



Themes from Memories and Heroes

Thank you again to each of you who shared your meaningful memories, unsung heroes, and the themes that tell the story of who we are as a community of faith.

As noted in the summary from Vision Retreat #2, a task force gathered these recounting of memories and heroes and thematically grouped them—out of a belief that the themes arising from our stories tell us something about our core values. The aim in this was to begin to uncover and articulate our community’s **True North**: our core values, focus, and strategic priorities to which God is calling us to next.

During the next week you will be asked to review the themes we identified and let us know if you see anything that is missing and/or anything that stands out to you (conversations will be held on 4/18 at 6:30pm and 4/22 at 10:45am). After this, a task force will work on developing language to capture these themes as our core values.

Please submit your feedback via paper at the ReForming Table in the Commons or to swilhelmgarbers@colonialchurch.org **by April 30th**.

Theme #1- Warm Welcome | Home

This theme involved stories of being seen, loved, and known as a part of this community. The words/ideas that most frequently arose in your stories included (in no particular order):

Known by Name	Love	Appreciation of Difference
Personal	Support	Families
Emotional Connections	Home	Multigenerational families
Personable Staff	Warm Welcome	Marking of Personal/Familial Milestones
Loved for Who you Are	Caring Presence	Valued as an individual
Warmth	Mentorship	Friendly
Acceptance	Community	Relational
Deepening Connections	Owning the Covenant	Space to be seen
All Ages	Intergenerational	Open-hearted

Questions: How would you name this theme? What would you say about it? Does this seem like the right grouping?

Theme #2- Experiencing the Sacred

This theme involved stories of weddings, funerals, services, choir, music, and worship. The words/ideas that most frequently arose in your stories included (in no particular order):

Liturgy	Music	Celebrating Milestones of Faith
Reverence for Sacred	Meaningful Traditions	Spirit-Filled
Aesthetic Sensibility	Sacred Ground	Appreciation for beauty
	Creativity	

Questions: How would you name this theme? What would you say about it? Is this the right grouping?

Theme #3- Personal/Alive Faith in Jesus

This theme involved stories of lives being transformed, a place where faith is about our head, our hearts, and our hands. It's the way we've been formed and are committed to the life of discipleship. The words/ideas that most frequently arose in your stories included (in no particular order):

Generosity	Biblical Foundation	Courageous
Wholistic Faith (all of life)	Jesus	Owning the Covenant
Healing/Reconciliation	Personal/Alive Faith	Mystery
Grace-Filled	Heart	Longevity
Personal Faith	Genuine/Authentic	Resilience
Spiritually Deepening	Bible Studies	Retreats
Mercy and Grace of Jesus	Spiritual Formation	

Questions: How would you name this theme? What would you say about it? Is this the right grouping?

Theme #4- Shared Experiences / Service to and with Community

This theme involved stories of both experiences that deepened faith and community (ski trips, Crisillo, retreats) and service together with others. The words/ideas that most frequently arose in your stories included (in no particular order):

Groups	Service to broader community	Church within Church
Committees	Using our skills	Competent/Capable Leaders
Missional Experiences	Shared (Common) Experiences	Intentionality in Commitments
Working together on events	Service to and with Community	Committed Volunteers
Embodied Service	Having Fun Together	Share Responsibility
Service as a Community	Servant Leaders	Spaces to Use Gifts
Innovation	Engaging your strengths	Vocation + Faith Intersection

Questions: How would you name this theme? What would you say about it? Is this the right grouping?

Theme #5- Thoughtful Faith/Appreciation of Differences

This theme involved stories of thoughtful sermons, the connection between the mind and heart, and the way that this community provides a space to wrestle with the things of faith outside of the bounds of legalism. The words/ideas that most frequently arose in your stories included (in no particular order):

Challenge	Thoughtful sermons	Wise Teachers
Tolerance for Difference	Thinking Deeply	Breathing Room
Taking Faith Seriously	Teaching minister/ministry	Theological Diversity
Tolerant	Learning Together	Open-Minded
Questions	Thoroughness	Not Strict/Rules-based
Holding the tensions	Deepening Spirituality	Healthy Wrestling
Challenge the mind	Non-judgmental	Faith as mind+heart

Questions: How would you name this theme? What would you say about it? Is this the right grouping?

And in all things, let us continue in prayer as we together journey through...
ReForming: What is God Calling us to Next?