open Doors
- Hearts
- Music Notes
- Hands
- Ears

DESIGN PROCESS FOR THRIVING AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

The Design Process results in a Provocative Proposition statement for each of the Topics and are intended to be:

- Narrative statements (describing the ideal)
- Provocative, in that they stretch the organization beyond its norm into novel and more desired forms of interaction
- Stated in the affirmative, using vivid positive imagery
- Statements of belief that constitute the ideal organization
- The Provocative Proposition(s) are not about specific actions

Based on the synthesized results of the Discovery Stage and the summarized results of the Dream Stage, Amanda Nelson drafted a Provocative Proposition statement for Thriving and Engaged Community. This information was shared in April of 2019 with members of the Leadership Core Committee to get their input. Following is the result of that effort:

Provocative Proposition for Thriving and Engaged Community

Prairie is a community of people of all backgrounds and beliefs that thrives by providing everyone a warm, welcoming experience. Our community provides a space where all people will be cared for with compassion and they are valued, included, seen, and heard. There is a space for each person's story and personal journey, and we are not afraid to discuss and learn from our differences. Our relationships in our community encourage our growth and fill our hearts and souls with love and joy as we work together to improve our world.

Spiritual Growth



SPIRITUAL GROWTH AT PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

We inspire and enrich spiritual awakening, exploration, wonder, and deep connection in ourselves, our community, our world, and beyond. At the same time we honor diversity in spiritual thought, experience, and practice, with each person choosing what is true and right for themselves.

The above statement for Spiritual Growth came as a result of a 9-month Appreciative Inquiry process conducted in 2018-2019, and facilitated by the Prairie Vision Team and volunteers. The information that follows comes from three steps of this process and are called the Discovery, Dream, and Design stages. Team members were guided in this process by the book *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry; A practical Guide to Positive Change* by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom.

The topic of Spiritual Growth was one of 5 Topics selected as integral to Prairie by members of the Church. The outcome of the Discovery, Dream, and Design stage that follows is intended to be used as a resource and guide for members of Prairie and the members of the Leadership Core and other Committees as they chart our future course and activities around Spiritual Growth at Prairie.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONNAIRE UNSYNTHESIZED RESULTS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The following Discovery results came out of a questionnaire prepared by the Vision Team and given to church members and used in facilitated group sessions on each of the Topics over the course of a 3-month process. Vision Team member Amanda Nelson refined the topic concept for Spiritual Growth as follows:

Spiritual Growth - When spiritual communities are at their best, members of that community experience a safe place to explore their own spiritual journey. The members are inspired by the services to think more deeply about their spiritual path and to take steps to act in alignment with that path. When at its best, a spiritual community provides not only a safe space, but also a place that pushes us to expand our minds to not only our own truths but to find understanding and peace with other possibilities of sacred meaning and truth.

Two questions were asked to uncover the best of what is and has been with regard to Spiritual Growth at Prairie. Here are the unsynthesized results compiled by Kim Rebecca-Murray:

Question 1. What do you see as Prairie's greatest strength related to Spiritual Growth?

ANSWERS

- Jann Halloran has been one of the best teachers I have ever had for this area of my own growth. I am responsible for my own spiritual growth, but need help sometimes with the details. Jann and others have led the way for me many times at Prairie. I will miss her deeply, but that we must go on together after she departs.
- Classes/workshops for all ages
- Hot topics
- Music
- Readings
- Thought-provoking sermons
- Variety of contributions
- Great sermons that inspire, educates and are thought-provoking
- Great music program: awesome music director (Eric), talented music staff
- Various spiritual practices: meditation, circles of trust, centered heart, discussion groups, etc.
- Candles of community
- This area is currently our greatest strength
- Jann's sermons and other (lay) speakers
- As a new attendee, this is hard to peg at present. I can say that I am impressed with the welcoming nature of the congregation, which is the first step to creating a safe place.

- Music is great
- Thought-provoking sermons - for internal and external action
- Candles of community - very safe- keeps us connected and caring
- Hot topics
- Having events and discussions about ideas that stimulate and challenge would be attractive to many (not all) members. We need to know more about the history of the UU movement and famous Unitarians. Group reads are fun and educational with meaningful discussions. Topics that border on heresy for some people would be especially stimulating to many (like *Jesus Mysteries*). Music is one of the strengths of Prairie and must continue to be a focus and should be expanded. If suitable venues can be secured, films and documentaries should be offered for members and the Parker community.
- Jann Halloran has been one of the best teachers I have ever had for this area of my own growth. I am responsible for my own spiritual growth, but need help sometimes with the details. Jann and others have led the way for me many times at Prairie. I will miss her deeply, but know that we must go on together after she departs.
- The main thing that affects me spiritually is our covenant and when we say it every Sunday in unison - I can really FEEL prairie when we're saying it - I feel like I belong, it's very emotional for me - it almost always brings tears to my eyes. By the time we get to through the singing Spirit of Life and start to greet each other, I feel open and vulnerable and I end up hugging people more than I shake hands and I feel ready for church.
- I have not personally experienced much spiritual growth at Prairie. I am not sure what that even means. Perhaps the closest was with the Death Cafe, exploring ideas about what happens to us after death - I think it is important to have these conversations and help people be more comfortable talking about death.
- I am a lifelong learner and enjoy the learning hours vet much. I have been enjoying the book discussions as well. The small group sharing has made it easier to know people.
- Prairie focuses more on spiritual practices and growth than my previous congregation. Spiritual practices are frequently shared with each other in meetings in discussion and in worship. One is frequently asked to lead with a reading, spiritual practice or reflection on topics explored. The emphasis on this has encouraged my reflection about my own spiritual growth and how I attend to it or not.

Question 2. What additional work can be done to reaffirm and increase these strengths in our community?

ANSWERS

- Get an effective minister who can take up where Jann left off. This will be tough, but maybe not impossible.
- Re-establish circles of trust
- Re-establish centered heart
- Add regular community building sessions for staff

- Consider adding “weekly practice” to each sermon - something for the congregation to work on during the week
- Marketing/advertising
- If a goal is to add membership to Prairie, will need to assess needs of the community - of Parker - what do people want/need
- Continue to work toward a diversification of the active population
- If the most talented musicians at Prairie lead in expanding musical offerings. If groups person outside of the usual Prairie events, they should be identified as the “Prairie Band, Prairie Singers, Prairie Gospel Quartet.” There are so many smart and insightful members of Prairie, such members of the congregation might take the lead in the study of the history of UU and famous writers, thinkers, and activists who were Unitarians. If needed, some of these increased activities might occur in members’ homes.
- Get an effective Minister who can take up where Jann left off. This will be tough. But maybe not impossible.
- Having a good DRE and minister that captures these nuances of passion and compassion from one another and feed that back to us in lessons and sermons. Small group discussions on spiritual topics. Visuals in the congregation - we need to include spiritual art to communicate spiritual messages on display in the sanctuary. The projector is nice, but banners, wall hangings that we can take out and put up every Sunday.
- A formal, structured adult religious education program and a DRE.
- We will need a new minister as committed as Jann to continue this learning tradition. Continue the emphasis on a regular basis. Encourage more individuals to share and add classes about spiritual practice.

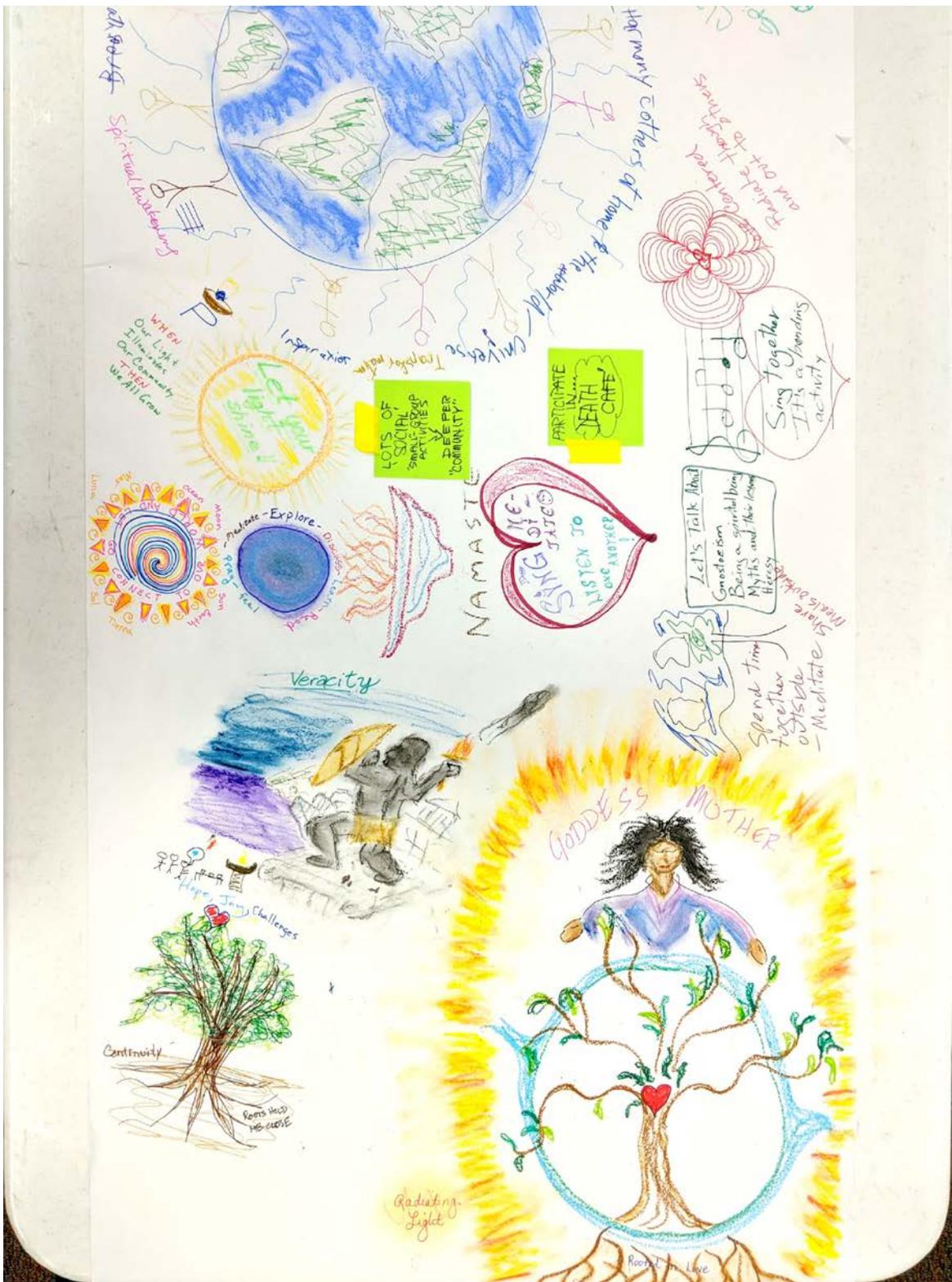
DISCOVERY RESULTS SYNTHESIZED FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH
Synthesized by Samera Baird

Summary of Prairie's Greatest Strengths:

Prairie's greatest strengths relating to Spiritual Growth are related directly to leadership; diversity of thoughts; experiences; and spiritual practices such as sermons, music, readings, candles of community, reflection, reading our covenant together; and spiritual growth through thought-provoking activities including at learning hour.

Additional Work:

- Hire a DRE for children's programming;
- Active adult RE programming;
- Tie sermon to weekly practice during the week (soul work);
- More focus on personal, spiritual growth - people can share during middle hour;
- Increase reflections after sermons;
- Hold a community-building workshop with staff (bonding);
- Assess needs/outreach to Parker/Aurora community;
- Reestablish circles of trust and centered heart;
- Marketing/advertising; and
- Continue to work toward a diversification of the active population.



DREAM RESULTS SUMMARIZED FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

People here and around the world can experience spiritual awakening, universal spirit, and transformation through/by:

- Freedom, to flow wherever you choose
- Exploration (discuss, read, learn)
- Connection (connect to our world and let go)
- Creativity - it connects us to our soul and our creator; it allows creativity in the spirit of life to be brought into solid form
- Music (including singing together as a bonding activity)
- Meditation
- Prayer
- Being centered (radiate through and out to others)
- Breath
- Energy
- Hope
- Joy
- Veracity (truthfulness)
- Challenges
- Listening to one another
- Light (when our light illuminates our community, then we all grow)
- Astronomy
- Journey into mystery and wonder/universe
- Rituals/Pagan
- Yoga
- Ying and Yang/Light and Dark
- Continuity
- Harmony with others at home and the world

Institute Spiritual practices specific to Prairie:

- Spiritual Circles – congregation gathered in a circle for meditation, singing & prayer (breathe in/breathe out energy and spirit and light)
- Spend time together outside
- Circles of Trust
- Men's Group
- Create regular and deep community-building sessions w/ Staff
- Spiritual Retreats
- Chalice
- Classes and Trips for Spiritual Growth
- Discussions about Gnosticism, being a spiritual being; myths and their lessons; heresy
- Death Café
- Lots of social , small group activities to create deeper community

Spiritual Images:

- Light
- Tree well rooted
- Goddess Mother
- Earth
- RiverSpirals

DESIGN PROCESS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The Design Process results in a Provocative Proposition statement for each of the Topics and are intended to be:

- Narrative statements (describing the ideal)
- Provocative, in that they stretch the organization beyond its norm into novel and more desired forms of interaction
- Stated in the affirmative, using vivid positive imagery
- Statements of belief that constitute the ideal organization
- The Provocative Proposition(s) are not about specific actions

Based on the synthesized results of the Discovery Stage and the summarized results of the Dream Stage, Jennifer Drybread drafted a Provocative Proposition statement for Spiritual Growth. This information was shared in April of 2019 with members of the Leadership Core team to get their input. Following is the result of that effort:

Provocative Proposition for Spiritual Growth

We inspire and enrich spiritual awakening, exploration, wonder, and deep connection in ourselves, our community, our world, and beyond. At the same time we honor diversity in spiritual thought, experience, and practice, with each person choosing what is true and right for themselves.

Engaged Youth



ENGAGED YOUTH AT PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Our congregation embraces YOUTH by providing a welcome and safe place for youth and their friends to thrive and flourish spiritually - preparing them to make their own spiritual decisions.

Our activities and education are centered around helping youth understand and transform our complex world. We support our Youth as they live out the 7 Principles and lead us into the future.

The above statement for Engaged Youth came as a result of a 9-month Appreciative Inquiry process conducted in 2018-2019, and facilitated by the Prairie Vision Team and volunteers. The information that follows comes from three steps of this process and are called the Discovery, Dream, and Design stages. Team members were guided in this process by the book *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry; A practical Guide to Positive Change* by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom.

The topic of Engaged Youth was one of 5 Topics selected as integral to Prairie by members of the Church. The outcome of the Discovery, Dream, and Design stage that follows is intended to be used as a resource and guide for members of Prairie and the Leadership Core and other committees as they chart our future course and activities around youth at Prairie.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONNAIRE UNSYNTHESIZED RESULTS FOR ENGAGED YOUTH

The following Discovery results came out of a questionnaire prepared by the Vision Team and given to church members and used in facilitated group sessions on each of the Topics over the course of a 3-month process. Vision Team member Amanda Nelson refined the topic concept as follows:

Engaged Youth - When communities are at their best, they are engaging the future generations to grow, and thrive and have an impact on their futures. The community members are active in sharing experiences and stories with our youth that will guide them on their spiritual journeys and become a part of who they are. The community members engage in inspiring our youth with our enthusiasm for our community and support of one another. Youth programs are led by enthusiastic leadership that lead fun and meaningful programs that make them want to come back again and again. Communities at their best include youth and see their children from all ages actively participating in the success of the community, now and in the future.

Two questions were asked to uncover the best of what is and has been with regard to youth. Here are the unsynthesized results compiled by Kim Rebecca-Murray:

Question 1. What do you see as Prairie's greatest strengths related to Engaged Youth?

ANSWERS

- Efforts related to OWL, summer camp, social justice involvement
- YRUU HS summer camp! It's hugely impactful for the kids who attend
- OWL and middle school weekends, too
- I think it was really good for the kids when they attended classes during the service and had their own space and special activity.
- Time for all ages was great. Prayer ground is a nice touch too. Youth-led services, coming of age and bridging and retreats
- Responsible at church
- OWL
- Camp
- Energy
- Doing principles instead of curriculum
- Dynamic DRE (Kristin Famula)
- Dynamic/thriving FCE Council
- Lots of parent volunteers
- Engaged youth advisor
- The high school camp and OWL are our current biggest strengths. It would be wonderful to have similar opportunities to engage younger children, We have had strong RE leadership in the past and there seem to be a vacuum at present
- There is clearly a close community that exists and a culture of acceptance of children of all ages in the fellowship hour.

- Unknown, only second visit. That said, in my youth, Boy Scouts were very good and community buildings. Perhaps helping sponsor one or forming a troop may be beneficial.
- OWL, including sharing teen presentation with the congregation.
- Coming of Age, including sharing teen presentation with the congregation
- Brunches
- Among my earliest memories of Prairie (about 10 years ago) was attending the "Coming of Age" Sunday and realizing that these youth were ready to fly as adults. They testified that they appreciated the contributions from their peers and adults at Prairie to help them mature. The OWL program is a fine example of what we should be doing to show our youth that we acknowledge them and value their contributions. And expect them to live up to high standards that they set for themselves
- Young people should be included as much as possible in social justice activities. Doing meaningful things with others may stimulate more commitment from the youth. An active effort to include youth in the music should be made. Some youth may want to be part of the Prairie choir.
- Although much of the Prairie activities for youth seem to be "social" in nature, the ones that have serious goals seem to engage the youth the most. Participation of youth in services and discussions should be enhanced. The youth camp and OWL programs are strengths of Prairie and must be continued and enhanced
- Among my earliest memories of Prairie (about 10 years ago) was attending the "Coming of Age" Sunday and realizing that these youth were ready to fly as adults. They testified that they appreciated the contributions from their peers and adults at Prairie to help them mature. The OWL program is a fine example of what we should be doing to show our youth that we acknowledge them and value their contributions. And expect them to live up to high standards that they set for themselves.
- My grandson wanted to go church on a day that was not Sunday and when we told him that it wasn't Sunday he pointed to the sun and said "every day is Sunday." Just that he was excited about going to church was a blessing - he was three at the time. The fact that my grandkids always describe the people at Prairie always as their friends and I appreciate that we have created an environment where kids identify that's the place their friends are - that at a very young age they identify that Prairie is where their friends are - it is one essence of Prairie.
- We have not been with Prairie long enough to answer this question very well, nor do we have any children or youth who attend regularly. However, our grandchildren attend during the summers, and they really, really love it. I am not sure why because there is no structured programming. I think it is because they feel a sense of unconditional love, and they reference Prairie people as their friends. Additionally, they really enjoyed the one volunteer opportunity they had - which was at the bird sanctuary. Also, we recently hosted a puppet making workshop at our home and the children and youth who attended were very engaged, They seemed to be able to make the connection between making the puppets and preserving cultural identity.

I love the story portion of the service when kids come up and participate. I like the playground during services. I have enjoyed participation of our young people during services and at service events. They also need their own group time, so brunch time is good too.

- Coming of Age

Question 2. What additional work can be done to reaffirm and increase these strengths in our community?

ANSWERS

- We need to find a way to reach out to more families and teens.
- Make it fun and provide a safe space for them to express themselves.
- Find a way to encourage church attendance by the families that send kids to camp (but don't attend church)
- Need when we had FCEC - it created contagious energy.
- Youth to do readings, lightings, etc.
- More youth involvement in services and time for youth to be together
- Communications/reminders/publicizing events
- Revisit the time of services - a lot of youth would choose evenings over a.m.
- Do we ask our youth what they think?
- Acknowledge and help them understand that they're important and vital to the church and the community at large
- As a newcomer I can only give input on what worked well for me growing up in a UU religious education program. We met every Sunday in small groups 3-7 kids of similar age. Over the years strong friendships were cultivated not only by structured time on Sundays, but also with frequent group trips (bowling, movie nights, UU retreats). The tradition of having a member of the Sunday School light the chalice very week also gave us a sense of belonging to the greater community.
- Unknown, only second visit. That said, building relationships slowly is really the only way to reach teens, They have to trust you and that can take a LOT of time. Gimmicks like using Insta don't work.
- Hire a DRE and develop an active RE Committee.
- Use UUA Tapestry of Faith
- Get a Youth Director. Don't expect our Minister to do this work.
- We should involved kids in our services and the usual "Time for all Ages." This will be valuable in creating self-confidence and the ability to speak to groups. Fund musical activities, such as a ukulele band might be attractive to some youth. Inviting youth to be part of the Prairie choir should be a regular thing. Youth should be included in many of the group discussions and studies. Youth and young adults must feel that their participation and their ideas are valued
- Get a Youth Director. Don't expect our Minister to do this work.
- We should have an usher program connected to the greeting on Sunday for maybe middle school kids assisting people getting out of cars, carrying stuff for them. There should be some junior membership program where kids and youth know steps to take to adult membership-that they understand what it means to

be an adult member. Kids who have grown up at prairie who are now parents say they don't know where they fit. They need to understand that they can be members with a voice - without contributing money at first - maybe we can make it that a percentage of their parents contribution is attributed to them. I would to include more art in the kids and youth programming. We also should always look to them for volunteers and we need to ask more than once.

- I think there is a need for more structure

DISCOVERY RESULTS SYNTHESIZED FOR ENGAGED YOUTH
Synthesized by Samera Baird

Summary of Prairie's Greatest Strengths:

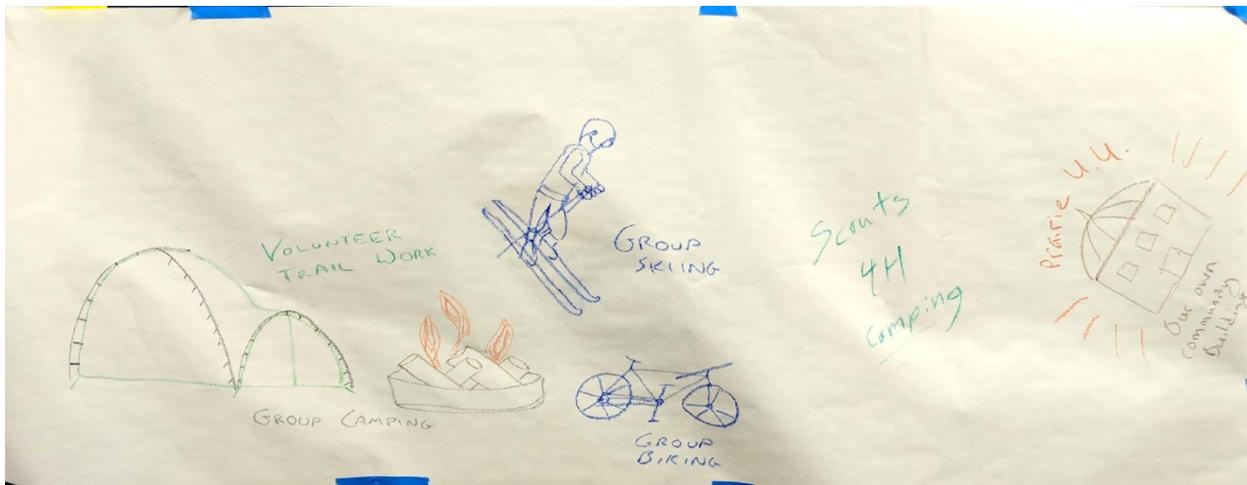
Prairie's **greatest strengths** relating to **Engaged Youth** are the dynamic, energetic, engaged leaders who take an active role in the RE program; the relationships that are built and exist among the young people; and the specific activities they engage in including OWL, camp, Coming of Age, and brunches.

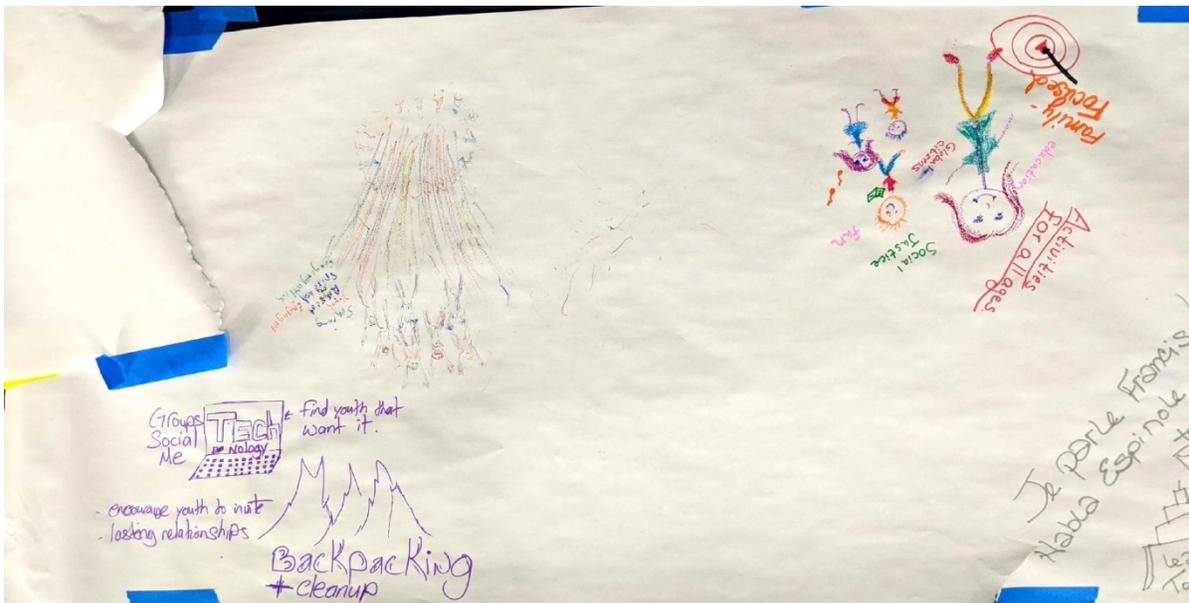
Additional Work:

- Increase communication about youth programs (intentional invitations, DR reminders, etc.);
- Encourage the youth to invite their friends;
- More youth involvement in services, including greeters and ushers, chalice lighter, readings, storytime, choir, music, etc.;
- More social justice involvement;
- Continue to ask youth what they want;
- Recruit more parent volunteers;
- Consider evening activities;
- Help the youth understand how important they are to Prairie;
- Get a youth director;
- Find activities that work to slowly build lasting relationships;
- Make it fun!

DREAM SUNDAY ARTWORK FOR ENGAGED YOUTH

Dream Sunday was organized by Maurice and Kim Murray and the Vision Team. It was held at Prairie in lieu of a Church Service on February 24, 2019. The following outcomes came from a facilitated effort where people rotated among 5 tables, one for each of the 5 Topics, and were asked to imagine a bigger and bolder future for Prairie, in this case related to Engaged Youth. They were given markers and pencils and a large sheet roll to express their thoughts and feelings. The following are photos of that artwork.





DREAM RESULTS SUMMARIZED FOR ENGAGED YOUTH

People at Prairie define their vision of their ideal Engaged Youth in word and through pictures in the following ways:

- People at Prairie define their vision of Engaged Youth within our community in word and through pictures in the following ways:
- Volunteer Trail Work
- Group Camping
- Group Skiing
- Scouts, 4 H
- Group Biking
- Prairie UU – our own space (building)
- Activities for All Ages
- Create Global Citizens
- Social Justice
- Family Focused
- Backpacking
- Tech to support communication and outreach
- Online social
- Support, energized, growth, explode
- Retreats
- Mission Trips
- Strong Youth
- Safe and welcoming
- Staff: RE Director and plenty of volunteers

DESIGN PROCESS FOR ENGAGED YOUTH

The Design Process results in Provocative Proposition statements for each of the Topics and are intended to be:

- Narrative statements (describing the ideal)
- Provocative, in that they stretch the organization beyond its norm into novel and more desired forms of interaction
- Stated in the affirmative, using vivid positive imagery
- Statements of belief that constitute the ideal organization
- The Provocative Proposition(s) are not about specific actions

Based on the synthesized results of the Discovery Stage and the summarized results of the Dream Stage, Susan Ermisch drafted a Provocative Proposition statement for Engaged Youth. This information was shared in April of 2019 with members of the Leadership Core Committee to get their input. Following is the result of that effort:

Provocative Propositions for Engaged Youth

Our congregation embraces YOUTH by providing a welcome and safe place for youth and their friends to thrive and flourish spiritually - preparing them to make their own spiritual decisions.

Our activities and education are centered around helping youth understand and transform our complex world. We support our Youth as they live out the 7 Principles and lead us into the future.

Impactful Social Justice



IMPACTFUL SOCIAL JUSTICE AT PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

We dedicate ourselves to living our values by consistently engaging the full congregation to educate and activate ourselves and to challenge the intersectional conditions that create and sustain oppression, inequality, and injustice at both the institutional and individual levels – in the world, our communities, our own back yards, and our hearts.

The above statement for Social Justice came as a result of a 9-month Appreciative Inquiry process conducted in 2018-2019, and facilitated by the Prairie Vision Team and volunteers. The information that follows comes from three steps of this process and are called the Discovery, Dream, and Design stages. Team members were guided in this process by the book *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry; A practical Guide to Positive Change* by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom.

The topic of Impactful Social Justice was one of 5 Topics selected as integral to Prairie by members of the Church. The outcome of the Discovery, Dream, and Design stage that follows is intended to be used as a resource and guide for members of Prairie and the Social Justice Committee and other committees as they chart our future course and activities around Social Justice at Prairie.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONNAIRE UNSYNTHESIZED RESULTS FOR IMPACTFUL SOCIAL JUSTICE

The following Discovery results came out of a questionnaire prepared by the Vision Team and given to church members and used in facilitated group sessions on each of the Topics over the course of a 3-month process. Vision Team member Amanda Nelson refined the topic concept as follows:

Impactful Social Justice - When communities are at their best, they create ways for individuals to come together with their own individual passions and abilities to create a sum that is greater than all of the individual parts. When the community does this, the community's love, commitment, and intent is amplified, and the community's positive intent makes a meaningful impact on not only those participating in the collective efforts, but for all of those people, organizations and institutions the community partners with.

Two questions were asked to uncover the best of what is and has been with regard to Social Justice at Prairie. Here are the unsynthesized results compiled by Kim Rebecca-Murray:

Question 1. What do you see at Prairie's greatest strength related to impactful Social Justice?

ANSWERS

- Passion, enthusiastic leaders.
- Service Sunday - has engaged more people in social justice
- Many ways to get engaged in social justice
- Prairie members together making a difference in the community, like Habitat for Humanity, Aurora Warms the Night
- Many members are passionate. Prairie is noticed for attendance at events like Standing on the Side of Love. We now have people check us out based on our justice work/focus. Sometimes there is media attention (Pennies for Peace). Prizes for soup cookoff. Good intentions. Openness to difficult situations and discussions. Noticeable banner sends message. Sometimes youth is involved. Wide variety of justice issues. There is a focus on our "learning" rather than our help.
- Tenants for Accompanying - small group meeting format
- Our ability to come together in lone groups for meaningful results to make a difference and inspire our youth and others to a life of fighting for justice, Examples that really Howe's this was Habitat builds from many years ago and the work with AWTN. They brought together all ages and people who don't really show up.
- Justice League with its broad reach and intentional check-in and story telling makes it a mission and about personal growth, not just tasks
- Information, action
- Commitment of leaders
- Brings us forward by educating us, challenging us, not accepting the status quo

- Showing us that we need to change in order to grow; helping us understand bigger issues
- Even though our focus changes from time to time (every 5 or ten years or so), we are always working on something worthwhile
- It's good that we let the focus flow to the areas where there's currently the most passion
- Getting out into the community gets me to places I wouldn't have gone otherwise and pushes me outside my comfort zone. That helps me growth while (hopefully) benefitting the larger community
- My perspective as an outsider (someone who has not been active in Prairie's social justice work) is that Prairie already is active and making an impact toward making a different just by increasing awareness and being active in multiple activities - BLM, Pride, donations for multiple movements, homelessness, poverty, clean-up projects, food abcnk, etc.
- Prairie already has an SJ program/group to be proud of
- Intersectionality
- Intersectionality through education and the flow of information. In short, we are educating ourselves. Being creative. We are fundraisers. We invest in community. We give gifts to other nonprofit organizations. We are doing a lot with a small amount of money. We don't just give money - we show up.
- Communication - who, what, when, where and why (congregation's choice? Assumption)
- Regularly scheduled meetings
- Been introduced to and educated about people and situations that I wouldn't know about otherwise
- Refugee family - met them at airport, took them to apartment, bought groceries and clothes, helped set up apartment - an amazing experience
- I appreciate a community that supports itself with help from others
- Aurora Warms the Night
- Gay pride parades with our kids-
- My kids have introduced and exposed to justice issues ... makes them more open to the world around us; I'm thankful
- We give to the community and attempt to engage others (non-members). Examples are Prairie Food Drive in August. We went into the surrounding area to secure food; Aurora Warms the Night - Prairie members prepared and served food to non-members
- From visitor: Honestly, this church seems pretty diverse all things considered. Good job; keep trucking along.
- I was proud to help carry Prairie's banner in the Women's March, I am learning that it impact social justice I must first recognize social injustice. People of color among our community are teaching me about racism and helping me uncover my own ignorance of my privilege. It's me a bit longer to realize that my heritage can be a barrier to my forward progress. But others have been patient with me. I appreciate that. This is a work in progress for me
- Have been in various justice efforts including marches and collecting money but I think the most impactful effort is the hands-on interaction with AWTN, specifically

the picnic this past summer when many Prairie people stepped outside of the comfort zones and had meaningful interactions with at-risk folks. Also true of the Laundry Days. The Justice League is a great effort overall but am not sure how impactful it is as a whole

- The structure of the JL meetings is great in that it emphasizes the connectivity between us and others who have had, perhaps, life experiences very distinctive from our own - that structure is impactful to the individual
- Emphasis on social justice activities in the local community is most meaningful. Involvement in other movements and groups with whom we have shared values stimulates people. When Prairie members have been active in promoting ballot issues and campaigns, participants feel as if they are doing important things and making an impact. Any member who finds such activity too “political” should not be forced to be part of such activities. Things such as “common sense” gun control and voting rights, getting people to vote, and supporting public education should not be too controversial. Active expression of our values might not be attractive to all members but this may bind others together and make them enthusiastic about Prairie.
- I was proud to help carry Prairie's banner in the Women's March. I am learning that to impact social justice I must first recognize social injustice. People of color among our community are teaching me about racism and helping me uncover my own ignorance of my privilege. It takes me a bit longer to realize that my heritage can be a barrier to my forward progress. But others have been patient with me. I appreciate that. This is a work in progress for me.
- The service Sunday's have been impactful- to see what ur little church can do on Colfax. The laundry days were very strong because we are never short of volunteers or contributions. Going to the cemetery and putting flags on the graves on fallen soldiers was intimate - entire families showed up and did this together. The picnic was amazing and we looked like we knew what we were doing and an amazing turnout from Prairie. The marches - protesting guns, MLK, Women's - I felt we belonged there as UUs - that we were being true to our covenant and connecting with others in the immediate and broad community.
- As co-chair of the Justice League, I could go on and on. What has impressed me the most is the participation in Service Sundays, which have grown to be a tradition. Not only is there participation in numbers, there is participation as people really try to push themselves outside their comfort zones and accompany people. I also am extremely appreciative of recent efforts by the community to tackle concepts of racism and white supremacy and fragility. And because people have attended our conversations who are not members of the church, we are providing a service to the local community. We are serving as a resource.
- What has impressed me is the commitment of Kim and Melissa. The service Sundays have been a great way to go out into the community.
- The dedicated and passionate leadership of Melissa Bishop and Kim Murray has been inspiring as they coordinate action efforts, but also share ideas and inspiration during services. The dedication to the Social Justice mission of the majority of the congregation has also been meaningful.

Question 2. What additional work can be done to reaffirm and increase these strengths in our community?

ANSWERS

- Keep doing what we're doing
- Get more people engaged in planning process (how?)
- Assess longer meeting time with those who do not attend - how can we make the meeting more accessible from a time commitment perspective?
- Would like to work together on criminal justice reform. The idea centers around the ideal for the human capacity for redemption, the opportunity for a second chance
- More regular, focused education offered in a variety of formats
- Return to some former justice focus
- Increase leadership capacity
- Continued emphasis on a variety of communication
- Balance of limited/deep focus of variety
- Intentional invitation
- Deepening interfaith partnerships
- International-based missions, either with UUSC or CROP walk or others.
- Have youth leaders of something
- We used to have more open-space clean-up
- Look at Parker Chronical/Aurora paper articles for some of what we can do
- Coordinating/organizing events like PrideFest and other marches
- Realizing that we must continually learn and apply our insights
- Amend/correct
- Group emails
- Notice of meetings
- Coordination of efforts
- Intentionally invite people
- Share service opportunities with the non=Prarie community. I think there are lots of people who don't belong to a church who would like to do good in the world but don't know where to start or haven't been invited/offered the opportunity
- Have people sign up for events to feel committed but drop ins are totally welcome
- Have a particular contact/organizer for each event
- By getting more people involved and witnessing their passions, Prairie's SJ program can increase
- Fundraising committee and more focus, Grant writing opportunities - ie justice grants. Big community project like a garden or green energy grant,
- Political issues can be divisive
- Logistics/mechanics of effectiveness - are our goals met
- Focus - how many issues should we address?
- Pay attention to be aware of all the opportunities where we can help others
- Repeat past activities
- The discussion group on "White Fragility" is a prime example of how we can help each other learn and grow toward more impactful social justice - more like this.

- Not be afraid to have organized fundraising efforts toward a specific goal
- Addressing new people's factions
- Re-iterate/re-communicate JL mission and meeting structure
- Re-publicize the web
- As much as possible, social justice activities should be local and might be in cooperation with other groups and faith communities. Prairie might consider an ongoing commitment to the Parker Task Force. Any way Prairie might help local people who are homeless or unemployed would be well worth the effort, Support of immigrants might also be considered. Habitat for Humanity deserves more emphasis. Prairie might reach out to some other groups in the Parker areas and see if we can make a "common cause." Prairie might consider being more aggressive in support of public policy matters - even though some might consider this too political.
- The discussion group on "White Fragility" is a prime example of how we can help each other learn and grow toward more impactful social justice. More like this.
- More participation in the planning and in the committee. More membership, meetings, planning. Child care considerations. Making the meeting so that they can happen around peoples schedules - maybe subcommittee meetings. Or get Entire congregation to commit to attending 4 JL meetings per year. Increase partnerships with other local churches and nonprofits and more focus on environmental justice and intersectionality with environmental justice; some task forces to make sure that we're making an impact. Host a forum to identify service gaps for homeless in Arapaho's and Douglass counties and also host a health fair.
- I would like to attract new leadership to the Justice League. I would like to really take the next steps with restorative justice for the women impacted by K. Wiley's behaviors. I would like to explore restorative justice in general. I would like to expand upon our baby steps of helping the homeless in Douglas and Arapahoe counties by hosting a forum for community partners to uncover service gaps and develop a plan to cover those gaps - notably that there is no winter shelter for men in these counties. I would like to engage in long-term planning for a Garden For Justice in which Prairie, via grant monies, purchases or leases a plot of land, plants, teaches people to plant, serves as an outdoor sanctuary for Prairie members, provides harvest opportunity for local people and families at risk for hunger, etc. Religious programming intersecting with environmental justice initiatives. A more organized environmental justice task force. Involving children/youth in Justice League.
- It is always a challenge to find ways of going out into the community. I liked working with Parker food bank. Also getting involved with other churches in the area.
- More individuals involved in making things happen and leading. Also other areas of social justice are priorities to some members and visitors. Expanding the focus into subgroups might bring more active members to the committee. The meetings are interesting and the worship/reflections meaningful. Finding out why more don't attend would be helpful.

DISCOVERY RESULTS SYNTHESIZED FOR IMPACTFUL SOCIAL JUSTICE

Synthesized by Samera Baird

Summary of Prairie's Greatest Strengths:

Prairie's greatest strengths relating to Impactful Social Justice are our engaged congregation, passionate leadership and the dedication by our members to make a social justice difference in ourselves, the larger community, and the greater world. We don't just give money, we show up. Activities, such as Service Sunday, inspire us and help grow our church. A focus is made on learning, openness and discussion on difficult topics and situations that leads to personal growth for members and children.

Additional Work:

- Publicize and share information and organization to encourage members and friends to attend activities;
- Send reminders and announcements of upcoming events;
- Get more people engaged in planning;
- Promote partnerships with other organizations;
- More regular, focused education offered in a variety of formats;
- Focus - how many issues should we address?
- Repeat past activities;
- The discussion group on "White Fragility" is a prime example of how we can help each other learn and grow toward more impactful social justice;
- As much as possible, social justice activities should be active, local, and in cooperation with other groups and faith communities;
- Help local people who are homeless, unemployed, immigrants, etc;
- Plan meetings around peoples schedules - maybe subcommittee meetings;
- New leadership to the Justice League;
- Develop a plan to cover social justice gaps - no winter shelter for men; and
- Religious programming intersecting with environmental justice initiatives.

DREAM RESULTS SUMMARIZED FOR IMPACTFUL SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Dream Sunday results for Impactful Social Justice were summarized by the facilitator, Kim Rebecca-Murray

Living our values.

- Prairie is a leader in social justice through the active participation of all members and partnership with the community and other justice-seeking organizations.
- Dream illustrates full, all-age congregational participation at a variety of justice-related activities, including marching, legislative action, witnessing, accompaniment, sustainable farming.
- Justice issues referenced include restorative justice, economic disparities, racial and immigrant justice, environmental justice, and animal/insect rights.
- The dream reflects a desire for Prairie to serve as a resource for the community on matters of justice, including providing education, organized activism, safe space for conversation, financial resources to those in need, refuge, food bank, etc.

The larger world.

- Prairie will covenant and collaborate with the wider world to do the work of transformation and build a world of connection, justice and peace.
- This dream of connection to a greater world was captured through the use of imagery and symbols such as globes, mountains, stars, yin/yang, rainbows, hearts, UU symbols, Lady Justice, peace signs, and an elaborate graphic of economic movement upward toward equity.
- Teamwork was reflected in illustrations of people gathering together, marching together, and working together.

DESIGN PROCESS FOR IMPACTFUL SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Design Process results in a Provocative Proposition statement for each of the Topics and are intended to be:

- Narrative statements (describing the ideal)
- Provocative, in that they stretch the organization beyond its norm into novel and more desired forms of interaction
- Stated in the affirmative, using vivid positive imagery
- Statements of belief that constitute the ideal organization
- The Provocative Proposition(s) are not about specific actions

Based on the synthesized results of the Discovery Stage and the summarized results of the Dream Stage, Kim Rebecca-Murray drafted a Provocative Proposition statement for Impactful Social Justice. This information was shared in May of 2019 with members of the Social Justice Committee to get their input. Following is the result of that effort:

Provocative Proposition for Impactful Social Justice

We dedicate ourselves to living our values by consistently engaging the full congregation to educate and activate ourselves and to challenge the intersectional conditions that create and sustain oppression, inequality, and injustice at both the institutional and individual levels – in the world, our communities, our own back yards, and our hearts.

Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own



STABLE AND INSPIRED HOME OF OUR OWN AT PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

Staffing - Our paid staff use available resources to help us all look good. They keep us informed of our opportunities to help each other and our greater community. Our various committees and teams benefit from their daily maintenance of Prairie priorities and make us proud. We are better together because of their guidance.

Facilities - The place where we meet each week vibrates with the energy of our enthusiasm for our mission. It echoes with the sounds of our choir and children. Together we look forward to the day when we will fill our own building with our community. This place will continue to reflect our values and ideology. We keep our covenant to each other and the outside world in this place we call home.

The above statement for Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own came as a result of a 9-month Appreciative Inquiry process conducted in 2018-2019, and facilitated by the Prairie Vision Team and volunteers. The information that follows comes from three steps of this process and are called the Discovery, Dream, and Design stages. Team members were guided in this process by the book *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry; A practical Guide to Positive Change* by Diana Whitney and Amanda Trosten-Bloom.

The topic of Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own was one of 5 Topics selected as integral to Prairie by members of the Church. The outcome of the Discovery, Dream, and Design stage that follows is intended to be used as a resource and guide for members of Prairie and the Board of Trustees and other committees as they chart our future course and activities around our Prairie Home.

DISCOVERY QUESTIONNAIRE UNSYNTHESIZED RESULTS FOR STABLE AND INSPIRED HOME OF OUR OWN

The following Discovery results came out of a questionnaire prepared by the Vision Team and given to church members and used in facilitated group sessions on each of the Topics over the course of a 3-month process. Vision Team member Amanda Nelson refined the topic concept as follows:

Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own - When faith communities are at their best they enjoy coming together in a place that is welcoming, has a spiritual aesthetic for services and other programming, is safe, has adequate facility space, is affordable for the congregation, and can be counted on for the long term.

Two questions were asked to uncover the best of what is and has been with regard to Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own. Here are the unsynthesized results compiled by Kim Rebecca-Murray:

Stable and Inspiring Home of Our Own

Question 1. What do you see as Prairie's greatest strength related to our Church Home?

ANSWERS

- Located in a school has provided affordable and green space to worship in.
- The cost - $\frac{1}{3}$ less than commercial space
- Good rooms for our RE and the playground; several rooms for use
- Green
- Space to dance
- Security - not as likely to have issues
- I like our central location. If I have to drive more than 15 miles (currently), I would miss some of the services.
- No maintenance, mortgage or management issues
- Adequate parking
- I think the projector has been a strong addition to services. The visual variety is inspiring and adds richness to the service. Improved sound system is good as well.
- When we were at Sierra Hills Middle School, the raised stage made a good impression. The larger space felt good.
- The fact that we are in a school suggests safety for children and implies a learning environment
- Positive impact - food drive, blessing of the animals,, worked well for AWTN training
- For me, it's about the community, not the building or specific location. A warm, welcoming place is what I've found at Prairie UU - I have attended services in very beautiful buildings that have left me cold
- Helping set up and take down just reminds we that we work together

- Schools usually display encouraging and inspiring and uplifting messages
- Makes/helps our kids feel comfortable
- We pull together without division usually for the community - like the Task Force (food drive) though not our neighborhood directly
- I have only known Prairie here - strengths are that is not too costly, community works together at setting up
- Good space for Fellowship
- It's kind of fun and bonding to put away folding chairs together
- By wandering from school to school, we get exposure to different neighborhoods
- It's great that meeting in a school is very green - we use an existing building that would otherwise be empty on Sundays
- I love the atmosphere and lighting when we decorate for Xmas - lighting makes a big difference
- It's awesome when we meet outside for Blessing of the Animals - it's great that we have that option
- Our current space has been the best thus far, but the fact that the school can ask us to leave with little notice is unnerving. It's happened many times before.
- This building allows us to use most of the space we need so RE has had space not previously available.
- Fermin and all he does
- Having a place to gather after service to share food and talk
- Video screen
- Adequate parking
- Adjustable lighting
- Visibility is important and related to that, the spot is easy to find and easy to get to.
- Nice lighting is good - we have had that for some Christmas services
- The lack of a "home of our own" is a rallying point for many Prairie members. We all help and work together to set up Sunday services and we share our homes for get together. Using public facilities for Prairie events is a very "green" way of doing things. We are free of some of the worries that go along with owning a building - insurance, maintenance, caretakers, etc. Prairie is a community of people, not a place. There is no way that Prairie can be a building - unless the membership triples, there is an influx of wealthy members, or we receive a significant endowment. The responsible approach is having a different physical "home" would be a sharing arrangement with another faith community or another compatible organization. Having to deal with the expected problems that along with having a physical come will likely be a burden and a distraction. Placing emphasis on the community, not on the building, can keep Prairie unique and focused on the things most meaningful to members - like social justice and music.
- visibility is important, and related is that the spot is easy to find and easy to get to. Nice lighting is good - we have had that for some Christmas services.
- I think that it would be great to have our own space, instead of being in a school setting, for a number of reasons. First of all, we don't have a lease...so we can't guarantee that we won't be asked to leave on extremely short notice. Secondly,

we have very limited storage space at the school, so we have to bring many items back and forth from Sunday to Sunday. Also, we have little if any hospitality equipment available on site...such as a kitchen with refrigeration, ovens, and many other kitchen-related items. We also don't have classrooms, or an office for our staff that can be used during weekdays. I don't think that we necessarily need to purchase a building...at least not until we have enough membership to warrant the expenses. A rental building would be just fine with me. I believe that having a more 'permanent' space would give most people a greater feeling of Prairie being their spiritual 'home' away from home.

- Fermin and all he does Having a place to gather after service to share food and talk Video screen Adequate parking Adjustable lighting
- We have a good relationship with the current elementary school. Even if no long term lease they do seem to really want us there and to like to work with us. It is nice that its a green building with solar power so that fits into our environmental mission. Having a nice playground and field area outside is great too, as RE classes, child care, and sometimes adults too use that space. Having separate spaces for sanctuary and fellowship I think has a nice vibe to it.
- The space we are in is kid-friendly and that's really important. There is a sense of safety for the kids - even the walls are padded. The different classrooms and lounges offer us good space for learning hour activities. Ferman is the key - he makes us feel safe. We would not be able to do it without him. We pay a fair price for that school and we make the most of the time we have there.
- I have not been a member long enough to comment on the different homes. Only have experienced Pine Grove. I really love having church in a school setting because I think of church as an educational experience. I like the different rooms for activities afterwards. I love the playgrounds outside which provide alternative settings for the kids, especially those who need to move around a lot. I like the courtyard where we have had outdoor services, notably for Blessing of the Animals. The cafeteria space is excellent for fellowship. I like the sanctuary when it is lit for holidays and it is conducive space for showing video, which I think has become an important and progressive part of our services. I also appreciate that we are being prudent with our money by renting a space and I feel like we are minimizing our carbon footprint by making use of a space already in existence rather than taking up other space.
- I have attended only where we are now. I wish we had a place of our own so we wouldn't have to pack up each week. Also, we would have a place to meet during the week. One of the nice things now, though, is the presence of Fermin. He is a part of our community too. I love that this meeting place is close to my home. I don't want to move out of Parker.
- Coming from an historical meeting house and new green sanctuary that was in itself inspiring and was one of the draws to visitors and members the ability of members to transform a gym and cafeteria into a warm meeting and fellowship space was inspiring to me. I have not missed on a regular basis the formal space of my past. I have enjoyed returning for a yearly visit, but look forward to the people rather than the building. I also don't miss the challenges of raising funds for the building. There is a second fundraising campaign going on to pay down

the debt. Having a space to leave materials in place and to meet during the week would be nice. The focus should be on growing our community in the near future. How much more would it cost to have a permanent place than we are currently spending?

Question 2. What additional work can be done to reaffirm and increase these strengths in our community?

ANSWERS

- We should spend one Sunday a year volunteering with parents and families of our school home to improve/better this school. This may also have the benefit of raising awareness about our church home to the community.
- Lights - we can already just use some of the lights in the sanctuary and should do this regularly - like second lights from the front and every other
- Better acoustics in the gym - if we paid for installation of acoustics tiles on ($\frac{2}{3}$) of walls, I could hear better. School would need to improve.
- Keep Fermin happy!
- Sound system - provide a dedicated sound person - have a way to provide background music
- Visual elements - think about simple enhancements and additions that could enhance services
- Better control over lighting
- Getting the word out to the community of who we are and our values and programs
- Provide community services (?)
- More chair cushions (2)
- Dedicated storage unit
- Chair covers with pockets to hold hymnals
- Awareness and sharing - like budgeting and invitations to board meetings
- Lighting changes
- Increase outside services (3)
- Visibility of music
- Signage on Lincoln and Jordan (2)
- Make current expenses known
- Enhance lighting for every service, especially now that we have a screen.
- But again, the problem (major) is that a change in leadership at the school could change our semi-stability.
- Lack of our own space has constrained our growth.
- Lack of adequate storage is still problematic.
- Groups such as social justice must scrounge for meeting space and our community impact is limited.
- Space and home are important to any community. I'd say some sort of symbol is important like all those bumper stickers I keep seeing on all the Christian Church members' cars. Something that identifies us like that may be useful for community building

- Our own space with kitchen, storage, offices, classrooms, 24 hour availability, stability
- I think that it would be great to have our own space, instead for being in a school setting for a numbers of reasons. First of all, we don't have a lease, so we cannot guarantee that we won't be asked to leave on extremely short notice. Secondly, we have very limited storage space at the school, so we have to bring many items back and forth from Sunday to Sunday. Also, we have little is any hospitality equipment on sites, such as a kitchen with refrigeration, ovens, and many other kitchen-related items. We also don't have classrooms or an office for our staff that can be used during weekdays. I don't think that we necessarily need to purchase a building, another not until we have enough membership to warrant the expenses. A rental building would be just fine with me. I believe a more permanent space would give most people a greater feeling of Prairie being their spiritual "home" away from home.
- We should continue to investigate potential rental space in the local areas. In addition to this search, I recommend that an analysis should be conducted to find out how much more financing it may take to make it financially practical to actually move into such a space. Having an actual cost "number" available to our membership, on a per-member basis, for example, might stimulate additional pledge contributions. Once members get a "feel" for what's required to actually move into a space of our own, they may be motivated to give a little more.
- A location with food visibility, permanent signage and natural lighting would be beneficial
- We need to appreciate the advantages if being a "virtual" church and a community of loving people, free of the burdens that go along with maintaining a physical facility, We should make good use of public spaces and homes and should actively pursue opportunities for sharing a facility with other groups.
- A location with good visibility, permanent signage, and natural lighting would be beneficial
- We should continue to investigate potential rental space in the local area. In addition to this search, I recommend that an analysis should be conducted to find out how much more financing it may take to make it financially practical to actually move into such a space. Having an actual cost 'number' available to our membership, on a per-member basis, for example, might simulate additional pledge contributions. Once members got a 'feel' for what's required to actually move into a space of our own, they may be motivated to give a little more.
- Our own space with kitchen, storage, offices, classrooms, 24 hour availability, stability
- I like the times when we make the sanctuary look extra special---Christmas for example. If we had a strong effort every week to go all out to sanctuaryize the sanctuary that would make it feel more home too, having more banners against the paneling behind the sanctuary for example. Maybe two banners (similar in size to the Black Lives Matter) that we put just outside the entrance to the school that says, "Welcome to Prairie" would emphasize the churchiness of the space on Sundays. More storage space would help us too, for example for the Social Justice library that is proposed. As we don't have a permanent lease, if we stay

at our current location it would be wise to keep a good working relationship with the principal... every board president should meet with their principal, and I guess that would be true wherever.

- We need a space of our own because I feel like our creativity is blocked and the ability to expand ourselves is hindered. This is important because we need to expand our membership to survive and we need to be attractive to ourselves - that we're comfortable where we are and excited about that - AND that same excitedness and comfort and vibe will attract people. When people who are not comfortable with where you are, others can sense that and its not attractive. Like the other day we had to abandon an important conversation because we had to be out by 1 - that was uncomfortable. I come to church to feel good and secure.
- I am in the minority in that I am not interested in us having our own building. Perhaps we could share a building with a Jewish community because they have services at different times. In this way we could also have access to space for special occasions, meetings, admin space, community service like music, art, RE explorations/speakers, AA meetings, etc. I have heard of churches sharing space even when they have services at the same time. I am thinking for the time being we might think outside the box. If we remain in the school, there are things that we can do to make it even better. Have classes before service. See if we can have the building longer than 1 p.m. Have pleasant lighting all the time, not just during the holidays. Have as many services as possible outside when the weather permits. Look into having lighting in the sanctuary that mimics natural lighting LED?
- Staying in Parker is very important to me.
- More members who make a financial contribution.

**DISCOVERY RESULTS SYNTHESIZED FOR STABLE AND INSPIRED HOME
OF OUR OWN
Synthesized by Samera Baird**

Summary of Prairie's Greatest Strengths:

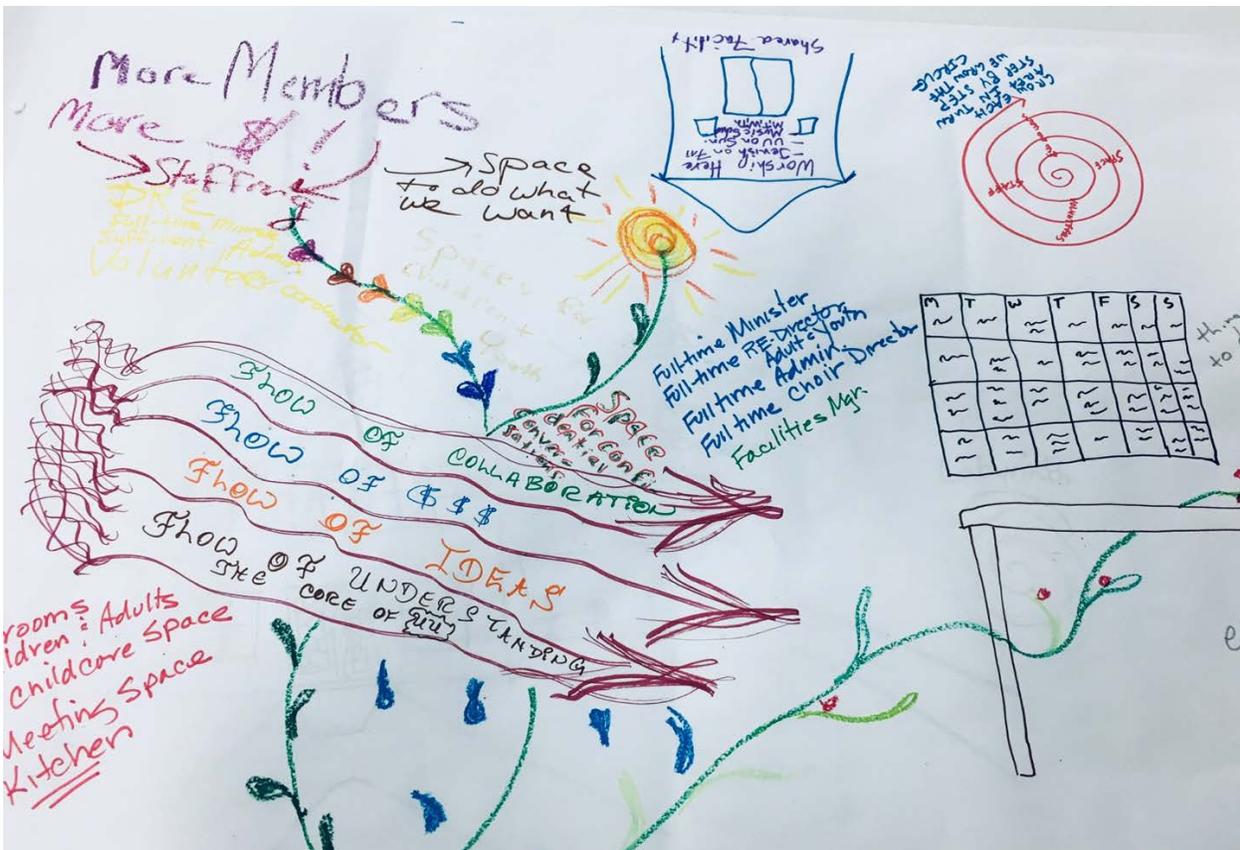
Prairie's greatest strengths relating to Stable and Inspired Home of our Own include the advantages associated with meeting in a school in Parker where safety is a priority and the space is kid friendly; the financial cost of maintenance are substantially lower than the cost of purchasing land or owning and maintaining a building; the location is central to Prairie's primary catchment area; Fermin is available to provide support; we have adequate space for a variety of activities including parking and a playground; our work together to set up/take down the sanctuary builds community; and our space is "green" since we reduce our carbon footprint by using an existing building.

Additional Work:

- More space for storage;
- Think of ways to increase comfort in and aesthetics in our sanctuary
- Better acoustics;
- More creativity with lighting;
- Conduct outside services;
- Enhance publicity;
- Realistic overview of Prairie's financial resources and the cost of owning a building;
- Continue to grow our congregation and seek more stability through a leased space, and one that is available 24/7 to our congregation and has amenities such as a kitchen; and
- Maintain a good working relationship with the school (volunteer at the school once a year?) so we have less chance of being displaced.

DREAM SUNDAY ARTWORK FOR STABLE AND INSPIRED HOME OF OUR OWN

Dream Sunday was organized by Maurice and Kim Murray and the Vision Team. It was held at Prairie in lieu of a Church Service on February 24, 2019. The following outcomes came from a facilitated effort where people rotated among 5 tables, one for each of the 5 Topics, and were asked to imagine a bigger and bolder future for Prairie, in this case related to Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own. They were given markers and pencils and a large sheet roll to express their thoughts and feelings. The following are photos of that artwork.





DREAM RESULTS SUMMARIZED FOR STABLE AND INSPIRED HOME OF OUR OWN

The Dream Sunday results for Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own were summarized by the facilitator, Bill Baird.

Staffing - Prairie dreams of a competent, diverse and fully-coordinated staff that is adequately resourced, team-oriented, and communicates well with all.

Dreams show full-time staff who work together to keep a busy calendar of activities that feature youth participation and social justice outreach. All activities are communicated to all members through an up-to-date website and regular announcements.

Facility - Prairie dreams of a beautiful facility that incorporates input from our congregation, is designed to support our activist community – with an architecture that reflects our ideology and invites growth.

Dreams include (stained glass) windows to let in outside light. We dream of classrooms for RE programs and a welcoming entrance. A kitchen where we can store and prepare food; an office for our minister and staff. We would like to have a garden where flowers and vegetables grow, and perhaps a memorial to those we remember.

DESIGN PROCESS FOR STABLE AND INSPIRED HOME OF OUR OWN

The Design Process results in Provocative Proposition statements for each of the Topics and are intended to be:

- Narrative statements (describing the ideal)
- Provocative, in that they stretch the organization beyond its norm into novel and more desired forms of interaction
- Stated in the affirmative, using vivid positive imagery
- Statements of belief that constitute the ideal organization
- The Provocative Proposition(s) are not about specific actions

Based on the synthesized results of the Discovery Stage and the summarized results of the Dream Stage, Bill Baird and Jan Spooner drafted a Provocative Proposition statement for Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own. This information was shared in May of 2019 with members of the Board of Trustees to get their input. Following is the result of that effort:

Provocative Proposition for Stable and Inspired Home of Our Own

Staffing - Our paid staff use available resources to help us all look good. They keep us informed of our opportunities to help each other and our greater community. Our various

committees and teams benefit from their daily maintenance of Prairie priorities and make us proud. We are better together because of their guidance.

Facilities - The place where we meet each week vibrates with the energy of our enthusiasm for our mission. It echoes with the sounds of our choir and children. Together we look forward to the day when we will fill our own building with our community. This place will continue to reflect our values and ideology. We keep our covenant to each other and the outside world in this place we call home.