

**Westwood ... What's Next?
"Our Place in the World"**

Review: Westwood ... What's Next?

Our Goal: *To discern & design
"A Thriving Future for Westwood Unitarian" –
that is Relevant, Meaningful, Pluralistic,
Sustainable & Transformative*

1st Workshop: "How We Work Together" (October 2018)

Three Foundational Premises to begin:

- 1. Old model of church is not sustainable into the future**
 - * *Cultural – Relevance, Meaning, Pluralism, Membership*
 - * *Fiscal*
- 2. What we know to be 'good' is still good**
 - * *Our values are still relevant & needed more than ever – despite changing cultural patterns around church & membership*
- 3. This is an advantageous time to focus on our future**
 - * *Lifting up what is essential & valuable*
 - * *Making intentional, community decisions while fiscally sound*
 - * *Shaping our presentation for maximum sustainability, while remaining true to our essential nature*

2nd Workshop, "What Really Matters?" (November 2018)

- **Naming what is essential & valuable & good (premises 2 & 3)**
- **Looking toward greater cultural relevance/visibility**
 - *What barriers exist?*
 - *What concerns arise when we consider removing barriers?*

3rd Social Enterprise Workshop: (February 2019)

A different way of thinking about organizing/fundraising/social justice work

Our Place in the World: Justice

What are our priorities – within & beyond the building?

Our Place in the World: Resources

What are our resources – how will they carry us toward the future?

Our Place in the World: Impact & Identity

How do we connect with WW (web, email, Facebook?) / what do we share?

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"Our Place in the World"

Session 1: Justice

"Our Place in the World"

- **Outward focus** (*we know who we are – where are we headed?*)
- **Inward focus** (*what do we need to change/improve/learn?*)
- **Identifying our current foci/affiliations**

Justice Concerns & Alignments:

- **Write down the topics, concerns, alignments you believe WW should be focused on right now** (*handing these in*)
- **What do you believe are the justice priorities within our building?**

WORKSHOP RESULTS: (*both groups combined*)

4 stages of Social Justice commitment:

1. Social Awareness
2. Social Responsibility
3. Social Action
4. Social Justice

On 'balance' / concerns:

- People get burned out
- Ways to become involved without guilt trip
- Value in being a space to recharge and recover
- Folks don't know about our TRC section on website
- Frittering energy + impact on too many projects
- How to we effectively participate in Reconciliation?

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"Our Place in the World"

On 'balance' / suggestions:

- WW Social Justice is inspirational to new people (+ old)
- A space where people can safely say "Oh I'm not alone" *e.g. climate grief*
- A safe place to have hard conversations
- At least two meaningful ongoing affiliations with Climate + First Nations
- CUC minute on Sundays
- 1 or 2 major things "as a church" and maybe other small things
- Without a guilt trip
- Take examples from other UU Communities / continental
- Limit scope to where we best fit
- Need connection betw. 'learning/education' & 'outreach/meeting real people'
- A way to get involved 'hands on' and working on making change / learning about systemic issues
- Help people make culture shifts (*changing terms / land acknowledgment, etc*)
- Increasing justice-oriented speakers
- Meeting opportunities after services
- Sharing space with groups & causes / Free
- New individuals coming in & working for support for their project - *have an avenue for them to connect with*
- Bite sized initiatives
- Be active in our community in a more proactive way: *like supporting Omar Khadr*
- Programs & speakers
- Zero tolerance for discrimination
- Welcoming Congregation (*refresh*)

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Causes / Topics dear to Westwoodians:

(Bold items came up repeatedly in workshops & 'yellow papers' from individuals)

- Water & Food Security
- **Climate / Climate Change**
- **Environment**
- Energy
- **LGBTQ2SI+ topics**
- Relationships within THR
- **Our Syrian family**
- **Hate & Violence**
- **Racism & Fascism**
- Non-violence
- **Connection / Loneliness / Isolation**
- Palestinian Rights
- **Youth Emergency Shelter / homeless queer youth**
- **Homelessness**
- **Poverty**
- Working Poor
- Physical & Verbal Abuse (women's shelters, historically)
- Protecting access to universal health care
- Freedom from religious oppression
- Freedom from oppression of religion
- Pluralism
- Continued white supremacy teach-ins
- Understanding colonialism & capitalism
- Learning the multiple sides of sensitivities
- Unconscious bias
- **Intergenerational community living**

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"Our Place in the World"

Session 2: Resources

Creating cards: Naming our WW resources

- Calling out – What are our WW resources? (*flip chart*)
(*money, people, uniqueness, pluralism, inclusiveness, ...?*)
- Narrow/combine list to 10-15
 - Break into groups and divide cards between groups (*max. 6 people*)
 - Write on the back: *how this resource could help create a vital future*

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Lean Start-up Review: Shaun Loney / jump in, but jump in small / pivot as needed

Pivot Improv: (*light hearted, creative, not necessarily 'reasonable'*)

- * **Group of 2 or 3**
- * **Start with a resource card:**
invent a project, towards our goal, using this resource
- * **Talk about your project until I call 'freeze'**
- * **Someone hands one of you another card – pivot**
 - * **Someone takes away a card – pivot**
 - * **Someone joins you - pivot**
 - * **Continue until ridiculous**

Conversation in a circle: What did you notice?

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"Our Place in the World"

WORKSHOP RESULTS:

Saturday Group Resource List:

Governance (*Democratic Process*)
Heart + Compassion
Building + Property
"Can Do"
Free Religious Thought
UU Network
Events + Programs (*solstice, choir, RE, +*)
Social Capital (*education, experience, +*)
Principles
Money
People (*staff, people, lay chaplain, +*)
Sources
Community
Social Conscience (*Inclusive/Pluralistic*)

Thursday Group Resource List:

Structure
Compassion Bank
Building + Environs
"Go Getters"
Free Religious Thought
Larger UU World
Programming
Skills + Talents
Principles
Money
People
Sources
Music
Welcoming Congregation (*LGBTQ2S+, Rainbow People*)

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"Our Place in the World"

Back of the Resource Cards (combined *Saturday* & *Thursday* responses)

Governance / Structure:

- Creates clear mechanisms for decision making
- Fairness
- Encourages people to participate
- Gives a sense of belonging + responsibility
- Engagement
- Delegation or roles
- Gives people a voice
- Shared leadership
- Clear guidelines for process
- Something to hang onto no matter the physical space
- Democratic process
- Staying power, proven track record (*with adjustments when needed*)

Heart + Compassion / Compassion Bank:

- Intentional community
- Safe space
- Deepen relationship
- Combat loneliness
- Sense of reward / worth
- Project to help people e.g. homeless
- Meditation training for prisoners
- Get on a roster to provide meals for the poor/homeless
- Integral to our purpose
- Concern for each other
- Connection – no one left behind
- Empathy

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"Our Place in the World"

Building + Property / Building + Environs:

- Host parties for homeless LGBT youth
- Café
- Rental space
- Homeless shelter
- Fruit growing in yard – sell at market
- Sell property
- Renovate property
- Marijuana growing
- Art show
- Change the name to “Westwood Unitarian Centre”
- Toilet facility for Community Garden across the street
- Venue for Off-Fringe shows
- Expand the building
- Contest – find the perfect building (*with a prize*)
- More garden – Grow a Row – Food Bank
- Downstairs spa
- Better kitchen
- Solar panels on roof
- Accessible!!!
- Carbon neutral
- Knock it down & build a tent
- Know down the stage

“Can Do” / “Go Getters”:

- More volunteers (no burnout)
- Inspire people to join us
- Innovative programs / services
- Facilitate members / friends to meet with MLAs, city gov., MP
- Make things happen
- Follow-through
- Enthusiasm

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Free Religious Thought:

- Easier to reach wider community
- Non-denominational
- Daycare
- Solstice parties for all in Parkallen Park
- Non judgmental
- Accepting
- Affiliations + cooperations with other 'religious' groups
- Charter school
- Children's learning
- A "both and" space (*non-dualistic*)
- Integral to our purpose
- Open to new ideas
- Connects us to our past
- Promotional tool
- Are you a UU without knowing it?
- Handling controversial issues

UU Network / Larger UU World:

- National Association for PD, resources, cons
- Provides identity, history, + greater context
- Access to grants
- Affiliated, relevant network – experience of other congregations
- Curriculum
- Deep Fun
- OWL
- Social Justice
- Source of in-depth research + theological context
- Harmonia + Choreal
- Use the new basement kitchen to feed homeless

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"Our Place in the World"

Social Capital / Skills + Talents:

- Critical thinking skills
- Raise awareness
- Fundraising
- Life the heart + inspire
- Expansion of available resources
- Networking
- Kevin – professional fundraiser
- Diversity of experience
- Wisdom
- It takes a village – many special skills
- Learn of each other's skills + talents
- Encourage use of skills
- Create programs around them
- Celebrate talents, e.g. talent show
- Talent show
- Teach each other

Principles:

- Broadcast – communications / podcasts
- Define boundaries, make choices
- Focal point for events and programs,
 e.g. theatre event, workshop – non-violent communication
- Refer to principles with each action or programming
- Support and promote
- Tell others
- Programs around them

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Programs / Events + Programming:

- Gives structure to going forward with efficiency
- Educate people within congregation
- Attract newcomers
- Take it outside Westwood e.g. Solstice
- Political activities
- Garden
- Fund Raising
- Raise Profile
- Education
- Meet Spiritual Need
- Enjoyable / fun
- Networking
- Film Festival
- 24 h Chant for Peace (Interfaith)
- Solstice for Community YEG
- Workshop: Finding your Belief + Answers to Big Questions

Money:

- Accessible renovation (2x)
- Build bigger better building / New building (2x)
- New building with private dwellings above
- Fixing building / expand building (2x)
- Maintain physical plant / General maintenance
- Ambitious projects
- Social enterprise
- Hire help/people (2x)
- Syrian family / buy food truck for our Syrian family
- Film festival – free thinker
- Use to achieve principles
- Provide space for free for specific groups
- Hold a casino
- Advertising
- Support agreed to programming
- Invest it
- Parties
- Donate it (2x) (*other orgs, outside projects*)

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People:

- Ambassadors' Bank – send Daryl + JP everywhere
- Play with the kids
- Mad Hatters Tea Party (*+ other themes: Harry Potter, Halloween dance*)
- Mentoring
- Skills Transfer Parties: *Cooking, Knitting, Canning, Plumbing, Painting, Edible Gifts, Bread Making, etc. (on Meetup)*
- Café
- Possibility for income generation
- Manage physical resources
- Create + implement plans + programs
- Carry out rules of governance
- Donors of financial resources
- Volunteers + physical labor
- Program Leadership
- Lead in ritual
- Populate committees
- Liaises with UUA + other faith leadership

Sources:

- Give us integrity as we go forward
- New understandings
- Open-mindedness
- Seeking and welcoming new truths
- Wisdom from many traditions
- Partner with interfaith communities
- Learning + development for non-denominational spiritual centre
- Humanism
- Earth centred
- Judeo-Christian
- Speak truth to power
- Think broadly about possibilities

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Community:

- Emotional support/enrichment
- Provides additional resources and expansion of knowledge base
- Intellectual enrichment
- Carrying out larger goals
- Spiritual enrichment + development
- Prevents naval gazing
- Strengthens the web
- Safety web
- Prevents social isolation

Music:

- Outreach
- Raging (Grannies) Westwoodians
- Seniors
- Mummering – sing our way around neighbourhood for various occasions
- Talent Night
- Harmonia + Chorealis

Social Conscience / Welcoming Congregation:

- Partnerships
- Advertising /marketing
- Branding
- Affiliations (*indigenous, LGBTQ2SI+, current orgs, providing services in the community ...*)
- Pride Parade
- Nature School
- Space for Social Justice activities (*building crossover*)
- Host LGBTQ2S+ Choir
- Host parties / social events
- Outreach for Pride Edmonton
- Host Workshop Weekend
- Open House after Pride Parade
- Parkallen Pride – use the park / BBQ

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Session 3: Impact & Identity

Survey: handed out on arrival

On Flipchart:

"Nothing matters if no one knows we're here."

But you're here ... how did you get here? (add)

Thinking about all that we've said about the changing face of church:

***What are the compelling parts of our identity –
to best communicate who we are?***

To get peoples' attention – what do we need to share?

Why would you bring a friend, family member?

What are our identity markers? How would you identify "oh, that's Westwood!"

Symbols: Westwood Tree of Life?

Colours: Blue?

Language:

Fonts:

If we create a unified style (logo, colours, branding, etc.) would you use it?

If this is work that interests you – please let me know.

How do you want Westwood to be known in the world?

What is key?

If you were unable to attend this session – and would like an opportunity to fill out the survey (pg. 13 in this document) – we'd love it if you:

print it out, fill it in & leave it in Rev Anne's mailbox

OR

send your answers to Rev Anne by email: anne@WestwoodUnitarian.ca

There will be paper copies at the May 5 meeting, if you'd rather do it there.

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Westwood Identity & Impact Survey

How do you *KNOW* what's going on at WW – programs, services, events, etc?

What information do you notice/pay attention to? (see the list below)

This isn't asking "what do you know that exists" – it's asking "what reaches you"?

Where do you *LOOK* for information about WW programs, services & events?

Where would you look if you're trying to find something out?

How do you *SHARE* Westwood information and/or events with others?

Friends, family, other WW folks ... how do you spread info?

How would you *PREFER TO RECEIVE* Westwood information?

What's the best way to reach you / communicate? What gets your attention?

Please:

- **CIRCLE** all the methods/tools you believe are currently effective at WW
- Put an **X** beside any methods/tools you think are **valuable** – if used well
- Put a ☺ beside your **favourites** (*best ways to reach you / things you use*)
- **Cross out** anything you think is **not useful / effective / worth doing**
- **Add anything** you think is **missing from the list** (*Other*)

Order of Service Announcements

Spoken Sunday Announcements

Email from the Office

Email from _____

Website

Newsletter

Facebook Page

Facebook Events

Meetup

Twitter

Yahoo Group

Phone Calls

Posters on WW walls

Text Messages

Westwood friends

Coffeetime Conversation

Other: _____