



Vision Statement

**Christ's compassionate community in Tecumseh
loving and serving prayerfully and unconditionally.**

Keywords / Tags

Community, Compassion, Prayer, Love, Service

Vision versus Mission

Vision: a description of who we want to be. This description is aspirational in that what it describes is not yet fully realized (if at all). It provides a general sense of direction and is intended to guide all we do and filter out those things and activities that do not move us toward who we are becoming.

Mission: a brief statement about what we do to move us toward the vision of who we want to be. It is a general statement of how we implement our vision.

Core Values Discernment

A group met on 24 October 2018 to discern the most important values—the core values—held by our church. The activity was led by our VCI coach, Rev. Lisa Batten. The top four values we identified are:

- Helping others
- Prayer
- Compassion
- Love

This exercise was necessary for us to understand who we are today and to help us develop a vision that would be consistent with our core values.

Vision Statement Development Process

A group attended a workshop on 30 April 2019 to begin the process of developing a vision statement. Working from our list of core values, we explored in depth how we currently live out those values and how we might better express them. Like the earlier core values workshop, this was led by Lisa Batten.

As we began to explore verbiage to articulate our vision, we discarded “helping others” from our list as it is a phrase more appropriate in a mission statement because it is about “doing” rather than “being”.

A vision writing group of four—Susan Gilmore, Carol Legenc, Duane Koppelman, and Pastor Mark Miller—met twice, the first time with Lisa Batten, to develop a terse, descriptive, and memorable vision statement. The vision statement created by this working group is intended to represent the core values of our church and who we want to be as a church into the future.

Purpose of this Commentary

The purpose of this commentary is twofold. First, it offers transparency into the process of the discernment of our core values and vision. Second, it unpacks the terse vision statement so that it can be understood in depth. Thus, the statement is broken down in the following sections.

“Christ’s Community”

Foundational to all else, we of Tecumseh UMC are a community of Christ-followers whose common life is shaped and guided by Jesus Christ. As such we are a community in worship who grow in faith through the means of grace (prayer, Bible reading/study, worship, service to others, Christian conversation, to name the most important).

Although we comprise a church, the word “community” is a more accessible descriptor as its participants look after and support each other while being welcoming and hospitable to new faces.

Ministry and mission, both within the community and out into the world, is a shared enterprise. While particular activities (other than worship) may not involve everyone in the church, it is hoped (expected?) that each person will participate in some way over time.

We are a Christ-centered, Bible-based community, thus discipleship will be a basic goal and activity.

“In Tecumseh”

We are located in Tecumseh, Michigan, a place that contributes to the church community’s sense of identity.

“Compassionate” and “Loving”

These two words are closely related. Compassion (along with the mandates of Jesus Christ) is a basic motivation for service to others as well as welcome and hospitality, especially of those who are hurting in some way. We care about others.

The love in view here is that mentioned repeatedly in the New Testament that is unconditional and self-giving, a love that is focused on the welfare of others. This love is not only directed toward others whom we hope to serve but is and will be what binds us together as a community as we support each other, help each other, and hold each other accountable to our faith and to the good.

“Serving”

Service to others was a repeated theme throughout our discussions regarding both core values and vision. We see ourselves as a church who reaches out into our world, both near and far, to help others. This is not just aspirational. Today, we are engaged in several mission activities, the largest being the Fresh Food Initiative, which involves people in a hands-on way that allows us to build relationships with the people the initiative serves. Yet, there will be ways in which we can do more “ministry-with” rather than “ministry-to” people in need.

To be even more a church in mission, we will need to engage most if not all of those who participate in it in service activities and/or the support of those activities. Doing no more than attending worship once a week will not be enough.

“Unconditionally”

We will welcome and include anyone who comes to us without regard to gender, gender identification, ethnicity, economic status, nationality, marital status, appearance & dress.

“Prayerfully”

Prayer is and will be fundamental to all we do as a community. Everything we do will be anointed with prayer, and by doing this we shall be intentional about keeping God at the center of whatever we do.