

A WORSHIP VISION FOR FAIRVIEW

WORSHIP VALUES

Praising God – People will feel invited to celebrate God, God’s love for us, and God’s love and care for all people and creation in approachable and accessible ways.

Building Community – Participants should feel a sense of belonging and of relationship-building by being in worship over time. The worship community should offer affirmation, support, challenge, guidance, and reassurance that we are not alone in our struggles, as we pray with and for each other. Worship will be designed to reach the community around us in all its breadth of age, racial diversity, and varying levels of Christian faith (including no explicit Christian faith). Understanding that many at Fairview are only present for worship, relationship and community-building must happen within the worship setting.

Encouraging – Participating in worship should help people feel renewed, energized, and encouraged in their faith journey.

Equipping –A progressive Presbyterian Christian faith and Fairview’s missional values will be taught and illuminated. Worship should provide education, resources, and practices for living those values and Christian faith in the world.

Engaging – The content, music, liturgy, and physical space of worship should all work together to engage the whole person – mind and heart. People should be emotionally moved by worship, but not manipulated.

Transforming – Over time, as people participate in worship at Fairview, they will grow in their faith and change in their practices and values to be more Christ-like. Worship should provide opportunities for discernment, and reflecting and listening to God through prayer, as important parts of transformation.

Inclusivity - Worship is to be shaped by the needs of the community, and should be designed to be engaging to our broader community, and not only current Fairview members.

INTENTIONALITY

Every worship service at Fairview should be planned in a manner that allows for the scripture and topic for that day to be presented in the most engaging and meaningful way possible.

Before any worship service is planned, the scripture and topic will need to be chosen well in advance to allow time for adequate planning. Ideally, planning will happen by a team of staff (pastor, music director) and volunteers with interest, skills, and gifts for worship planning. There may be several planning teams at any given time, working on different services, so that serving on a planning team is a limited short-term commitment.

The planning team will meet multiple times a month to consider how best the scripture and topic can be presented, guided by the Worship Values. The planning team will work with specific goals in mind for what should be accomplished in the service. In meeting these goals, the planning team will consider:

- The best use and arrangement the worship space, or alternate locations for worship
- The content and order of the service
- The type and content of music (songs, musicians, choir)

The worship planning teams will require more from existing volunteers as well as recruiting new volunteers. Fairview will have to look at, and possibly re-prioritize, other areas of the church where volunteers are needed to determine how best to meet all needs.

FLEXIBILITY

In order to make each worship experience as meaningful as possible, it will be necessary to provide a variety of “tools” in the “worship toolbox.” The church needs to move away from being locked into a small range of music or liturgy, or a worship space limited to one configuration or arrangement. By equipping Fairview with the ability to have variety in worship content, space, liturgy and music, worshippers will experience greater engagement and impact, and we can engage a wider variety of people in the community.

Flexibility in the liturgy and order of worship

Worship services should be designed not based on a single order of worship and standard liturgy, but by choosing what best works in service of the scripture and topic of the service. When appropriate, services could include longer times of silence for prayer, community discussion, prayer stations, drama, praying with one another, longer pieces of music or times of singing.

Flexibility in music

There will be services where a more traditional style of music is appropriate. Other services may have a scripture that is best expressed through a song that sounds best with a band. One service may need a joyful and upbeat atmosphere, while another may require a contemplative and quiet atmosphere. There is no one style of music, there is no one instrument or instruments, that can adequately serve the variety of scriptures, themes and topics to be presented in worship. Fairview needs to be able to employ jazz, traditional organ, contemporary Christian, gospel, bluegrass, and multiple other musical instruments and styles with equal ability, so that the planning teams can choose the best music for each Sunday.

Flexibility in physical space

The space that we worship in matters. How big the room is, how close we sit to one another,

how far away we are from the preacher, whether we are facing each other in worship, all of this affects how engaged we are in worship and how meaningful the service can be. So that worship planning teams will be able to best design a particular service around a scripture or topic, Fairview will work to transform the sanctuary to a place that could allow for:

- seating that is appropriate to the size of each Sunday's worship attendance
- bringing the congregation closer to the worship leaders
- allowing the congregation to be in the round for discussion or other interaction
- having an area of the sanctuary to include rocking chairs, soft seating, a coloring table, and quiet toys for small children and parents to sit at during worship
- having a more secluded section of the sanctuary for members to pray for one another

Having a flexible worship space could facilitate connecting congregation members to one another more readily each Sunday morning. This would strengthen our congregational bonds and our relationship with one another, both of these are crucial in supporting mental health within the Fairview family.

ITERATION

Iteration is a concept used in development by engineers and programmers, referring to consistent and systematic evaluation, and then incorporating what was learned into a new version of the product. In embracing iteration in worship, we admit that not everything will work the way we intend, and we embrace adjusting by stopping one thing and trying something else. Worship should be in a constant state of improvement, not working toward finding "the" way to worship but improving and expanding on the "many" ways to worship.

This will require developing ways to get regular congregational feedback, and methods for learning from that feedback as worship planning continues. It encourages the congregation to give things a chance, understanding that any given change may not be permanent. The congregation will be encouraged to be honest about what engaged them in worship, and what didn't, learning to present their experiences in constructive and loving ways.