

St. Lucas United Church of Christ

“Cliff Notes” of Strategic Plan and Phase 1 of Implementation

St. Lucas UCC is a special church with great members, great programs, and great heritage. However, like many churches in today's world, St. Lucas faces challenges with regards to maintaining its membership, participation, and programming. The Visioning Process that has been taken on by this congregation since early 2013 strives to ensure that St. Lucas UCC can continue to be a special, thriving church in the future. Many great ideas have been generated by our congregation through the feedback received during this process, focused on attracting new members as well as fulfilling existing members with great programming and united sense of purpose for connecting with God and carrying out God's ministry.

Five Core Values of St. Lucas UCC:

- Providing people with fulfilling opportunities to **worship**.
- Leading **mission** programming to do the work of God.
- Developing Christian **education** to deepen our faith and personal growth.
- Inviting others through **evangelism** to fuel our church's future.
- Building the family of God through nurturing **fellowship**.

Key Objectives of the Strategic Plan:

1. Develop exceptional hospitality: going beyond welcoming to inviting.
2. Become a more connected community of faith with each other and with God that is marked by spiritual depth, mutual respect, care, and love.
3. Provide worship services where people can experience a sense of belonging while also appreciating the other forms of worship offered.
4. Entrust, empower, engage, and equip all members including our youth for our mission and our ministries, quickly drawing new members into leadership and avoiding burnout.
5. Provide Christian education for all generations, equipping people for deeper spiritual life and Christian service.
6. Expand and deepen our influence and witness, both to we who are part of St. Lucas UCC and to the wider community and world.
7. Intentionally meet the needs of each generation while also engaging the generations with each other.
8. Consistently grow the average worship attendance from current levels. Also grow the numbers of those participating in the church's mission and ministry. Particular focus made towards increasing the membership and engagement from youth and young adults.
9. Communicate more openly and effectively using multiple means including paper, mail, telephone, e-mail, website, texting, etc., so that people both inside and outside the congregation know what is happening at St. Lucas UCC.
10. Clarify, simplify, and adapt our decision making process so that decisions are made with congregational input and trust is engendered.
11. Foster a collaborative relationship with the Preschool.
12. Positively enhance the culture of St. Lucas so that we become more adventurous in trying new things; everyone gets heard and no one falls through the cracks; we celebrate our history and culture in a way that empowers us to move into the future; we become a church in which everyone is equipped and empowered for ministry; we are unified by a common purpose and direction; we move towards a model of dialogue and discernment; we move towards a more mission-based mentality, actively reaching out to the community.

Strategies for Achieving Our Objectives:

Several different strategies will be employed to achieve the above objectives over the next 5-7 years. The full list of potential strategies and ideas is available in the complete “St. Lucas UCC Strategic Plan: 2014 - 2020” document. To get started in a manageable way, the church will implement the plan in phases, focused on a defined number of strategies at a time. The goal will be to attain a level of success with each phase before moving to a new phases in the future. Phase 1 below shows the initial activities that we will pursue as our 1st step in beginning to achieve the church God calls us to be in the future.

Phase 1 of Strategic Plan Implementation: Theme: Delivering God’s “Exceptional Hospitality”...Inside and Out

Inside Hospitality

Goal: Let’s become exceptional as an inviting place where people feel included and compelled to join the ministry of our church.

Strategies to achieve this include:

- Form a Hospitality Task Force to develop a plan for increasing awareness of hospitality and ways to improve.
- Develop and begin conducting periodic Visitor Orientation Seminars.
- Involve youth more visibly in participation/leadership of worship.
- Form new small groups focused on inviting underserved groups in the congregation.

Outside Hospitality

Goal: Let’s become exceptional as a place that makes a real difference in our community.

Slogan: “St. Lucas UCC Cares”

Strategies to achieve this include:

- Form Mission Leadership Team to coordinate & increase focus on mission efforts across congregation.
- Include all generations in mission efforts. All groups and individuals can have opportunities to pitch in and help.
- Develop a common sense of purpose and increase awareness inside and outside of our congregation about our mission efforts.

Communications Team: Exceptional Hospitality will be enhanced by additional focus on communications. The existing Marketing & Website committees will be supplemented with additional resources on forming this team to implement new approaches for increasing visibility in the community and making the congregation more aware of the activities within the church.

An **Implementation Team** will help give oversight to the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Implementation Team will monitor progress, share successes with the congregation, and review with Council, no less than every 6 months, suggestions for the appropriateness and timing for pursuing future elements of the plan in keeping within the capacity and priorities of the church at that time.

With this plan in place, we are excited about the prospects for what God calls our church to be and do in the years ahead.