

## **Congregational Meeting 10/26/25**

*Discussion Notes – Sorted and Lightly Consolidated into Themes*

### **Discussion Prompt #1: What spiritual and material needs have you observed at City Church?**

- Spiritual needs:
  - Classes, guides, places to process the weight of the world
  - Gen Z needs:
    - Spiritual anchor!
    - Authenticity!
  - People want something that feels real and authentic. Communities that live and welcome people in the way of Jesus.
  - Prayer (either for a crisis or ongoing situation)
- Relational/Accompaniment Needs:
  - Loneliness/community
  - Check in on people that aren't showing up that had been regularly here. Helping people feel cared for/noticed/that they matter.
  - Having someone walk with you through crisis (i.e. financial crisis, health crisis)
  - Building relationships, praying, coaching, supporting
  - Physically being with those who continue to be present (older, injured). Groups of 2-3.
  - More south/east community groups
- Needs related to life stage or transition:
  - New arrivals
  - New parents
  - Ageing
  - Unemployment (coaching? Networking events? Plus emotional and spiritual support.)
- Mental Health Needs:
  - In the past, Diaconate was related to the Counseling Center. Would like to see mental health included in future plans
    - Subsidize
    - Support groups
  - Mental health resources and support
- Material needs:
  - Financial
    - Financial need. Personal support stories. 100% pledges collected [during last fiscal year] says a lot.

- Federal budget cuts to Medicare, and much more, will create great need
  - SF these days is more expensive and there are more layoffs.
  - Rent, food
- Physical health issues
- Meal Train – people meeting your immediate needs while you’re going through a crisis. Practically helpful!
- Mutual Aid (ex. Cat-sitting for someone, volunteering for youth retreat)
- Wanting to stay connected to City Church but not having resources to do so because it’s expensive to live in the city (college students and retirees)
- Note that San Franciscans of today are dealing with particular needs – the threat of ICE; layoff culture; financial and health crises.
- Other:
  - Mobilizing a service
  - Within the same community

**Discussion Prompt #2: Recall a time of crisis. Who was helpful? What was helpful?**

- Relational Support:
  - General emotional and mental support (meeting once a month)
  - Matching people to listeners who have experience. Have a breadth of people.
  - Listening is helpful – and all the more important in a diverse congregation such as our own
  - Someone you’re already in relationship with and knows you. Need deacons who represent diversity of the congregation.
  - Naming what they see
  - Consistent follow up after talking.
  - Check in on people that aren’t showing up that had been regularly here. Helping people feel cared for/noticed/that they matter.
  - (Personal story) going through divorce:
    - Conversations with Jay Wilson and Fred Harrel. Appreciated their expertise, perspective, wisdom, care expressed.
    - Also hearing old welcome mentioning City Church as a place for people regardless of marital status helped me feel like I belong in the community
- Mental Health Support:
  - Therapy
- Material Support:
  - Housing Board

- Deacons Fund – helped with medical situation. Community group helped access Deacon's Fund.
- Accessibility:
  - Make sure people who aren't in community groups know how to access help.
  - Make sure people know who to go to about stuff. Who's the point person for me/my crisis?
- Key Characteristics: Relational, Trustworthy, Mature, Safe
- Other: Visibility into community prayer requests

**Discussion Prompt #3: How might the diaconate uniquely help us fulfill/realize our vision?**

- Upright and Spiritually Mature Character:
  - Relational
  - Trustworthy
  - Well-respected, wise, faithful
  - Mature, recognizing that life is messy
  - Good boundaries
  - Diaconate needs to be Spirit-led
  - The diaconate should be capable of being comfortable being uncomfortable. (Self-differentiation!)
- Diverse:
  - The deacons must have diversity amongst them.
  - Diversity of age and background
  - Diverse in age, ethnicity, etc.
- Inward focus on the City Church community
  - Transition support – new parents, new to city, job change. Funds if needed, but also navigation to people, resources, ideas to help make through the change.
  - "Visitation" ministry where deacons can visit folks in need of company or prayer.
  - The diaconate should be especially gifted at being attuned to the movement of the Holy Spirit within our community.
- By being visible to our community:
  - Eyes on the congregation, known to them
  - Very important that the Deacons be a known vehicle for two-way communication
  - Deacons as a connective tissue between communities and resources
- By being organized and efficient:

- Person to person communication and a way to do this quickly. (Ex: death in the family, reach out. Ex. Phone tree?)
- Assigned deacons
  - Point person idea continued.
  - Assigned to certain needs?
  - Assigned to certain groups?
- Through considering the positionality of our community:
  - “Do the widows even come to our church?” Do our deacons enable people from different (financial?) backgrounds to feel welcome and fully supported.
  - Underground church – the church is its best self when it’s marginalized.
- Other Input:
  - Diaconate should not just be open to City Churchers but [to] people outside our church
  - Co-housing options for people to stay in the city?
  - Young-adult group – not on Sunday AM. An alternative to IV and Cru for college students.
  - Small group for people unsure of faith or of church because of past church hurt. CCSF can be a place of refuge and renewed growth.
  - Surface problems from the congregation to leadership