

September 2, 2021

Greetings to the Congregations of First UMC Escondido,

Let us introduce ourselves. We are the Strategic Growth and Planning Committee. Our team consists of leaders drawn from each of our three worshipping communities: Manantial de Vida y Luz, RISE, and The Sanctuary. We are a team of nine: Jaime Carbajal, Ron Guiles, Chris Iaccio (secretary), Laurie Schwartz, Karli Tomlinson (chair), and the four pastors—Ruben Torres, William deBos, Benjamin Camp, and Broghan Hunt.

We have been called together to lead a process to help us clearly define how the physical spaces of our campuses are connected to the mission, ministries, and vision of our church.

The need for this process began with our Trustees, who have discovered that our campus is aged and in need of significant and costly repairs – a basement with substantial water intrusion, a kitchen not up to code, many areas inaccessible for the disabled, to name just a few of these issues. As these significant repairs are hindering our growth and ministry, the Trustees asked the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) to engage a larger process by which our community will find a way forward. The CFA has called together this team to begin and guide that process.

This team will guide the process of discovering how our physical spaces do or do not connect to our mission, ministries, and vision of our church. We will then make a recommendation to our governing bodies for their decision. We are not a decision-making body but an exploration and process guiding team. We want to be faithful to our history by thinking creatively about our future.

Our initial meetings have been about team and relationship building. Through pastorally directed values exercises, we've worked to discern **worship, community, and inter-generational ministries** as common core values at the heart of who we are as a church.

We want to be guided by our values as we discern together the next steps God is calling us to take in our ministry and for our campus. Our first next step is to reach out to you, the congregations and people of FUMC Escondido, to assist us in better understanding what these core values mean for us as a whole community of faith.

Please be on the lookout for future correspondence from us in the upcoming weeks as we begin our work.

Finally, we ask that you keep us, this church, and the communities we serve in your thoughts and prayers. We trust that God's spirit is leading us, and that together we will be faithful disciples who follow Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Peace,
The Strategic Growth and Planning Committee

Our journey with God continues.

***Peace,
Pastor William***

...Methodists practice discipleship with prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness...