



The United Church of Canada

Canadian Memorial Church
& Centre for Peace

Imagine Visioning – Congregation – April 5, 2009

1. Who we are ...

My personal response is ...

That I do embrace this statement as is yet...in the silence the word ‘peace’ as in Centre for Peace emerged as if asking how do we express the connection between our faith community being a centre of evolutionary spirituality with our extended mission partners community being a centre for peace. Is there a need to include the word “peace” in our “Who We Are” statement?

One of agreement.

Yes! I love this statement! It has the heart, mind and spirit of the Christian mandate and denotes the openness and evolutionary thrust of our way of being.

I love the statement. I think evolutionary Christian spirituality can be both provocative and evocative. Provocative in that it brings together the scientific and spiritual and Christian components which can provoke curiosity and wondering of what that means. Evocative in that it works on evolutionary paradigm to spiritual growth and the spiritual path —that God is never done with us. It evokes the ‘blessed unrest’ that we’ve talked about which is exciting.

Open hearted, open-minded Christian spirituality. I’m working on this by being loving.

We are a memorial congregation dedicated to peace. We as a congregation are open to that new thing God is doing. We are about being and doing the Gospel story.

This is exciting and energizes me, but I am often challenged as to the details of how to teach this to children (i.e. how to teach stories of the bible without becoming literal in their understanding).

This statement feels expansive for me. What does it mean for us to be open-hearted/open-minded?

Stuck on the use of the word centre, why was such a neutral, non-descriptive word used and not church, or community? Need some clarification there!!

This is an inclusive, all encompassing but light (rather than significant) invitational yet rigorous expression of “Who we are!” I am able and excited to embrace.



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Great movement along the evolutionary chain and it does not glow(?) the awesome mystery that is beyond all time and circumstance – love, God, mystery. The unfoldment is not the whole. Somehow go beyond ‘Christian.’”

Evolutionary – good, safe adjective

Evolutionary – present as welcoming, doesn’t have to be intellectual it means we are welcome in our journey and all of us are on a journey no judgement, instate a welcome that your journey nourishes all of us and all of our journeys nourishes each of us.

Welcome, safe, yet intellectual/spiritual too.

The important word is transcend – it is our hope/ our goal to achieve an open-minded spirituality that includes all people, is not judgmental and accepts people where they are, with the full knowledge that together we can grow in understanding and love. It is not where we are but must work to become.

Very positive. The ‘open’ words and ‘evolutionary’ may convey to people burned by religious Christian dogma that we represent something quite different.

I like the idea of ‘evolutionary’ – it seems to me as keep changing according to the society/people’s requirements, states of being and next steps in consciousness.

(17) Welcoming community of dynamic emerging Christian spirituality. I am concerned about labeling of us through the word evolutionary – it is not a paradigm shift and I believe it will send the wrong sign and message which will not include and transcend. I also think it is important to include some personal responsibility in Who We Are perhaps consciously aware – dynamic instead of evolutionary – emerging or transformative. I also think open hearted not is what I feel nor what I heard around table – the word welcoming raised 4 times out of 6. So we are a welcoming group of dynamic inclusive believers? of an emerging transformative Christian spirituality. I do not have enough time. We are an emerging Christian spirituality committed to be welcoming and consciously open minded to continue to ‘be volutionist’ We are an transformative Christian spirituality welcoming all with open mindedness, committed to peace, love and contribution. This is why I am saying this – This is a public document and why I intentionally want this who We are: to be more coming, more inclusive!!!

Yes!

Excitement – some apprehension about how far out of the box it is. Ought we separate ourselves from the progressive Christian community? What will it be like to be all alone?

At first unsure about word ‘centre.’ After thinking about alternatives, centre does make most sense. It is a more open, welcoming word than say ‘congregation’ or ‘community.’ I believe this purpose is an accurate portrayal of my views and how I would like us to be presented.



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The term center is confusing. It can be interpreted in many different ways. It can be taken to be exclusive by some. A centre also sounds like a physical location and not a group of people. The term community is more welcoming.

I embrace this statement, because evolution, not in a straight line towards a fixed goal, but as an expanding and transcendent cloud of light, is what I experience in my personal life and on my faith journey.

Feels like clear guidance for directional ministries – open hearted – open minded – evolutionary Christian feels true to where I am in my spiritual journey.

How will I tell our story? How will I stay open?

I celebrate the integration into everyday life, the integration of religion and science, the continuing role of CMUC's leading edge, builds on the church's origins and accept evolutionary Christianity but am personally challenged, especially to explain it to non-religious people.

CMUC is on the leading edge of evolutionary Christian way of being. I am excited to be a part of it.

A group of people who believe in a God – that expects us to live with purpose and joy.

A question around the word 'centre.' To my mind it connotes a closed community – one which provides opportunity for learning, but not necessarily comfortable 'membership.'

I agree with the revised wording.

Happy.

The evolutionary theme is so needed, especially if as you say, it is novel. Not only does it reflect truth, i.e. the fundamental way things are, but it validates that a process of change with constant checks and occasional side excursions is the way to grow together.

Acceptable for me as individual and us as a community. Carries on in transforming manner Col. Follis' dream.

The word evolutionary works because it is not exclusionary, is provocative transcending 'scientism' and is holistic, addressing heart, mind and spirit.

I agree with the direction of the change in Purpose. I'm uneasy with the word 'evolutionary' because my mind ties it to a specific thing: Darwin's Theory of Evolution. I feel more comfortable with 'evolving' Christian spirituality. Also I resist either/or (e.g. literal or metaphor progressive). I think scripture and people's spiritual experience hold both.)



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Yes!! We are an open-hearted, open-minded centre of Christian spirituality. You know what? Maybe “We are centre of evolutionary spirituality with Christian roots.” Or “We are a Christian, open hearted open minded centre of evolutionary spirituality.” We are a religious Christian community with a progressive belief system that allows how we apply the Biblical Truths to evolve with our ever changing world, environment, culture, society, families and personal experience.

This statement is exciting, hopeful. It continues the conversation; hopes of the congregation, of Bruce.

Surprised about the word centre as opposed to ‘church’ but open to it because of the word Christianity being included. Hoping not to lose the concept of a Church. Maybe a personal traditional perspective.

Evolutionary may not be the perfect word but is there one? I like the notion of ‘meeting people where they are at on their journey.’

I can and want to embrace all that statement implies.

I’m not fond of the word ‘centre.’ I think of a shopping centre. We are the centre of evolution etc. Community instead of centre?

I embrace the ‘Who We Are’ statement wholeheartedly.

I liked evolving Christianity. Evolutionary brings to mind Darwin – can be contentious.

We are open-minded.

Christian – evolutionary. Welcoming ‘all’ people. Willing to listen, share and grow in the spirit of Christ.

Positive.

Centre – impersonal? Place for shopping? Self important? Suggestion of church, community. I am looking for a word which suggests we are nurturing this seed of evolutionary, then embracing it, affirming it and encouraging others to contribute themselves to it.

I discern that CMUC should ...

(2) Be actively * in the process of a ‘transformation’/ *

Let’s keep it! It’s very welcoming



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CMUC should be a powerful leadership model for what is possible in the community and in the faith world.

The idea of “silence” is good. A time to “Let God.”

What does it mean to be an open hearted, open-minded centre of evolutionary Christian spirituality? What training, workshops, seminars, support, can CMUC provide the congregation so that we can incorporate this teaching way of being into our daily spiritual practices? How can we ensure that we rooted in respect and acknowledge that we are in different points of our evolutionary journey of faith and spiritual development? How do we acknowledge that the Christ we are centred in has many colours?

Always strive to provide opportunities for spiritual reflection. Not just action, but growth through silence too.

Walk the talk. Be mindful of this and use it to (*test?) ourselves and constantly evaluate what we present, how we present and the continued growth and development on a current basis of the leadership, staff, members etc. so others can find themselves here however mid way they are in life and issues etc. We can all join in flowing towards our own and each others flowering – full flowering.

State or emanate the glory of this as well be like body of God participating in the unfoldment of that body.

Hold firm to the past – the peace of the soldiers who made the reason for this church yet ‘our angels’ want us to feel, express – know the joy of change, growth, ‘new thing’ They’ve watched it for years and love it.

Create an expansive and inclusive environment in which spirit is free to express itself individually and collectively, spirit being free of our ego and fearful constraints and allow to reach out in this world as expansively as it desires.

Through 3 minute silence I got in touch with the sense of ‘as it is’ – that everything is perfect as it is and we’re all supported wherever we go. This felt like connected to the spirit rather than our individual ego.

(17) Our small group of four would like to entertain the possibility of having a joint ecumenical symposium to integrate at least the United Church. In Sedona, Arizona they have all faiths work together in a community service day – this helps connection and seeing similarities instead of differences.

Illuminate what this means in ‘real terms.’

Do this but with as much awareness as possible. We will need the support of the out of the box angel.



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Use this purpose as it is written.

Continue along the path of helping people evolve within themselves, asking themselves what they can give and receive to allow Spirit to move through them.

Have training/dialogue on how to describe, talk about what it really means to be evolutionary Christian spirituality. Came up – Is the general congregation ready/does this embody who we are and who we are Becoming? (inclusive and transcending to)

Consider ‘checking in’ process to consider how ‘open’, (the pitfalls and perils of our spiritual practice) – we are and to enter communal dialogue about our evolution.

Provide more training to the congregation on evolutionary Christianity. I would like to participate in a public forum where ‘hard’ questions are confronted about evolutionary Christianity.

Continue to encourage ministry by anyone, anywhere, anytime, for increasing outreach and serving the community at large. The needs are great. We can provide help and hope.

Be a “community providing a centre for evolutionary Christian spirituality.” Or “a community guided by the evolutionary spirit of Christ.”

Embrace this statement and celebrate it in all aspects of our church ministry.

I agree with the way it is.

Push evolutionary Christianity in all possible manifestations.

Accept – covers transformation, Biblical base and Christian spirit.

Our angel invites us to become ‘bees of the invisible’ (Rilke), making honey individually and collectively.

Proceed with the change (semantics aside). Evolutionary/Evolving meaning: inclusive, going deeper, constant and continuous process.

(35) Switch the word order so that Evolutionary Spirituality (a more all-encompassing label) comes at the end of our congregation’s who are we title. I.e. Christian is a wonderful wonderful jumping off point.

Continue to explore how Biblical values and the Word can be applied in new and innovative ways that guide our community into new ways of being.

Carry this out into the world. Use it as an organizing force inside ourselves; our congregation; outside in our communities.



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Be prepared that in 10 years time 'evolutionary' may be the same as 'progressive' i.e. regressive = non evolutionary. But for now it is great.

Stay the course with these changes.

(40) Welcome all that come into our midst. A * with wide open arms.

Continue evolving and "Get the Word Out."

"What the spirit is saying" – rather than "this is God's Holy Word."

Keep on emerging and praying for peace in the world.

Keep on learning about Christianity, each other as a family and respond in loving community. "Welcoming."

Strive to be resilient, brave and adaptive. The angels?

1. The children and those who care for them.
2. The elderly and those who love them.
3. Those others and their needs and hopes for making the world a better place for all.

I have a worry that the word 'evolutionary' will be diluted and become a catchword but it's the best we have at the moment.

Continue the evolutionary aspect of faith.

2. What we do ...

My personal response is ...

I embrace all the "What We Do" statements, although I might change 2.1 by replacing the word "backgrounds" with "paths." (not NB, though)

I'm not sure who I am!

Joy and excitement that this is available – here, now, at CMUC.

I like all of it. However, I would like to see if there is some way of presenting both in a non-linear fashion. We discussed holographic or DNA strands, etc. They are all inter-related, that the linear presentation doesn't do that justice. My felt sense was of excitement – so much possibility and no sense of restriction/constriction yet there is focus and concreteness. I also felt that it expresses and allows for even more expression of individual expression within the community, i.e. ministry anytime, anywhere, by anyone.

Caring, loving. I like the objectives of 2.



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Ministry anywhere, anytime by anybody.

I like that the feeling of this section is openness and that the audience ‘spiritual seekers of Cascadia’ has been taken into account.

“Nurturing, loving community” Who is the community?

No need to prioritize or emulate. Leave out the numbers.

2 is great, 2-3 respond compassionately and effectively (add) to the suffering in all life.

I like it.

2.6 celebrate what does that mean? We chose ‘trust in’ because it embraces celebrate, enjoy, bear, uphold etc. etc.

Thankfulness for the group, so that I do not have to be all things for all people.
Thankfulness for individuals who help show me the way. Thankfulness for people with special gifts who can do what I am unable to do.

2.6 suggest changing ‘celebrate’ to ‘trust in.’ Is this line referring to worship services?
All 3 of us had no idea this was what it meant until reading the 4.0 page. We thought it meant living in and trusting in spirit in a place of trust and unknowing.

Find 2.6 description a little unclear. Celebrate and trust in/respect?

3.1 to 3.8 is very inclusive and ‘wise’ – they ground/orient.

2.2 – to all is weak. Ola! I liked the earlier version of this that defined the wideness of our community i.e. every web user, book reader, etc. I sense 2.6 is an attempt at a yellow or turquoise Christ – is it?

These are all solid points. I worry that 2.1 being the first priority, makes it seem like we are not a Christian church but instead a church of many faiths. Then again, it does follow ‘Who we Are’ which states we are Christian.

I embrace these articulations of faith and particularly appreciate the desire to be honest and authentic with each other for both sections 2.0 and 3.0. I don’t know the answer to the question of whether or not we need to mention God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit. I think the guiding questions to ask are at what point does wanting to attract people bleed over into a fear of taking any kind of position in case you offend someone but also, if God knows our relationship with Her/Him, for whom do we need to articulate those beliefs? Ourselves? Others?

2.3 My experience of CMUC – respond with active compassion to the suffering of all life!



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I like the emotional tone of intentions, personal and collectively.

I like the statements – wording is easily understood – may raise questions for readers – good thing.

To be open, invite participation.

2.1 The use of “of all backgrounds” is redundant, and may lead to a feeling that we must have a distinguishing ‘background’ in order to be welcome.

The words reflect a set of actions, behaviour and values I can support and ascribe to. I know that God is with me and also with you.

We had a lengthy discussion about the removal of God, covenant and Jesus Christ from the document.

I am attracted to all the elements of 2.1 through 3.8; especially like emphasis on authenticity and JOY and sustainability.

Adopt. This is an important evolutionary move #3 MVV – and acceptable to outside spiritual seekers.

Great, superb

My soul’s response and my being are within God/Christ/Spirit. How do we reflect our ‘Centre’ in an open, inclusive wording?

Great but (see 35)

Being involved in our families, church, community, country and world in meaningful ways that can nourish, minister and transform their lives in an Evolutionary Progressive manner.

So exciting and wonderful! I felt this was excellent for new audiences (which is partly our goal, no?) so am comfortable and inspired by the wording and choices.

Peace/Justice – higher on list. This should be looked at as a document not just to draw on new people i.e. website but as statements for people who are becoming new members – the values statement had a huge impact on me when I attended the membership day, so to leave out words such as Jesus Christ/Holy Spirit dilutes my commitment to how this place is different. I can be discerning/authentic/peaceful etc etc at a Yoga class. The difference at CMUC is that I am committed to these things because of a belief in what Jesus Christ demonstrated.



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This for ourselves to live by on an ad? It reminds me of E harmony – no mention of God or Jesus or Spirit – but when they meet us we do talk about God, Jesus and Spirit.

I'm concerned about the fine line between this and New Age Spirituality.

2.1 Remove 'of all backgrounds' – it labels people. Instead – welcome all spiritual seekers.

I feel empowered and positive by the actions in 2.

This was new to me – I heartily agree.

2.1-2.6 etc.

2.1, 2.2, 2.4 I think Joy is more important than I give credit to. Joy.

A lot of hard work has been done on this so far be it from me to change it.

Is the objective to have more people on Sun morning and in programmes? Or is it to affirm all kinds of spirituality we encounter around us? So many people I meet are active in justice, environment etc. don't turn up on Sun mornings in churches but are consciously spiritual.

I discern that CMUC should ...

Perhaps – provide some guidance (through our Spiritual Pathways booklet) for congregants to spiritually evolve by discerning which option fits when in their journey.

Sorry!

Keep it. Invest energy to keep it happening.

Is there a way that we could invite people to meet outside the building to hear what we would like to tell them like In From the Cold?

Through spiritual pathways, small groups, new programs and initiative mentor disciples of Christ.

Make it clear that these ways of functioning are not "flaky," but in our commitment to them we prove that we do have strong fundamental core beliefs.

"Of all backgrounds" (2.1) needs to be explained why it is not superfluous.



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Be audacious enough to set bold goals, make huge and powerful requests to – sufficient to call us to be e.g. goal of having a zero point carbon footprint by year 2014 in our church community and each of our member's homes.

Sorry my angel went on coffee break.

Explain what they mean in 2.5. There are many colours in the rainbow and each 'adds' to the overall paradigm. Each colour 'adds' and does not detract from the others.

Angel is green. What does yellow angel do – is 2.6 the yellow Christ?

Embrace these points but make sure it is clear that we are still a Christian church.

There is nothing in environmental sustainability in What we Do.

Change 2.3 to read: respond with active compassion.

2.5 This is the new thing that needs more attention in helping the congregation understand evolutionary Christianity.

Add music, prayer time during the week.

2.1 "invite and welcome all spiritual seekers."

Continue to invite the debate and discussion about the avoidance of the words god and Jesus in what we do and how we do it.

I had a concern that in opening the statement so broadly, it may be somewhat misleading in the sense that this is still a church. It is a point I raise, although I am not sure whether or what I would propose to address it. I wonder, if anywhere, it's necessary to say (and is this a truth?) that this is a Christian faith community and that is non-negotiable. I am wary of the move to 'sanitize' the Christianity out of the church to make it more palatable although I am aware that this may be an evolutionary process.

Try to attract and retain people who want to embark on a journey to evolve spiritually.

How about showing the three steps on the wall of C for Peace and * (32) #1 MVV of 12 years ago, #2 of MBB, plus this one which has developed and grown out of our growth in spirituality!

Values. Spread the excitement.

Be inclusive to those 'church' people who are seeking, as well as those who have been wounded by/left church. How to open the wisdom and fullness of Christian scripture and not reinforce common sentiments/stereotypes about it/us.



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(35) Be as specific as possible. I think you left out in 2.0, 2.5 a? Plan for sustainability in What we do.

Be able to be an example of a new peaceful way of being that encourages people to leave healthy, sustainable, ecologically sensitive and spiritual lives. Assist its members, community and the world in being effective witnesses of this through programs, training, workshops, committees, teams, prayer and interactive activities that can allow us to continue to grow in this manner.

Use these to organize our board, our ministries, live this! I am inspired to help!

(39) Believe what we do well and want to support is TEACH. What we do. CMUC should be authentic to who we are – we do talk about God, Jesus and the spirit so say it upfront.

Regularly assess what we do and whether or not we're honouring our relationship with the Holy One.

Embrace these principles in all our affairs (and provide funds)

Be open to all – know what we believe and ready to share it.

Continue. Very welcoming.

Morning prayer time – a.m. short service 20 minute max.

Be clear on where we are as a church community.

3. We are committed to ...

My personal response is ...

(3.4) Needs amending – include “We are an active voice and agent for peace, justice (or another phrase that defines what we mean by justice) and change for ourselves...all creation. Eg. Every creature fully alive quote or include word ‘freedom.’

Language is very important – the fewer words used is better but that means each word must be important, accurate, clear and understood. I like the words ‘welcome’, ‘respect.’

Nice clarity. Wholistic – any part opens up to the rest. Expresses the loving nature of this church through its diverse parts.

Transmitting in simple terms what #3 is all about...being realistic, honest.

These value statements are directed for us individually and collectively.



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I love the recognition that this section brings to creativity, ecological sustainability and joy sharing.

That diversity includes – inclusive as opposed to embraces – embrace not strong enough? Sexual or gender diversity, as opposed to personal diversity. Will people understand what personal diversity means? Not sure. The shift in language is wonderful. It is accessible and welcoming.

Great!! I really dislike the traditional god talk. Softening the language is inviting. But needs to be explained often to some doubters.

Really amazed at how you have distilled these commitments and would still like to adjust.

I like it.

3.3 Take out 'ecological.' We do not embrace ecological diversity. We embrace sustainable ecological diversity. Isn't ecology covered in 3.5?

Be open to opportunities to take part.

/difficult to understand what 'ecological' means in the context of 'diversity.' Is it trying to say that we embrace people 'not' living ecologically sustainable lives? True we want to embrace everyone but I'm not sure this is what it is attempting to say which leaves us open to not knowing what is intended.

Do the church embrace 'ecological diversity'? this is differing from the statement 3.5 Really appreciate esp 3.1, 3.2 and 3.5

3.3 ecological diversity makes no sense and why do we submerge the fact that we are perhaps the only church in the world that welcomes gay lesbian and transgendered people.

At first disappointed at the removal of the words God, Christ, etc.

I am concerned about the use of the word authentic. I completely agree with the way Bruce used it. However, the term is easily misinterpreted. A different term should be chosen.

Feels like there is both an individual and collective component to these values and how cultivate (3.2/3.8) is used twice – maybe use 'experience' or 'express' in 3.8.

To change section 3 to read – Individually and collectively we are committed to ...3.8 We express joy



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It's all good. We do it well except for 2.5

Good statements. Good guide to way of living, being.

3.4 omit 'for ourselves' 3.8 replace 'Spirit' – give me 'God' back.

One action is not and should be articulated – proactivity

They are my commitments. I appreciate having joy as a commitment.

Add one more 3.9 Change the world.

This is not an ego trip – the angel spoke to me after hearing Ann Bell and our own small group. There is a definite air of growth and upswing in worship and pathways.

Excellent categories.

I didn't have as much time to reflect as I feel I need. I feel comfortable with this wording/language.

Discernment most important. Good idea to do an ecological audit/inventory of our own congregation (not fascistic or run raggedly) but loving change (reduce reuse recycle as a model)

Upholding a loving, peaceful, just, generous, compassionate, discerning and joyful and Christ like way of being.

(37) Bravo! Wow, this has come a long way. Want to capture/encourage a more active stance of Peace and Justice, one that draws on the tradition of the United Church to speak out for others (*, immigrant, homeless) and honour that work at CM. How about 3.4 Peace and Justice: We are an active voice and agent for peace, justice and change in ourselves, our relationships, our world and with all creation.

Order is important. Peace and Justice first as it is our past, our present, our future. It is a bit unique to CMUC. Generosity...needs to be explicit about including \$\$\$ How we do it. CMUC should move Peace and Justice to #1 add money back in. Add Jesus, Spirit and God in. If we don't stand for something, we stand for nothing.

Yes!

3.8 Change Spirit to God. I can't have a relationship with spirit.

Very positive.

To be more open, be ready to share.



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Prayer, kindness, patience. Truth. Generosity giving financially. Acceptance. 3-1 Getting more involved.

Should we not mention Jesus Christ and God somewhere in this – perhaps not.

Somewhere it should say we take all this out to the word at large; our community, city, province, country... That means it all eventually has a political outlet. There is much we CAN do as individuals but even MORE that can only be done collectively – and that's political.

I discern that CMUC should ...

(3.5) Commit to living into 'big asks' such as striving to be carbon neutral by 2014.

Embrace these commitments.

I think the church is trying to reach others. What about something original.

Resurrect small group ministry, mentorship, blogging, etc.

Leave out the enumeration.

Rework Peace and Justice to include as having our 'asses' on the line – use our wisdom for action. We used to have a symbol of Wisdom in action (i.e. asses on the line) W that I love.

Perhaps need Footnotes on 'spiritual sustainability' to explain.

Perhaps need Footnotes on 'evolutionary Christian spirituality' to clarify.

We (the angels) can hardly wait to watch all of you 'walk the walk'

Celebrate who we are, and grow from that strength.

Reach out to other congregations and then other faiths as to how we can combine and synergize to become the rainbow (metaphor).

I like 3.5 a lot – also 3.1 as an attempt to move inward (yellow from green). The Christ within which the United Church of Canada does not lift up enough.

Keep these points but consider keeping the word God, or at least make it clear of what can be expected from our services.

Maybe add individually and collectively we are committed to:

3.5 Sustainability – maybe speak to physical, emotional and spiritual sustainability.



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Have monthly bulletin blurbs to highlight our commitments so we live them personally as well as in the larger congregation/community.

Focus on the evolutionary DIALOGUE not just the message. Expand the website to FAQs to make it more interactive. Provide opportunities for public forum/debate on Evolutionary Spirit.

Include opportunity for questions on the website. Who would respond?

Remember to HONESTLY state who we are – and not leave it for the seekers to find out on Sunday with the first mention of God.

Additional as follows: ‘We actively open our hearts, minds, talents and voices to introduce the church’s message and ministry to others.’

Take out the word ‘strive to’ in 3.5. We’re trying to do all of these. This one is like we’re trying to try.

Be open to getting wisdom from diverse sources. The Bible is amazing, but so are other sacred writings.

Consider presenting the linear list of ‘what we are committed to’ to a wheel to suggest the dynamic, interactive quality of these categories. Doing so gets us away from the hierarchical feel as well as quibbles over whether joy belongs at the top, middle, or bottom.

Use this values statement

Joy – I’d love to rewrite some of our hymns (eg. We come with our love and kindness, We come hosanna (for the off season times!!)

Include biblical passages that reflect each purpose and value vision.

Make sure there is money budgeted for any new ministries as a result of these principles.

Emerging as inspiration, hoping to again attract youth with fun and joy.

Put peace and justice first, including loving relationship in there.

4. Vision 2014

My personal response is ...

[4.0] – add Labyrinth: either permanent or portable (e.g. Rope – Marion and Susan Du Moulin are willing to create this) in the Sanctuary Centre or lawn. [5.0-5.3] needs more



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than one staff person – 2 part-time working together is more dynamic than one full-time to develop, nurture and maintain PC Ministry Teams and Small Group Ministry [5.1] could be included here.

A bit overwhelming that there are so many directions that what energy and participation to make happen – and also hope and excitement that they will happen. As long as the community remains vital and happy and meaningful.

I could really see there being an educational centre for educating the general population in what evolutionary spirituality is and then what evolutionary Christian spirituality is → therefore to use the Centre as an educational centre. We also talked about how to connect with university students → how to either reach out to them or attract them to us.

I went to a Taize and found it “quiet” and inviting.

Excitement about who we are and who we are becoming. Recognizing that programs are an entry point into the life and the work of the church.

I am inspired and as a staff member, I feel supported by the energy and imaginings toward a more inclusive, but outward looking direction to ministry at CMUC.

More focus on art as a spiritual practice and a vehicle of community building, rather than just “art shows”. The term pastoral care feels “churchy” to me. Perhaps spiritual care? And yet perhaps this term may not encompass what pastoral is, however, for me it feels less “churchy”.

Ambitious. Too ambitious??

That it reflects some of our community however one thing that I see as missing was a contemplative structure such as in the labyrinth at specific times (portable). Also times of pure meditation – where we “sit” for extended (hour to several hours long).

Good vision.

An education program for adults who want to continue to grow.

It is good to dream!

Important to establish how each of these is to be done, what will the cost be, and will the funds be available, and who is to be accountable with timelines or else it is Pie-in-the-Sky and much of it may not happen.

How does the church do all these? Would benefit to prioritize in order to achieve at least one or a few of them. 4.4, 4.6, 5.2, 9.0 etc would be beneficial for 11.0



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Overwhelmed – dreaming so big has a price tag – feels like selling the building and building what we need rather than fixing what is a beautiful museum – oh dear – take a deep breath – discern – we are the people to do this but how do we find the resources?

Lots of ideas here – need to make sure we don't get lost trying too many at once.

Don't forget about the young adults. It is important to be exposed to many styles of worship. Personally I love the building the way it is.

Excitement! I think the refurbished interior should include elegant and flexible seating similar to the Christ Church Cathedral, and an open chancel with a ramp for accessibility.

Feels very tangible (too much detail?) for vision statement of what God's highest idea for CMUC.

To simplify and prioritize our dreams (1) roof and electrical system (2) alternative worship, I recommend a marketing and full time pastoral care staff and family leader.

Get the order right on major initiatives!

Good suggestions re Celebrating Sacred Mystery of Life, CMUC Community, Programs / Service to Others.

[4.0] Alternative worship format requires refurbished space or space in Centre equipped for worship – including audio/visual.

(29) Economics and staff – Plenty space/times for additional services. * * staff numbers * attendees and cost. Building changes – will help lead the review and change process.

The integration and energy related to the development of small groups is really needed and it is one of the huge ways of providing care to each other.

I am enthusiastic about the following (1) skylights in sanctuary (2) promoting on-line communication (3) small group classes.

[4.1+6] take it easy, do what is necessary. Good idea to set [10.0] both structural and new program/expanded. Need an imaginative but reachable goal.

Good proposals all.

To be excited by our vision. “Marketing” is less urgent than coordinated communication (can be low cost).

WARNING about wireless! etc etc (See me, it may – I think will, detract more than augment) Keep the church sacred space please.



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It would be exciting to including solar generation which capture/allow more natural cascadia inclusion of natural environment where annual/every 6 months animal blessings which are more promoted.

This is an exciting and comprehensive list of dreams. Lots of room to add to these vision “buckets” which is great. Let things emerge.

Need some goals for 20-40 years. Really against multiple services. A full church draws more people than two small groups. Previous experience has been that people tend to be drawn to one rather than the other, the church becomes segregated. I'd rather have a bigger church capacity by better use of space than offering two services. If it is a matter of trying to accommodate people's differing styles of worship, doesn't this go against the ideal of diversity – being open to trying new things.

Lots of great ideas but need to prioritize. Skylights not high on priority list cost vs benefit and not very environmental. All it takes is time, talent, and \$\$\$ - we need to ask people to give to it. Imagine but don't do until we can build the program effectively. Missing something for the 20-40 year olds. Need staff to minister and lead these staff need offices – no room.

To much to absorb and respond to at the end of the day.

(41) Work on renovating the entrance * – more light – open – wheel chair accessible. No heavy doors, warm. Forget skylights – create way too many problems. Small group ministry needs a leader – paid? Updated audio-visual is a good idea.

Can Bruce do some workshops for us on Evolutionary Christianity?

New roof – no skylight.

Suggestion: short, early (before work)(8am?) service – prayer time – sharing concerns.
Mid week – Wednesday. 20 minute maximum.

Very ambitious.

(47) PROGRAMME please! Don't split congregation * numbers ABSOLUTELY demand it. Don't make “style” divide – we can all handle traditional/modern together. Shouldn't forget the “great hymns” etc. A sanctuary filled with people singing is an uplifting experience, thinking about the words and the sheer joy of being part of the gathering , and sometimes being aware that people sung the hymn/words for a long time.

I discern that CMUC should ...

Continue putting it out there.



Change the seating! Good stuff in [4].

Discern what are our priorities? The reality may be that replacing the roof may become one priority but that would be an opportunity to refurbish the sanctuary.

Focus its attention on building deeper relationships so that those who attend the church, and those in the wider community, feel known and are therefore more interested in CMUC's vision.

Marketing needs to be a priority. Bruce to become a columnist or contributor to Opinion Editorials? Press releases concerning social commentary.

We should be prepared for rapid expansion – are we actually willing for expansion – really? Just occurred to me – as somewhere to look. Also street banners and why we might have need of these turns me on!

I would like to see [4.1] be open to interfaith services. Once a month. No faith at all services.

Angel – allow these visions to continue to be emergent (i.e. the people will come who have the dream a vision represents).

Be open to new needs such as for a contemporary service or small groups – even if they exist for only a short while – they do add a new experience.

Acknowledge, share and integrate people's fear about moving forward/changing. Opening up further and reaching to the broader corners of the community as an evolutionary spiritual centre would be the way to survive/thrive in the new era in Christianity/religion.

Make sure to include variety in both services if there are two offered each Sunday. Make sure to think about who an on-line community would actually cater to. Include some sort of program or meeting time for young adults (20-30 years old).

Start a young adults group. Should not separate services based on style. Refurbish the building if you need to, but don't lose its character.

Be creative within its physical and financial constraints to fully use all resources and expand mindfully.

Could be more communication to “aging” population of the importance of youth and family to “sustainability of congregation”. Tap into United Church resources to support youth and family ministry. I think there is a minister based out of Shaughnessy United Church that is the regional support for youth and family through the United Church.

Celebrate who we are as an evolutionary Christian spirituality center.



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Train the congregation so members can engage in dialogue before a major marketing campaign.

Continue to evolve prayerfully to meet the needs of the congregation and wider community. More flexible space would help. Increase use of the church space for concerts, dramatic productions.

Find an active angel and many folks to support her.

Bring an element of training to congregation – bring up specifically worship leaders and creators.

Relocate library to archives area and make changes to improve lighting etc. Free up library for space. → Add a new infill house at rear (on parking pad) for additional staff program space [new zoning would allow this]

Integrate Be-The-Change Workshops into the church community. Broaden B-T-C and integrate their spiritual pathway into a Christian concept.

Pursue more programs to connect people in this church.

Some other response: charge more for the Spiritual Pathways and give tax receipts.

Use ‘Be the Change’ circles as a small group ministry (Spirituality, Fulfilling, Socially Just, Environmental Sustainability) to build our community and spiritual evolution. Ensure ‘cost’ is not a barrier to programs.

Continue to invite others through the leaving out of the terms: God, Jesus, Christ, etc. Yes, we might even get the ones we need. (ie Lots of seekers)

Definitely update the audio-visual devices, upgrade the electrical system, support alternative worship formats (ie Taize) and, if there is sufficient demand, consider a biweekly addition of a 2nd service of a differing format ie dance, acting/drama, music, etc to allow more interaction through smaller groups, mentorship, activities in and outside the church. To have a more integrated and responsive community/membership who knows/is close to the member calls/visits/prays for them when they are not able to attend or have emotional, spiritual, financial concerns. A potential job creation or wealth sharing for disadvantaged individuals who need financial/employment/housing/other assistance of training/teaching and potential support networks when crisis hits (financial, housing, employment, food, health, etc) This can fall under services to others/ programs/ community partnerships with businesses, skilled professionals, etc.

Take request for Evolutionary Christian School to Presbytery – we are not in the school business.



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Believing is Seeing!!

Have different forms of worship services – rather than trying to mix both into one. Up-to-date technology.

Maybe a short mid-week service.

Advertise more about what the church has to offer, we need young people in church. Youth groups – music nights – supper groups.

Prioritize on the basis of needs, space and funds.

Sanctuary is historic and more than a building. We should promote it MORE as a tourist destination. It's also one of the FEW places in Vancouver where there is respect for an old building (85 years isn't exactly a 12th century cathedral but it's as old as we've got). PA needs improving – unclear sound often too high volume to compensate.

5. Major Initiatives

My personal response is ...

Yes!

I need to tell people – do we need some training so that we could go to groups outside the church.

We need to put a human face on who we are as a congregation by getting the word out into the greater community.

Excellent! How do we start?

Love how you've worked these as well. Thank you so much.

I think this is an essential key.

Now we have to do it – plan – what, how, when.

Pastoral care for everyone? Would it be feasible to divide people up into areas/postal codes so that people would be supporting each other in a geographical group – walking area? Division not to be adhered to religiously.

Love the idea of taking our programs into the public realm.

Again overwhelmed – [10-14] seem more realistic than [4-9].



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(20) Looks good! What is * 2.0 and 3.0?

I am concerned about the idea of promoting the church. I don't personally like when people try to convert me.

An integrated Spiritual Pathways program would be invaluable.

Again, nothing on environmental sustainability.

More training on Evolutionary Spirit! Even for those who read Bruce's book – it raises lots of questions!!

Good ideas to start.

Outward "face" of the church is so important. Welcoming entrance, etc.

Put major effort to develop a program for teens.

Keep on dreaming and challenging.

Fantastic.

So much already 'arising' from people in our community.

[5.3] Very important goal but as Susan says it may mean more than a ½ time staff; it will also mean a wider, stronger congregational team (this is very much my dream).

A good mix of achievable and inspirational.

Need money and staff.

Youth and teenage – can we attract?

Think about equipping people to "do" ministry in the community – I'm thinking of "workplace ministry" for example.

I discern that CMUC should ...

[13.0] have wintertime candlelit labyrinth walks on a regular basis. Cloister walks in Sanctuary.

I guess [5.3] needs to happen first but to go to "outside" groups.

Hire a publicist and find new ways of getting the message out – facebook, blogging – our journey of truth and spiritual development.



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Be aware of the spiritual/shared elements in art shows and concerts. Not just events that benefit the individual artists (financially or ego-driven). But how do they bring change to change to our community?

Pursue the Evolutionary School for children. Grow the Pastoral Care staff position.

Question: Where does the money come from? Can we find innovative way to find the money. How is “Show us the money”?

Angel – each vision needs steps and a way to develop each step. When, they say, remember [3.5] Sustainable.

Prioritize and focus. Establish accountability and timelines and ensure resources will be in place. Establish ways in which internal fear of stepping forward can be dealt with so that those fears don't manifest external road blocks. Remember that Peace is the way not the destination. It isn't what we accomplish but how we go about what we hope to accomplish that counts.

Get on with it.

Absolutely do these. As I mentioned above, let's make sure both Sunday services include variety (Let's not split into “Family Service” and “Traditional Service”).

Provide support to members when it comes to promoting by word of mouth.

Add: Carbon Neutral as a congregation?

A Peace Day – one day open house. More fun – BBQs – Potlucks.

Consider the steps re: Evolutionary Christianity. Does the congregation understand to the depth necessary to “communicate” to the world, or even engage in dialogue with non-religious people?

Celebrate our presence with BANNERS which speak to who we are and what we do.

Become the center (movers & shakers) for ecological and evolutionary Christianity.

Consider the youth from ages 18-24 who are hungry for an inspirational approach to spirituality with an activist component. The evangelicals have Intervarsity, an on-campus presence, but most youth that age have never heard of evolutionary spirituality. Consider making the Great Hall available once a month free to selected youth groups like Oxfam for Youth and others. These groups could run their own programs. They could apply for the space and be screened – they might show a film, do a fund raiser, have a activist special program, etc.



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Identify and harness what is already happening (ie: not lose sight/energy of existing ministries in the new initiatives). Question - are these 'new' people to help?

Marketing yes! But mind the balance! Don't dare follow some government leader and hire two fulltime marketers but only one ½ time pastoral care person. Ah, but then 'to everything, there is a season ... '.

To help this move from vision to action, identify and support leaders to help get this going. Let's work on ways to engage and inspire the congregation to take on pieces of this work, use it as a unifying opportunity for engagement and action. Can we run this through all that we do, ie, from the announcement to the greeters? My 'angel' conversation was not on the specifics of this vision, but more on how to ensure it is put into action and how to recruit a "critical mass" of folks to help staff do this (rather than the burden being on staff).

We need at least ½ the church in choirs. Get rid of the barrier between the chancel and the people.

Might, vis a vis, the school, think about initiating something with the larger church community perhaps where a church building is no longer being used. Childcare is an even more pressing need than schools.

My comments about this retreat ...

I found this retreat ... Very Valuable → 26 responses

This is my first presence, introduction to the subject and I'm felling, ignorant and maybe confused.

I seem to think of a different angle each time I go to a retreat.

The people at my table, first time to all of this, enjoyed the challenge (what they love about CMUC) but found the vision too big – we're not ready to see so much or believe it could happen. How are we going to engage and encourage people to become involved?

As someone newish to the church, I learned a lot by attending it. There is a refreshing, wonderful energy around driving the church into the future.

Very well organized – I wish more had the experience.

To have the chance to get together and envision as a congregation is marvelous.

Appreciated planning, timing, and reflective time in silence and in small groups. Mostly I am grateful for time to ask myself how am I living with integrity both personally and as part of a larger congregation?



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THANKS!

Great opportunity to talk with others.

Listening to the congregation is completely necessary.

Learned lots from my small group. New insights and generosity of old members.

My apologies for my up and downs with philosophy (some stuff). Sure hope I can keep being a part of all this. When asked “What has inspired me about being here or its future?” I respond with (a) being able to offer my song voice (b) the prospect of a strong structure, built around the sacred and operating out of a beautiful space, with which to carry out the love that needs to blossom on forever.

Hard to do on a sunny day. Last part most important and getting anxious about time and wanting to leave and enjoy the day.

Well run.

Very informative.

Thank you. Blessings.

I found this retreat ... Somewhat valuable → 3 responses

Good to get to know new people and great to discuss ideas with young people – no really divergent thoughts or issues! Good to think about all these issues. Does this hit the Observer at any point? One way to communicate “enthusiasm” to others.

I found this retreat ... Not valuable at all → zero responses

