

Who We Are Project

Dear Church Family,

Join me on a journey to define “Who We Are” as a church through a series of “Listening Sessions” held in church members homes and at the church. A Listening Session is an interactive conversation that will explore who we are as a church and who God has called us to be.

These Listening Sessions will form the first step in a process of re-imagining our Church’s mission, vision, and core values—the key words we use to give shape to our identity as a church. First Church is deeply rooted, with a long history of ministry in Downtown Austin. It’s healthy for a church to step back periodically to ask, “Why has God put us here?” and “Who are we becoming, by God’s grace?” Childcare is available for the Listening Sessions at the church with rsvp to childcare@fumcaustin.org. Please accept this personal invitation to attend a Listening Session and choose from the available dates.



Taylor

Pastor Taylor Fuerst

How will you use our feedback?

Throughout the course of twenty Listening Sessions, scribes will be assigned to listen, observe, and record key insights and consistencies. These insights will get consolidated and reviewed to help FUMC develop its mission, vision, and core values. Once developed, the new messaging will be shared broadly with the congregation and then to the Administrative Board for consideration.

We have done processes like this before.

Why are we doing this again?

The church has continued to grow and change over the last several years. FUMC has engaged in similar processes around 2005-2006 and 2011. This process is healthy to go back and ask these questions again every few years and particularly helpful following a pastoral transition.

Do I need to register for the Listening Sessions?

Yes, online registration is required at fumcaustin.org/whoweare. For engaging conversations to be effective, we plan to have a maximum of 15 people at each session. Your registration will help us manage our group sizes. For questions, contact Mary Heckmann at mary@fumcaustin.org.

Listening Session Dates and Locations

Registration required online: fumcaustin.org/whoweare.

Address provided after registration.

NORTH AUSTIN

Friday, October 14, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Noble and Sharon Doss' Home (78731)

Monday, October 17, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Chris and Leslie Story's Home (78759)

EAST AUSTIN

Monday, October 10, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Adama Brown's Home (78723)

CENTRAL AUSTIN

Thursday, October 20, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Billy and Sherry McHale's Home (78704)

CHURCH

Available to those living outside of Austin.

Childcare available with rsvp to childcare@fumcaustin.org.

Sunday, October 16, 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Murchison Chapel, Hosted by Dick and Ann Young

Sunday, October 23, 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Murchison Chapel, Hosted by Bob Garrett

SOUTH AUSTIN

Thursday, October 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Scott and Deborah Wilder's Home (78749)

Friday, October 28, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Rob and Leslie Ivey's Home (78739)

Monday, November 7, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Butch and Debbie Grote's Home (78735)

Extravagant GENEROSITY

Extravagant Generosity. You have heard the phrase before—we use these words often in the Church to express our call to mirror God’s generosity toward us. Perhaps you have witnessed ordinary saints whose lives reflect such generosity: they are rooted in gratitude and love for God and others, inspired by God’s vision for the future, and fully committed to see that vision come to pass. The coming season offers us an opportunity to cultivate such generosity in our own lives—to grow in our perspective and our practice of generosity. Our hope is that you will engage in this opportunity during our church-wide emphasis, Extravagant Generosity.

AN INVITATION TO RESPOND

Throughout our Fall Generosity Emphasis, “Heart Cards” will be made available to you through the mail or in worship. Each Sunday, you are invited to share your thoughts about what it is you love about our church, how a person or the church has shaped your spiritual journey, and what your visions and hope are for the church. We will be posing a new question each week throughout this season and asking you to respond in worship and online. These cards will be displayed at places throughout the church, so we can share and celebrate our church.

EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY SUNDAY SCHOOL SERIES

October 9, 16, and 23

10:00 a.m. Wesley Hall

During the month of October, all are invited to participate in a study of *The Grace of Giving: The Practice of Extravagant Generosity*. Through the practice of generosity, we offer our material resources in a manner that supports the causes that transform life, relieve suffering, enlarge the soul and sustain the spirit. We give back. Join us as together we explore the personal side of extravagant generosity and ways we can grow in the grace of giving. This series will be led by Pastor Cathy Stone and Cindy Walter.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

October 16

Extravagant Generosity, “Rooted In Love”

John 13:34-35 and Deuteronomy 6:4-6

Heart Card: People Who Impacted My Spiritual Life

October 23

Extravagant Generosity, “Inspired by Vision”

Matthew 14:13-21

Heart Card: Visions and Hopes for My Church

October 30

Extravagant Generosity, “Driven by Commitment”

Genesis 12:1-4

Commitment Sunday

CHURCH-WIDE CELEBRATION PICNIC

October 30

Following the 11:00 a.m. service

All are invited to celebrate our commitment and growth in generosity at our church-wide picnic on the Capitol lawn. Bring a picnic blanket and come prepared to purchase lunch from some fun Austin food vendors. Have a favorite outdoor game to share with others? Feel free to bring games—washers, kickball, or even a soccer ball— as we gather together for fellowship and fun!

TOWARD THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger, and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood