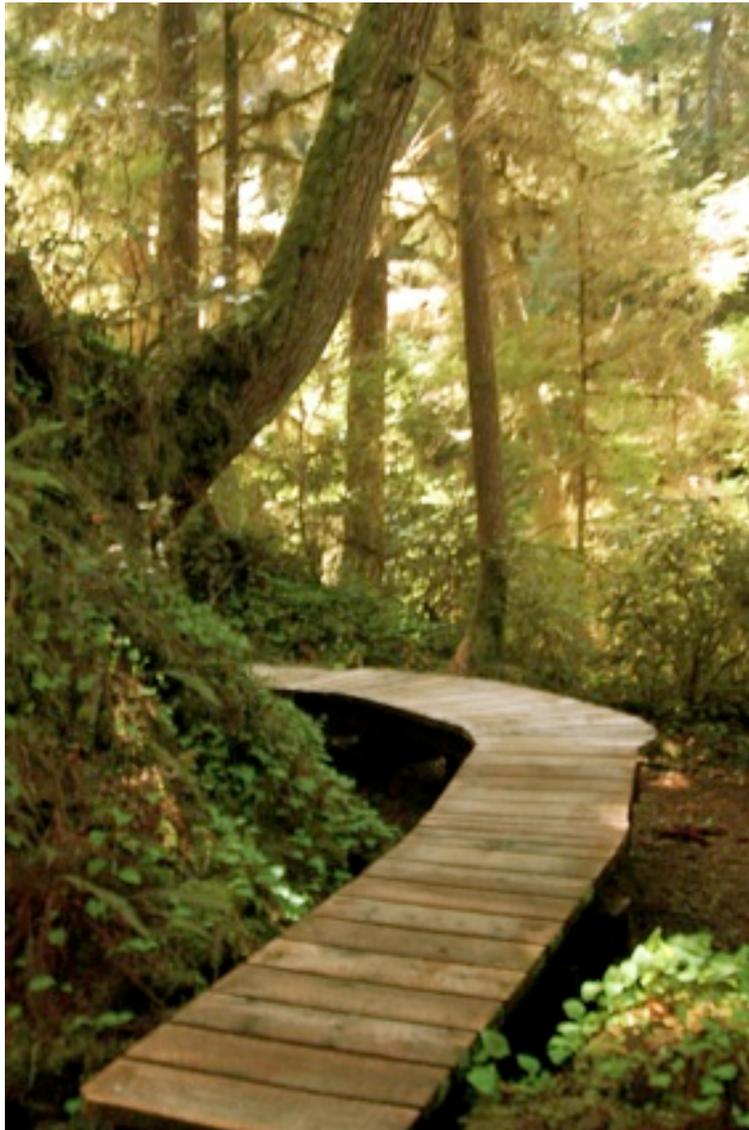

Vision & Values

Walking forward on our journey ... together!

Presentation to the Elders at Friends Langley Vineyard



*'Route and destination must be discovered through the journey if you wish to travel to new lands...
the key to success lies in the creative activity of making new maps.'* Stacy

Vision & Values

Walking forward on our journey ... together!



INTRODUCTION

'Route and destination must be discovered through the journey if you wish to travel to new lands... the key to success lies in the creative activity of making new maps.' Stacy

Our charge!

This process was initiated by Leith White as part of the group of elders responsible for FLV.

From Leith's original email:

"I personally feel a high level of importance in delving more clearly into establishing our purpose, vision, values and how we express that within our community of FLV."

"I want to resume some of the participants that were initially involved with this some months ago, in beginning to address this. Although I think its important that as a group of Elders we dialogue more surrounding this and then on some level, some of us engage with this group (which would really be the REAL working group for this process)."

"This group would be involved in various dialogues & FLV community discussions (Sunday am, SLT, general conversations) and crystallizing all of this down to the pure essence/heart. Included in this would be how to communicate, print documentation (distribution, Sunday service, posting in the church,) communicating in our various forms, and medias, even Home groups."

"Leading into this discussion, I think its important that we involve the rest of the church in explaining what we are doing, where we are going, take the opportunity to reaffirm, teach and explain 'the why' of all this. "

Vision & Values

Although it might sound trivial to bring up such basic matters as language, meaning, and communication, **these are the most fundamental components of dialogue**. We cannot make sense of dialogue without understanding language, meaning, and purpose of what is being communicated in the first place.

Language and meaning are essential in communicating vision and purpose, and unifying people in focus and energy towards them. Remember how God confounded his people by introducing various languages. **(Gen 11: 1-9)** No longer was there a common language but rather many, thus frustrating the efforts of the people of Babel.



This reinforces the need to “hear” and understand each other in order that we might move together in unity.

God instituted diversity of thought, expression and meaning in order that we might fully express His heart. Is it easy? No, but it does create the need for interdependency.

During the course of our process we found ourselves in the thick of this dilemma, but more about that later.

So with this in mind we have constructed the following preamble in an attempt to better articulate **WHAT vision and values within any organization look like**. A grounded point of reference if you like!

The starting point for planning is not the present but the future - a vision of where you want to be.... It is essential too that the vision is based on the guiding philosophy, core beliefs, and purpose of the organisation',



SHARED VISION

"Without Vision, people perish." – Proverbs 29:18

"A vision without a task is a dream - a task without a vision is drudgery- but a task with vision can change the world"

We must first be able to see our vision.

Organizations like many things in our world start as nothing but an idea in someone's mind and then turn into a physical reality. In order to get others actively working towards creating that physical reality, they must be able to see the vision and therefore, we must be able to convey it.

An organization's vision is a desired future.

It can help to guide all who accept and understand it. A shared vision can be a great tool for building a sense of belonging and community. In truth it can provide a basis for body unity.

*"I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be **no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.**" - 1 Corinthians 1:10*

While we did not settle on any kind of vision statement, one recurring theme seemed to emerge.

"Seeing Jesus formed in people"



SHARED VALUES

“And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person’s need was met. They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.” - Acts 2:44-47

“The whole congregation of believers was united as one—one heart, one mind!” - Acts 4:32

- Values represent our ‘modis operandi’ as we govern ourselves, our relationships with each other and form the DNA of our FLV culture & community.
 - For example: ‘transparency’ – How can we be mindful to be transparent in all our dealings with each other? What does that look like?
- Values also govern how we organize our community in terms of structure and practice.
 - For example: ‘team-leadership’ – We have chosen to model and practice team leadership rather than any form of hierarchical system.

Why Identify and Establish Shared Values?

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. - Phil 2:1-3

Effective organizations identify and develop a clear, concise and shared meaning of values, beliefs, and direction so that everyone understands and can contribute. Once defined, values must impact every aspect of our community, from the largest decision through to the smallest act.

We must support and nurture this impact or identifying our shared values will have been a wasted exercise. People will feel fooled and misled unless they see the impact of the exercise within FLV. Jesus of course describes this negligence as “hypocrisy”.



OUR PROCESS & LEARNING

So with our context set; we welcome you to our “Greenhouse!”

Over the past year we truly have been part of a process that has sharpened us, exposed us, and, one which has significantly grown our understanding of each other. There were significant highs and lows throughout the process with some of our greatest challenges coming in the form of unexpected casualties, fear, suspicion, anxiety, agenda and assumptions.

OVERVIEW OF FLV PURPOSE & PRIORITIES.

This was a relatively simple process of looking at what is currently contained within our Constitution and Bylaws; **laid out in summary below:**

Our Purposes

“Develop and maintain a church body of believers in accordance with Holy scriptures, dedicated to doing the work and will of God”

“Promote the physical and spiritual welfare of the body of Christ, individually & collectively”

“Equip the saints to maturity, and assisting them in finding their place of service within the body.”

“Assist in fulfilling the Great Commission.

“Develop and distribute resources of all means in spreading the Gospel”

In reviewing our established purposes outlined in the constitution; in conclusion we had to ask our selves the questions:

“Are these purposes still relevant for us today, as a local expression of the Body of Christ, professing to be followers of Jesus?”

“Do we sense these purposes resonating deep within us, calling out even now, yet to be discovered desires, callings, strategies and simple acts that would fulfill what we as individuals know to be obedience to God’s call on our lives?”

“Would we be willing to commit to these purposes; embracing them fully in all areas of our lives and encourage others to do likewise?”

Without question or hesitation; and in absolute unity we declared a resounding...

“YES!”

(Besides which they’re all Biblically based!)

Vision & Values



Our Priorities

Our “Priorities” as expressed in our Constitution and bylaws are intended to support our stated Purposes. If we are to achieve and walk in our expressed purposes outlined in our Constitution, then establishing priorities and understanding how they relate to our Purposes is essential.

As you read through them you’ll see that they are a blend of focuses that are either task in nature (leans more towards our *Purposes*) or more relationally focused (leaning more towards *Shared Values*).

Regardless of where these priorities lean, Purposes or Values; the intent in essence is to say,

“If these are our Purposes, then these things are essential supporting ingredients to walking out faithfully our Purposes ... therefore they are Priorities!”

Relationships

- Intimacy with God
- Fellowship with another

Teaching & Training

- Discipleship/Spiritual Formation
- The family

Ministry & Sending

- The poor, the sick and the lost
- Releasing/Sending

Vision & Values



DISCOVERY OF OUR VALUES!

'The challenge of discovery lies not in seeking new landscapes but having new eyes'.

Within our lengthy dialogue process the following relational values became apparent to us.

How?

Food was an active part in our discussions, the creation of a family type meal. A coming together based upon each person bringing his or her part/contribution. There was the exhausting effort to push through on the delicate and even contentious topics of discussion, sometimes seriously challenging our commitment to each other and our ability to stay engaged with our task.

Learning to lay 'our opinions and agendas down in preference of another cannot be understated...while the fun and laughter (mostly at each other) always seemed to be close at hand as well.

Perhaps the bedrock for our growth, mutual understanding and submission to each other came from each of us learning how to extend and build trust with each other. In each case, risk and increased tension were the yardstick for growth. Truly "as iron sharpens iron" we have sharpened and shaped each other!

The catalyst for us choosing our shared values was a realized commitment to a shared purpose and cause that was greater than our own individual opinions or agendas, these were the values that took us through this process:

Values

Love for each other
Community/Relationship
Authenticity/Transparency
Intimacy
Perseverance
Mutual Accountability
Humility
Generosity with each other
Process/Journey

While these were values that as a group we came to adopt amongst ourselves, they may have been what God gave us the eyes to see for our group, in our situation. In no way are we saying this list is complete or exclusive, and we're confident could be added to.

We do believe though, that our group, our situations experiences was fairly representative of our larger FLV community, a fractal of the whole.

Vision & Values

As we were able to identify these values amongst ourselves in our relationships, God really highlighted this passage of scripture to us. It immediately resonated deep within us and seemed to perfectly summarize these relational values we had come to experience and govern ourselves by throughout our time together!

Romans 12:9-21

Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good. Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle.

Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder. Help needy Christians; be inventive in hospitality. Bless your enemies; no cursing under your breath.

Laugh with your happy friends when they're happy; share tears when they're down. Get along with each other; don't be stuck-up. Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody.

Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do. "I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it."

Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.





BODY INVOLVEMENT

On two occasions throughout our process we sought specific input from our FLV community during Sunday mornings. This took place in the form of round table discussions in smaller breakout groups.

Body Input – Session 1

The first time we met was on Sunday, December 7th, 2008. **The body was invited to respond to three questions.** Each question was constructed to assist in "taking the pulse" of our body on how we could begin to shape our preferred future as God leads us:

- Why is our church here?
- What must our future look like as a community?
- God, make us a church that ...?

Points 1 – 3 below outline a synthesis of the collective work of our FLV community.

1. Why is our church here?

To serve our communities, to be a light in the dark, to be safe and comfortable for newcomers and new believers, to love and support each other, to worship together, to learn together, to be a dwelling place for God, to release the arts, to spread the gospel, to reveal God's nature through our relationships, to stretch each other, to foster accountability, to honour God and to be a catalyst.

2. What must our future look like as a community?

We must be diverse, unified, open, relational, loving, mature, pure, able to resolve issues, fun, spiritual, growing, safe, creative, free, full of integrity, honest, hospitable, generous, encouraging, equipping, healing, humble, deeply connected to God, alive, passionate, discerning, different from the world, healthy, accepting, sowing and reaping, letting go of the past, productive, anointed, teaching, obedient, an oasis, full of signs and wonders, prayerful, focused on others, not fearful, a strong family, a strong church, compassionate and rooted in Christ.

3. God, make us a church that...?

Loves well, cares, obeys, is full of faith, presses in, is not afraid to be hurt, is humble, walks with You, builds people up, is a light to our community, teaches about You, tells people about you, walks in Your anointing, is unified, is forgiving, is fearless, empowers, equips, glorifies You, is joyful, is full of life, is full of grace, is free, is diverse, is safe, is like You, is healing, connects with other churches and knows our identity in You.



Question: Is the synthesis of expression provided by our congregation out of step with our current Constitution documents?

Answer: No! The synthesis of expression provided by our congregation supports and acknowledges the veracity of our founding documents. Here we have a further synthesis of our body involvement with the inclusion of characteristics that demonstrate either vision (VI), vision and values (VI/VA) or values (VA) and the specific Purpose or Shared Value it relates to.

1) Why is our church here?

To serve our communities, - **VI** - GREAT COMMISSION

To be a light in the dark, - **VI** – GREAT COMMISSION

To learn together, - **VI** – EQUIP / DISCIPLESHIP

To release the arts, - **VI** – DEVEL RESOURCES/RELEASING SENDING

To spread the gospel, - **VI** – GREAT COMMISSION/

To be a dwelling place for God, - **VI/VA** – INTIMACY WITH GOD/ INTIMACY

To foster accountability, - **VA** MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILTY/

To honour God and to be a catalyst. – **VI** DEVELOP CHURCH BODY/

To love and support each other - **VI/VA** VALUE/DEV & MAINTAIN CHURCH BODY/
PROMOTE PHYSICAL & SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

To be safe and comfortable for newcomers and new believers, - **VA** RELATIONSHIP/
COMMUNITY

To worship together, - **VA** INTIMACY COMMUNITY

To reveal God's nature through our relationships, - **VA**
GREAT COMMISSION/ VALUES.....

To stretch each other, - **VA**



2) What must our future look like as a community?

Free,- VI

Full of signs and wonders,- VI

Equipping, - VI

Healing, - VI

Discerning, - VI

Teaching, obedient,- VI

Prayerful,- VI

Focused on others, - VI

Not fearful, a strong family, a strong church, - VI

Unified, - VA/VI

Mature – VI/VA

Pure, - VI/VA

Spiritual, growing, - VA/VI

Deeply connected to God, - VI/VA

Different from the world,- VI/VA

Healthy,- VA/VI

Compassionate and rooted in Christ. – VI/VA

Sowing and reaping, (needs clarity).

Letting go of the past,- (Statement)

We must be diverse, - VA

Open, -relational, loving, - VA

Able to resolve issues, - VA

Fun – VA

Vision & Values

Safe, - VA

Creative, - VA

Full of integrity, honest, hospitable, generous, encouraging,- VA

Humble, - VA

Alive, passionate,- VA

Accepting,- VA

Productive _VA,

An oasis - VA



3) God, make us a church that...

Obeys - VI,

Is full of faith, - VI

Walks with You VI

Builds people up – VI

Is a light to our community,- VI

Teaches about You, - VI

Tells people about you, - VI

Is unified - VI

Is fearless, - VI

Equips,- VI

Glorifies You, - VI

Is like You,- VI

Is healing,- VI

Knows our identity in You. – VI

Loves well,- VI/VA

Empowers, - VI/VA

Vision & Values

Connects with other churches – VI/VA

Cares, - VA

Presses in, - VA

Is not afraid to be hurt, _ VA

Is humble, - VA

Is forgiving – VA

Is joyful, - VA

Is full of life, - VA

Is full of grace, - VA

Is diverse,- VA

Is safe, - VA

Walks in Your anointing, - VI

In other words we do not need to reinvent our ‘founding constitutional wheel’, but we do need to simplify it and communicate the elements of what makes “us” ... “us” to the broader FLV community.¹

1



Body Input – Session 2

The second round of Body Input we had was August 9th, 2009 during our Sunday Series on “Community”.

The Questions were designed to help get input from people that would assist us in understanding how community is experienced within FLV.

The body was invited to respond to five questions.

- What does community LOOK like to you?
- What does community FEEL like to you?
- What does community SOUND like to you?
- What is challenging about community?
- What are ways you/me/we can address community challenges?

Community as an extension of relationship is a gift from God. It is one of the greatest testimonies to those around us that we have experienced God’s love and grace in our lives.

How we understand Community and how we live in our relationship with one another and with God serves as evidence of God’s redeeming work and grace in our lives, which ultimately serves as a sign post to relationship with God.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." - *John 13:34*

"If we love our Christian brothers and sisters, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still dead. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don't have eternal life within them. We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person? Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. ¹⁹ Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. - 1 *John 3:14-18*

We cannot effectively be obedient to Jesus’ command to love one another, without the risk of being in community.

How we live in community is the clearest expression of our Shared Values.





Points 1 – 5 below outline a synthesis of the collective input of our FLV community.

The bracketed numbers are the number of times that term was expressed in answering the question.

1. What does community LOOK like to you?

A group of people, common goals, togetherness, **diversity(2)**, comfortable, visions, many things can happen together at once, spending time **together(2)**, **commitment(2)**, welcoming, **develops relationships(2)**, brings out treasures, proactive, getting to know each other, common factor, **real issues(2)**, love, appreciation, openness, appreciating differences, **drawing out good(2)**, **acceptance(2)**, **opposite to isolation(2)**, listening, family, friends, working together, checking in, caring for each other, coaching, home, harvest field, hugs, hearts ready for harvest, support

2. What does community FEEL like to you?

Warm(2), loving, interested, supportive, strong, weak, chaotic, overwhelming(2), scary, conflicting, exciting, uplifting, **comfortable(2)**, **challenging(2)**, **patience(2)**, **safe(7)**, **secure(2)**, **belonging(3)**, rainbow of feelings, friendly, selfless, **changes your perspective(2)**, trust, understanding, acceptance, **welcoming(2)**, family, responsibility, intimacy, grief, uplifting, messy, **fun(2)**, **cozy(3)**, good, cared for, not alone, accepted, peaceful, inviting, supportive, life

3. What does community SOUND like to you?

laughter(6), **crying(3)**, whining, home, conversation, worship, dynamic, **alive(3)**, **silence(2)**, interruptions, **noisy(6)**, emotions, cacophony, comforting, **joyful(2)**, diversity, support, chaotic, buzzing, **arguing(3)**, **honesty(2)**, **encouragement(3)**, recognition, opinion, compromise, challenging, coaching, talking, harmonious, confusing, bitter

4. What is challenging about community?

Personal time schedules(2), decision making, living/working together, forgiveness, can't please everyone, **different styles(3)**, finding time, difficult, challenging, distance, overwhelming, engaging people, **opposing values(2)**, **personal boundaries(2)**, getting along, selfless, dominating personalities, including everyone, being understood, gossip, diversity, working out differences, conflict, open-mindedness, **inclusivity(2)**, complacency, **communication(2)**, obligation, expectations, **maturity(2)**, **commitment(3)**, accountability, risk of rejection, baggage, stubbornness, **trust(2)**, different ideas, in your face even when not wanted, finding common ground, touching the needy, drawing out the good, vulnerability, unconditional acceptance, like minded, leadership, different personalities, logistics



5. What are ways you/me/we can address community challenges?

Communication(2), leading by example, stepping up to the plate, being willing, boundaries, keep relevance of God speaking to people and knowing each other, **forgiveness(2)**, **prayer(2)**, home groups, **commitment(2)**, **grace(2)**, teaching people, engage with God, selflessness, flexibility, listening, openness, honest, real, try to understand others, act it out, freedom to vent, talk it out, humility, be purposeful, accepting, respond instead of react, group discussing, group activities, sensitive, coaching, ask the right questions, God's love, support, encouragement, lift up, speak truth in love, initiative, patience, talking, love, submission, bendable



CONCLUSION **RE-ESTABLISHING & ESTABLISHING**

This is where we begin the process of putting meat on the bones. It will involve risk, trust and a whole lot of continued reliance on the One who has faithfully guided us this far

- What needs to be re-established?
- What new, fresh ideas, contexts, structures etc need to be established?

It is extremely important that we do not simply approach this task programmatically; nor with a wide-eyed nostalgia on things that once were!

The large 'C' church is learning that we are truly in a different era. Most churches have been slow to acknowledge this fact and even fewer have chosen to tackle the issue. Quite honestly, it is not for the faint hearted and is especially more difficult for those who have been raised within a 'baby-boomer culture.'

While this aspect of Kingdom life is not specifically part of our process it is something to be considered as we look more closely at ministry in the 21st century.

RECOMENDATIONS

1. FLV Purpose and Priorities
 - a. Current document requires no major changes, however:
 - b. Needs to be simplified.
 - c. Contextualized for FLV today
 - d. Possible inclusion of our Shared Values within our constitution
2. Communication of our:
 - a. Vision
 - b. Purpose (Mission)
 - c. Shared Values
3. Envisioning
 - a. How do we encourage our folks to buy in?
 - b. What role do leaders play? (*everything rises and falls on leadership!*)
4. Congruence (*Walking the talk!*)
 - a. As a Body
 - b. As individuals
 - c. Especially valid for leadership!
 - d. The added filter through which we view everything! (strategy, focus, make decisions & walk them out.)
5. Next Steps
 - a. Chunk down into greater detail (areas, leaders, strategy)
 - b. Organizational values
 - c.

Vision & Values

- d.
- e.