

Question 1: What are your most audacious dreams for your family and the world ?

We explored what values were expressed in these dreams. The key values identified were:

1. **Love & Compassion:** This include showing kindness, empathy, and understanding towards those who may struggle or in need.
2. **Unity & Fellowship:** Individuals should feel connected and supported by one another, with a shared sense of purpose.
3. **Service & Giving:** This could involve volunteering, donating to charitable causes, or simply helping out a neighbor in need.
4. **Humility & Forgiveness:** People should admit their mistakes, seek forgiveness, and extend grace to others.
5. **Spiritual Growth:** Cultivate a greater sense of peace, purpose, and connection in our life by actively pursuing practices and learning opportunities that allow for personal transformation.
6. **Respect & Diversity:** People should value diversity and treat all with respect, despite their background or beliefs.
7. **Safety:** People seek a commitment to ensuring the well-being of all and actively work towards maintaining a safe and supportive environment.
8. **Concern for the Earth:** Protecting the planet is a long-term goal that requires dedication and persistence. This value combines environmental

consciousness, empathy and compassion, creativity and innovation, commitment and dedication, collaboration and community.

Overall, there were 339 dreams put forth by the Congregation. Almost 25% of the dreams were associated with the value of Respect & Diversity. Over 15% were associated with Unity & Fellowship. Dreams of Love & Compassion and Concern for Earth were each over 12%. Dreams expressing Spiritual Growth, Safety, and Service & Giving each were about 9%. Dreams about Humility & Forgiveness accounted only for about 4% of the dreams.

We also found a scale to these dreams: Personal; Family; Church (UCG); Local; State; National; and Worldwide.

At the personal level, about half the 62 dreams were based on Spiritual Growth. Love & Compassion was expressed in 20% of the dreams and 10% were Service & Giving.

There were about 50 dreams about Families. Love & Compassion and Unity & Fellowship accounted for about 25% each. Respect & Diversity and Concern for the Earth were each expressed in about 10% of the dreams.

Dreams about the Church (24) split between Unity & Fellowship and Respect & Diversity.

There were also 24 dreams at the local level with almost half expressing the Respect & Diversity value. Safety and

Unity & Fellowship each accounted for 20% of the local dreams.

There were only 14 dreams at the state level. They were largely split between Respect & Diversity and Safety.

At the national level, there were 30 dreams. Well over half referred to the Respect & Diversity value, with most of the rest depended on the Spiritual Growth of our politicians and our Safety.

Most of the Worldwide dreams (139) were about the planet. Over 25% reflected Concern for the Earth. At almost 20% each were Unity & Fellowship and Respect & Diversity dreams. Service & Giving dreams were below 20%.

Question 2: What are your most audacious dreams for UCG ?

The dreams for the church expressed the same set of values, but with an additional value of Adequate Funding of the physical church and its activities. Of the almost 300 dreams put forth, about 200 were facing inward and the rest were facing outward.

Almost half of the outward facing dreams expressed the value of Service & Giving. Respect & Diversity were expressed in about 20% of the dreams, and Unity & Fellowship accounted for about 15%.

One third of the inward facing dreams expressed the Unity & Fellowship value. Many of the inward-looking dreams suggested new programs and new facilities that supported the value of Service & Giving. Adding these to the other dreams that expressed this value totaled over 20% of the dreams. Dreams expressing the values of Adequate Funding, Respect & Diversity, and Spiritual Growth each accounted for 10% of the dreams.

Question 3: What are the barriers to these dreams ?

Barriers to dreams are different from expressions of values. We listed 347 barriers to our dreams. Several barriers can prevent achieving a dream, including:

1. **Lack of Clear Communication:** It is important to clearly communicate the dream and its goals to all involved parties. Misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and lack of clarity in communication can hinder achievement of a dream.
2. **Poor Planning:** Without proper planning, there may be gaps or oversights that can stop pursuit a dream. Plan for potential challenges, risks and contingencies to help ensure successful achievement of a dream.
3. **Limited Resources:** Insufficient resources - whether it be financial, staff, or infrastructure - can limit the ability to reach a dream effectively.
4. **Resistance to Change:** Change can be uncomfortable for some people and organizations,

and resistance to change can often hinder the successful pursuit of a dream.

5. **Lack of Commitment:** Without general commitment and determination of all involved parties, plans can fail. To build a general interest in achieving the dream, there should be clarity about what is in it for everyone.

All these were present in the barriers described by the Congregation. The barrier most often identified was Resistance to Change. About 39% of the identified barriers related to resistance, such as divisiveness, complacency, and fear. One-third of this 39% was divisiveness in our church community, followed by one-fifth of the 39% as divisiveness outside our church community. The remaining part of the 39% was near equal amounts of complacency and fear.

About 25% of the identified barriers spoke to a lack of Commitment, such as lack of spare time, prioritization, and lack of energy.

Limited resources were expressed in 16% of the identified barriers. The primary limited resource was money.

Poor Planning was expressed in just over 12% of the barriers, and Lack of Clear Communication in less than 5%.

Question 4: What are we called to build, to bring these dreams to reality ?

Dreaming in today's world is challenging. The issues are well known: the COVID-19 pandemic, racial and political unrest, economic stress, rising concerns over environmental issues, workforce challenges, and demographic changes that had been anticipated but not fully understood. It is in this setting that we dared to dream, confront the barriers to our dreams, and seek to drive a strong, progressive, resilient, and resourceful church community on to continued success in an evolving city, state, nation and planet. This is not new territory for UCG: since its founding in 1965, this faith community has consistently demonstrated an ability to innovate and to attract outstanding members, staff, and partners.

The Congregation generated 249 actions to bring our dreams to reality. They reveal many things about UCG, including our values, priorities, and aspirations. In order to bring our dreams to reality, we need to:

- Strengthen our community,
- Find the needed resources,
- Organize for action,
- Stay focused, resilient, and persistent, and
- Follow our values (our compact).

Strengthen Our Community – About 35% of the responses suggested actions to strengthen our community:

1. **Positive relationships:** A functioning community has healthy and positive relationships between its members. We need to improve our relationships by building trust, mutual respect, and open communication.
2. **Shared values and goals:** Additional work is needed to merge our dreams into shared values and goals. In this way we can work towards achieving common goals, giving us a sense of belonging and purpose.
3. **Effective leadership:** As a congregational church, the leaders come from the congregation. We have a tradition of effective leaders who have inspired and guided us towards achieving shared goals. We need to recognize leaders in our midst that are accountable, trustworthy, and able to communicate effectively.
4. **Strong social networks:** We have many social networks connecting people in our community. It is suggested that one or more needs to be strong enough to facilitate communication and cooperation throughout our community. Stronger networks may be built by having fun through community events, regular gatherings, and social activities.
5. **Active participation:** Everyone has a role to play in contributing to our community's development. A well-functioning community encourages active participation from all its members.
6. **Resilience:** There will be changes and challenges. We need to build resilience through effective planning, strong relationships, and a sense of shared purpose.

Find Needed Resources – Over 6% of the responses spoke of needed resources, primarily financial. Quoting some of the suggested actions:

- “An endowment that allows UCG to make targeted investments in priority projects above and beyond baseline needs.”
- “Continue to do all the things UCG currently does, (the programs, social work, etc.) lead the congregation to give more of our talents, work efforts, and money to support the church we love.”
- “Open new ideas for raising funds -- grants, online challenges, etc.”
- “Suit up and show up for projects for services for conversations for building for financial support.”

Organize for Action – A member of the congregation has suggested “A functional structure that blesses new ideas and ministries while sunseting others whose time has past.” Others speak of “Healing, cohesion, transparency - Exceptional problem solving & conflict resolution.” and “Making decisions from a place of spiritual connection and reflection -- (balanced with practical needs)”. No matter the dream to be built, almost a quarter of the responses recognized the need for organizing to make it happen. The suggested components for organizing for action are:

1. **Setting Clear Goals:** Define what we hope to achieve, including specific milestones and timelines, as well as any resources we may need to achieve them.
2. **Take Consistent Action:** Break down our dream into manageable tasks, prioritize them based on importance and urgency, and consistently work to make progress towards our goals.
3. **Utilize Resources and Support:** Seek out resources and support systems that can help us along the way, such as mentors, advisors, networks, and online resources that offer guidance and support.
4. **Clear Communication:** Communicate the plan and its objectives clearly to all involved parties to ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities.

Stay Focused, Resilient, and Persistent – Over 10% of the responses suggest we need to stay goal-focused and maintain a positive mindset, despite setbacks or challenges. Pursuing a dream can be a long and bumpy road, so maintaining persistence is key to success. Also practicing resiliency and using challenges as opportunities to learn and grow helps.

Follow Our Values (Our Compact +) – Over 20% of the responses saw the need to follow our values as we bring our dreams to reality. Recalling our values from Question 1 and reviewing our compact:

“We join as a spiritual community... [Unity & Fellowship]

to worship God, however known... [Humility & Forgiveness]

to welcome into our church those of differing understanding and theological opinion... [Respect & Diversity]

to learn from our religious heritage, yet to grow by seeking new dimensions of truth... [Spiritual Growth]

to follow, even imperfectly, the way of Jesus in personal involvement with each other, and ... [Love & Compassion]

and strengthened by this bond, to act in Christian concern for the welfare of all people.” [Service & Giving]

and

“Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” [Respect & Diversity]