

Alki United Church of Christ

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October 27, 2020

Written Presentation of Future Story

We presented the new vision statement and the Future story live for service this past Sunday, and now we want to have the congregation formally ratify these items and begin working on the next steps as Alki UCC moves into our Third Act.

After Reverend Diane Darling retired, we conducted an extensive search for an interim pastor. Twice the search team selected a good candidate and offered them a contract, but in both cases those candidates chose other offers. While this caused some stress for us at the time, in hindsight I think it was a blessing, as we needed to do the work, instead of relying on an interim pastor to show us the way.

As we continued our search, we learned of the Hope New Beginnings process, and in conjunction with hiring Pastor Kelly Wadsworth as our transitional pastor, felt that the discernment process outlined by Hope offered an excellent way to discern the future of Alki UCC. We embarked on that journey last summer, starting with a congregational meeting and some preliminary training. This then led to the six house groups, which comprised nearly 100% of the active members of the congregation.

When the 6 group leaders consolidated input from the house meetings and reported on the findings, it turned out there was great consistency and vision between those six groups. As the house leaders were preparing to present that information, Covid hit, and we found ourselves meeting via Zoom. Nevertheless, two groups emerged from the findings presented by the house leaders. First, was the Mission team, tasked with focusing on mission vision and our future story. Second was Radical Redevelopment, which looked at all the various ideas for renovation or redevelopment of the building and property, and the possible future uses, focused on narrowing those ideas down to the most viable and consistent with the input from the house meetings.

Ultimately those two groups came back together to make sure that mission and vision matched the future building redevelopment strategies. The result of that collaboration and work over the past six months is the Future Story we are now presenting to the congregation. Along with the future story, we are also re-affirming our existing purpose statement and created a vision statement which is the guiding light behind that Future Story. Your responses to the survey circulated in September also supported all the main elements of the Future Story.

To achieve that Future Story, we now need to work on a series of action steps for the balance of our current fiscal year, with the goal of fleshing out the components needed to start enacting that Future Story in time for our annual congregational meeting in June.

We will hold a second congregational meeting on Sunday, November 8, at the end of our regular worship service. This is the official notice for that meeting. The Council has put forth three motions for consideration:

1. Alki UCC hereby reconfirms the Purpose Statement which is currently within the church by-laws.
2. Alki UCC hereby adopts the Vision Statement to be added to the current church by-laws.
3. Alki UCC hereby votes to support the vision and intent of the Future Story, understanding that details of that eventual structure are conceptual, and some of those details may change as the Story develops.

With the adoption of those motions, we will formally begin the work on Act III, which will now need the help of all of you to conduct research, find needed outside resources, and enter into discussions and negotiations with various interested outside parties. This will include ongoing work with KHN and Admiral UCC, the UCC Building and Loan Fund and other potential financial resources, other faith communities and community organizations, and other consulting resources to help flesh out the identified options and financial resources.

The council is currently putting together a phased action plan which will have a variety of sub-committees and opportunities for congregational involvement, which we will present at the meeting on November 8. There is going to be a lot of hard, exciting work to turn this vision into reality.

In the near future we will put out a request for volunteers and form these new action teams.

The full text of the Future Story is attached. Please click on the following link to access the Purpose and Vision Statements, as well as an audio and video file of Alki UCC's Future Story as presented at Sunday's congregational meeting.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Co4vSNdC46rGRXcQ_Zz8Fb61xlzBXxTq

— Joe Mitter