

A Guide to Interacting with the “Guiding Vision”



VISION CONVERSATIONS in CCSW

This is a one-session meeting for persons to receive the Guiding Vision draft and interact with one another around it. The purpose of this group interaction with the Guiding Vision is to elicit and discuss our understandings of what it means to be the church as “a community of communities” in CCSW. Both the Guiding Vision and this conversation have the intended results to stimulate hope, ignite imagination, increase faith, and explore our purpose as God’s people.

The conversation around the Guiding Vision is primarily focused more on “theological realities” (how do we relate to God and what God wants us to become as the church) than about action steps, programs, and plans. That will come later.

All participants will have in their hands a copy of the Guiding Vision draft, as expressed so far by the New Day New Direction Team.

A “process” of interaction and conversation is designed, and a sheet will be on each table, for each session, indicating the assignment in the table group. The process will –

- Directly relate to the vision as expressed
- Invite imagination, and expression in words and images
- Be highly interactive

OBJECTIVES:

1. To update attendees about the current activity and progress in the New Day New Direction journey.
2. To interact with one another and contribute to the on-going discernment of God's Guiding Vision for the future of CCSW.
3. To clarify next steps in the transformation journey.

DETAILED NOTES FOR FACILITATION

Preparation: Set the room up with tables or circles of chairs, 5-7 persons at each table. Encourage people to sit with people they do not know so well. This will insure a good mix of perspectives. Copies of the Guiding Vision and discussion questions should be available for each participant. Feedback forms should be on the table for each participant, even though only one form will be handed in from each table.

1. Introduction and review of the agenda. (2-5 minutes)

Welcome everyone. Clarify the purpose of this session by sharing the objective above. (*Encourage folks to sit with people they don't know well; your purpose is to interact with others and discover perspectives you didn't know.*)

2. Update what has happened in the Journey since the October Regional Assembly/Vision Retreat. (5-8 minutes)

Briefly review the past two months of the Process illustrating how the New Day New Direction (NDND) Team has been working. Note the following:

Get a sense of who has been involved in the process so far. One way to do this: Ask NDND persons to stand, if present. Ask those who participated in bible study (Sign, Foretaste, Instrument) to stand; ask those who participated in the Ministers' Vision Retreat to stand; ask those who participated in the Regional Assembly Vision retreat to stand. Ask those who love the church and care about its future to stand (this might allow all to stand).

Briefly describe what is coming next: A leadership workshop with the Regional Council and key Leaders February 27 to decide Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest (CCSW) mission and 5-year goals; Conference on the future to stimulate ideas and ministry plans across the Areas in the spring. Design teams will be enlisted in coming months to spell out concrete ministry plans and structure.

3. Connecting with one another at table group. (10-15 minutes)

Go around the table and ask each person to introduce themselves, sharing one thing they are hopeful about for this process

Interacting with an Emerging Vision.

Introduce interacting with the Vision in the following way:

- a. Today's gathering is one more step in discernment process that will allow members from within the CCSW to contribute to choosing its direction for the future. We will now turn to the work of the NDND Team that has resulted from the prayer, study and interaction across the Region in the transformation journey so far.
- b. The NDND Team's work is still "a work in process." The NDND team seeks to understand and articulate what God is calling our Region to do and to be as a community of communities. First a Guiding Vision must be established from which mission and goals flow. The Guiding Vision at this time builds off the insights from across the region reflected through analysis of our key challenges, study of scripture, and reflection on our heritage. This work is not a finished or final product, but represents the continuation of discernment with and among communities across CCSW.

Process Suggestions for Interacting with the Guiding Vision draft:

1. Ask someone from each group to take notes
2. Invite someone to read aloud the "Guiding Vision." (All have copies.) Listen actively and attentively.

Individual Silent Reflection (5-10 minutes)

1. What words, images, phrases catch your attention as most expressive of a future God is calling us to as a CCSW community of communities? (Record reflections below.)

Group Discussion (30-40 minutes):

2. Share your answer to Q.1 with your table/circle group, going around the group, each person sharing their answer.

Now discuss together as a table/circle group (15-20 minutes): (Make notes as others speak; make sure each person has an opportunity to share.)

3. What kind of community does this Guiding Vision envision CCSW to be?
4. Working together, identify and express the image(s) that most captures the sense of hope for the future that the Guiding Vision conveys. Prepare to share with other table groups.

Share a report on Q.4 from your table group (10-15 minutes)

Second Discussion: Complete this Feedback Form (10-15 minutes):

Read the Guiding Vision aloud again.

Working together, discern the shared response of the group to the emerging Guiding Vision and record them. Each table group will hand in only **ONE FEEDBACK FORM** to the facilitator.

1. What of this Guiding Vision moves you to action? How can this Guiding Vision be clearer?

2. What would your table group like to contribute to the expression of the Guiding Vision?

3. What is it that we **MUST** do -- cannot wait to be about?

What congregation/group is providing feedback? _____

If NDND has questions, who may we contact for more information? (Please provide phone and/or email.)

Contact person: _____ Phone/email: _____

At the end of discussion, if there is time, report out a summary of conversation and hand in feedback reports.