

LAUMC 2020 Vision Project

Question of the Week Series Results Summary



The LAUMC 2020 Vision Study Committee is pleased to present this summary of the nearly 1,200 responses to the “Question of the Week Series” conducted in July and August. Special thanks to everyone who shared their ideas and dreams for LAUMC. Your responses establish a fruitful direction to set strategy and plan activities, the next and final phase of the 2020 Vision process.

This report contains the essence of the ideas expressed by the congregation, because the volume of data precludes publishing all the detailed responses. Using the analysis process described here, the Study Committee extracted themes and “gold nugget” ideas that will guide the committee during the final phase of the 2020 Vision process.

Outline of this report:

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1. Response Analysis Process

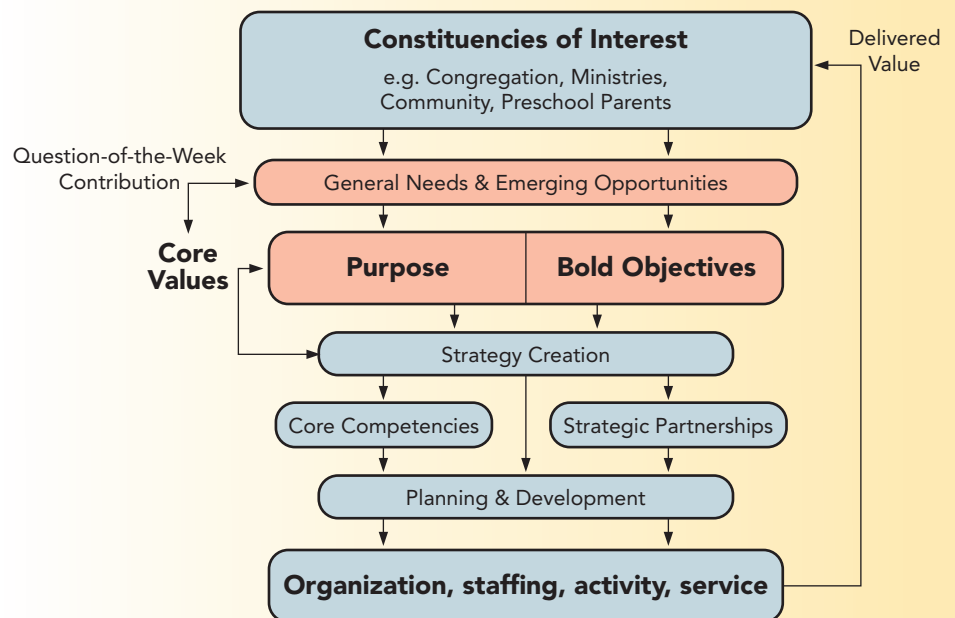
Sorting the Content

The members of the 2020 Vision Study Committee reviewed and evaluated each response to all the weekly questions. The content of each response was first sorted into three categories regarding the nature of the ideas contained — core values, purpose or bold objectives.

- **Core values** content reflects those ideals and principles that respondents consider important at LAUMC.
- Content related to **purpose** primarily describes aspects of life at LAUMC that relate most strongly to the fundamental reasons for its existence.
- Ideas related to **bold objectives** describe specific aims that this institution might pursue in addressing emerging opportunities.

As indicated in the diagram to the right, the information received in these responses will help establish a fruitful direction for subsequent strategy setting and planning activities.

LAUMC Planning Framework



Finding the Nuggets

The second part of the analysis process was somewhat like panning for gold, where sand and gravel, with a little gold mixed in, is swished this way and that in a manner that lets the gold settle and collect in the bottom of the pan. The level of substance in each response was first assessed and graded to determine its “weight.” This was done separately for each of the three categories. No attempt was made to judge the “rightness” or “wrongness” of an idea; only its level of substance or interest. The Study Committee’s goal in this work was to distill from the data all significant themes and interesting ideas in a non-judgmental fashion.

Once all responses had been assessed, the entries in each category were sorted by level of interest or substance, and the results from the various questions were merged into a single collection for each category. This data was then sorted and reviewed again for common ideas and themes. Lists of representative thoughts in each of the three categories were then compiled, edited, converged, and massaged to create a comprehensive and accurate, but highly refined, representation of the overall results.

From this point, a team of LAUMC clergy, staff and lay leaders will establish specific themes or directions based on these results that we as a congregation eventually pursue.

2. Summary of Results: Purpose, Core Values and Bold Objectives

Purpose

Provide an intergenerational, extended family environment based upon a shared faith with openness, fellowship, acceptance and affection.

Provide a variety of inspirational worship experiences and ministries that appeal to and serve a congregation diverse in age, ethnicity, and traditions. Our community's growing Asian population and young adults are current opportunities for new ministries.

Provide opportunities and the means (e.g. extended use of the internet) to be in community together around shared interests and needs. Areas of focus might include groups for youth, young adults and young families; marriage ministry; divorce recovery; music activities, programs and events.

Enable all people to discover and develop their personal gifts and talents in service to God, the community and each other.

Be continually inviting and welcoming to visitors and newcomers, including the non-religious and nominally religious in our community.

Promote personal spiritual growth through study, coaching and worship with Bible study, spiritual direction, Christian perspectives on current issues, and various approaches to worship.

Engage members of our congregation and community in shared mission outreach locally and globally.

- Identify and highlight opportunities to serve.
- Organize, enlist and support participation. Support might include, for instance, childcare or full-family involvement.

Ensure that all people and groups know whatever LAUMC knows through improved communications, shared experiences and understanding, pooling and sharing of expertise.

Nurture our community's children and youth and prepare them to grow in body, mind and spirit, serve God and carry God's message to the world.

Provide moral leadership to our church, the community and the world.

Provide leadership and resources that support the life of our community.

Perpetuate core Methodist beliefs and traditions.



Core Values

- A leader in advancing the principle of acceptance for all as children of God.
- Loving care for a community in need, with special focus on children and families.
- Sharing our abundance with a needy world.
- Bringing people to Christ through worship, study and fellowship.
- A holy, loving, welcoming church home that exemplifies love, trust, tolerance and patience.
- Sharing God's word with the community.
- Comfortable and familiar traditions that connect generations.
- Commitment to spiritual growth and study.
- Authenticity in worship rather than "performances."
- Music effectively integrated into the worship experience.
- Touching Heaven means discernment, listening — allowing God's purpose to be revealed and to guide us.
- Stewardship of our beautiful natural setting, preserving it as a legacy for future generations.

Bold Objectives

Fundamentally change our approach to local outreach and its impact:

- Routinely partner with religious groups of all faiths and other nonprofit organizations to multiply the scope and depth of our impact many times over. Areas of shared involvement might include ministry to the poor, the elderly, troubled youth and people with chemical dependencies.
- Emphasize hands-on, person-to-person relationship building.

Eliminate isolation, misunderstanding and hostility among people by creating community where none currently exists, e.g. among different faiths, ethnic groups.

- Create interfaith dialog by inviting the entire community to hear speakers and be involved in discussion on topics of religion and modern life.
- Gather leaders of all faiths to work together on strategies and solutions as issues arise.

Create a Methodist institute for personal spiritual direction and growth open to churches of all denominations throughout the U.S.

Launch an "LAUMC Without Borders" initiative that engages emerging technologies to expand the reach of the church's message and influence throughout the globe. In 2020, more than 100,000 people worldwide could enjoy our pastors' sermons, our liturgy and our music each Sunday.

Fundamentally improve the relevancy and appeal of LAUMC ministries to a younger and more diverse population. Innovate with new worship formats, music, technology and facilities that greatly amplify the attractiveness, quality and impact of LAUMC services.

Initiate a worldwide dialog among religious leaders in order to identify and articulate a common and concise set of principles that enable people of all faiths to "border, protect and salute" each other in harmony.

Establish LAUMC as a role model organization in environmental stewardship.

3. References

The Eight Questions of the Week

1. Why do you come to LAUMC? Please select your top three reasons. [multiple choice]

- a. Methodist tradition; b. Community worship;
- c. Music; d. Programs for children and youth;
- e. Friends and family attend; f. Programs for seniors;
- g. Discipleship and study opportunities;
- h. Other

Week 1 – July 13, 2008 Response total = 317

2. What change(s) at LAUMC would help you better meet your goals for spiritual growth and service to others? Please be specific.

Week 2 – July 20, 2008 Response total = 101

3. If LAUMC increased its yearly spending by \$1 million how would you allocate that money? Please select your top three areas. [multiple choice]

- a. Hire additional staff; b. Expand/improve current LAUMC facilities;
- c. Acquire additional site for expansion of ministries (e.g., pre-school, Sunday School, worship);
- d. Increase active participation in local mission work;
- e. Increase active participation in global mission work;
- f. Increase local financial giving;
- g. Increase global financial giving;
- h. Develop new programs (please identify);
- i. Other

Week 3 – July 27, 2008 Response total = 255

4. If you were to live elsewhere for five years and then return to LAUMC on a Sunday in July 2013, what things would you hope to find the same? What things would you hope to find changed?

Week 4 – August 3, 2008 Response total = 159

5. Like an extended family, LAUMC has traditions that enrich the life of our congregation. What are your favorite traditions? [multiple choice]

- a. Buck-a-Burger; b. Homecoming; c. Creekside Christmas;
- d. Festival of Carols and Lights;
- e. Intergenerational Mexico House Building;
- f. Other

Do you have suggestions for new inter-generational events or activities that would involve our church family?

Week 5 – August 10, 2008 Response total = 195

6. What can we do at LAUMC to be more welcoming to newcomers and new members?

Week 6 – August 17, 2008 Response total = 67

7. LAUMC has a long tradition of reaching out to local communities and opening our campus to support community activities. Can you suggest new ways that we can continue and enhance this tradition? Please be specific.

Week 7 – August 24 2008 Response total = 48

8. If LAUMC were to be featured on the front page of the local news in September 2020, what would the headline be? What would the article say?

Week 8 – August 31, 2008 Response total = 56



2020 Vision Project

LAUMC has been guided throughout its history by the vision and energy of its congregation. Almost sixty years ago, a group of 100 people held the first worship service for the "Methodist Community Church of Los Altos" under the oak trees along Hale Creek. Their dream was to build a church that would "grow with its community," and certainly it has! With each new decade, clergy and lay leaders have renewed LAUMC's plan for the future and set down goals that challenged us to expand our ministries and use our gifts to *Touch Heaven and Change Earth*. In 2008 our 2020 Vision project is underway to outline the direction and priorities of our church between now and the year 2020 with a special focus on how that vision will impact our buildings and facilities plan.

Question of the Week Survey Process

Beginning in early July 2008 and running for eight consecutive weeks, the 2020 Vision team conducted a "Question of the Week" series. Each week a new question was announced from the pulpit, and each individual was given the opportunity to respond online via the LAUMC website (www.laumc.org) or by filling out a survey card found in the pews. The questions explored what people like most about LAUMC and what they would like to see changed. They asked about favorite traditions and about people's dreams for the future. This program enabled the whole congregation to participate in the early visioning process and informed the 2020 Vision Study Committee about the goals and priorities held by hundreds of members of the LAUMC community.



For More Information

More detail about the responses received during the Question of the Week series is available on the LAUMC website (www.laumc.org). Please email questions about this report or the 2020 Vision Project to 2020Vision@laumc.org or mail to "2020 Vision" via the church office.

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