

# 2018 VISION PLAN ADDENDUM



**CATCH THE SPIRIT!**

<b>Where we have come from</b>	<b>Where we are</b>	<b>Where we want to go</b>
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*Help Grace make a  
world of difference.*

**Vision  
for  
Tomorrow**

**GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE**

**August 2016**

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**GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OAK RIDGE  
2018 ADDENDUM TO 2015 VISION TEAM REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

The last strategic planning activity at Grace Lutheran culminated in August, 2015, with the publication of the 2015 Vision Team Report. This 2018 Addendum describes Visioning activity since the 2015 Vision Team Report was published and projects our Vision Plan up through the year 2018.

Pastor Steve Damos announced his retirement as of October 1, 2015. On Monday evening, October 24, Congregation Council met with Pastor Ben Moravitz, assistant to Bishop Gordy, to discuss the subject of calling a new pastor for Grace. Pastor Moravitz explained the transition and call process in great detail. As part of this process, the congregation has been required to undertake a crucial self-assessment that gives a picture of the community, of Grace now and our hopes, dreams, and goals for the future. This was done and outlined in our 2015 Vision Plan, but due to changes that have occurred since the completion of that vision process (2013), it was deemed necessary to verify and/or update the findings of that plan.

With this in mind we have taken a fresh look at where we are today, what has been accomplished since 2013, and how best to utilize our resources to continue to follow our mission:

“Love Jesus and help others love Him too.”

We also seek to live out our vision statement: “Grace Lutheran ~ A Christian church dedicated to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to a diverse community by loving our neighbors as ourselves, developing vibrant ministries to meet current and emerging needs, and helping people know Jesus.”

As well as our purpose:

Led by the Holy Spirit, we are called to worship God,  
Love our neighbors as ourselves, and  
Inspire others to seek Jesus and  
Experience God’s grace in their lives.

And we wholeheartedly subscribe to our motto: “Grace makes a world of difference.”

See the Appendices to this Addendum for additional details and findings of this planning process conducted in 2016 in preparation for calling a new pastor.

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## **2016 VISION PROCESS ELEMENTS**

- Solicitation of Prayers of Congregation via multiple means
- Review of highlights of 2015 Vision Plan with congregation via Grace Connection emails
- Congregational Health Inventory
- Vision Events

**History:** Where We've Come From

**Values:** Who We Are: Taking inventory

**Grow with Grace:** Our Vision for the Future

Results of this last event are based on the use of Congregational Asset Mapping; conducting interviews with community leaders; and gathering demographic data from *Percept Group, Inc.*

## **GRACE'S HISTORY: WHAT GRACE HAS BEEN ABOUT**

From its beginnings, Grace Lutheran Church has been about fellowship, nurturing faith and spiritual growth, while reaching outward in service to others.

The fellowship that grew into Grace Church began with the gathering of a few faithful Lutherans in the living room of Ray and Frieda McCormick on an early November evening in 1943. Those gathered that evening were among the earliest arrivals who came to work in the secret Manhattan Project.

Blessed by strong leadership, that group of devoted Christians set about seeking the help of a nearby Knoxville pastor, developing regular church services for the nourishing of their faith, seeking out other Lutherans arriving in the community, and establishing contact with regional church officials for aid and guidance. By the end of December 1946, they had developed a set of rules and principles to guide them, organized a senior choir, a youth fellowship group, a women's missionary society, the first Bible study class and a Sunday School. They had held the first vacation Bible school and the first Christmas Eve candlelight service, held the first confirmation and performed the first wedding, and said goodbye to two mission pastors; welcomed a third pastor as well as a second and very gifted parish worker. They had published the first issue of *The Lutheran Light*, and been chartered as the United Lutheran Church of Oak Ridge (to be renamed Grace a few months later) with 101 communicant members, 160 baptized members, and 28 associate members.

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Benevolence and service to the community were evidenced by dedication of the 1946 Christmas offering to Lutheran World Relief and the sponsorship of a Christmas party for the children of the Scarboro community.

It was said that the “spirit of fellowship was strong, feeding the spirit of cooperation, enthusiasm and joy.” And so it has been throughout the history of Grace.

Please see Appendix A for the timeline developed in our History Vision event. Note that the events listed were taken “as is” from the meeting notes and have not been edited for errors of omission or commission.

## **GRACE’S PRESENT**

### **Accomplishments Since May 2013 Goals Were Adopted**

The Christian Education program was revitalized.

- Sunday School for both children and adults was enhanced, with two adult classes held year-round.
- Vacation Bible School events were strengthened.
- An evening Bible Study group was added.
- Regular evening prayer meetings were instituted.
- Via de Cristo activities were established for spiritual nourishment and lay leadership development.

Pet Fest and Blessing was expanded, especially with the addition of a Pets Are Blessings 5K Run/Walk in 2013. This was held for three years.

The ways we welcome new visitors have expanded and efforts to integrate them into the life of the congregation have been pursued to good effect.

Online outreach expanded via three main approaches:

- Major improvement of Grace’s website; addition of Pet Fest and Blessing website, Writers of Grace website, plus Twitter account; 2015 major revamp of Grace website.
- Addition of Grace Facebook presence.
- Ads in online *Oak Ridge Today* that link to Grace’s website.

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Advertising increased via more press releases, large banner signs for special events and services, and new venues for paid ads.

A Communications Survey and Inventory led to efforts to improve communications within the congregation.

We changed from a full-time Minister of Music to half-time music director and part-time organist.

Fellowship and interest group activities changed:

- Restart of Grace's Greatest on quarterly basis.
- Replacement of Grace Prime Time with monthly Fellowship Dinners.
- Annual Grace Women's Teas started.

Three new serving/outreach ministries were established:

- Ministry to the Hispanic community to assist in cultural assimilation through classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) three nights a week and programs to learn of the community needs and issues. Classes expanded in starting in July 2015 to two evening and four morning English classes. Participants have come from 16 countries to date. Outgrowths include weekly Chinese and Spanish classes for members and friends.
- Mental Health Ministry with near-monthly community events.
- Stephen Ministry, with three volunteers trained as Stephen Leaders in January 2015, and training for five Stephen ministers completed in May, 2016.

Food pantry scope and operations ramped up as the need has increased substantially.

- Remodeled Food Pantry and its storage room in 2015 with funds from Thrivent grant.
- Began distributing USDA commodity foods as available for those eligible in 2016.

Renovations and improvements to our facilities were made to keep them inviting and functional.

- Planning done for Christian Education/community wing renovation/redecorating, and initial improvements were done in narthex.
- Painting and new carpet tiles installed in office area and Room 101.
- New security system installed in 2015.
- Major computer system upgrade in 2016
- Replacement of the sanctuary HVAC systems in 2015.

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- Improvements in sanctuary sound system initiated in 2016.
- Library holdings reviewed and moved downstairs to Rm 107 in 2016 for easier access.

## **Congregational Health Inventory (CHI): Summary**

We have much to celebrate. Most members find Grace to be a place where the Good News is proclaimed regularly through the preaching, music, worship in general, witness to one another, and support for our daily ministries. Grace is perceived as an inviting and supportive place, where relationships are nurtured and people of diverse backgrounds and life situations are welcomed. Serving the community is highly valued. Our scores on faith development (Sunday School, Bible study opportunities, personal study and devotions, etc.) scored significantly better than in 2013. See Appendix B for summary and detailed results of the Congregational Health Inventory.

The survey revealed some areas where we could benefit from improvement.

- We need to improve our internal communication—many folks are confused or unsure of how things are done at Grace, whether it's how we welcome folks into membership, how we do publicity, how many groups use the church, or how the Pastor and lay leadership interact. *How would you prefer to get such information?*
- We have a way to go to improve how we deal with conflict.
- We have no program or process for instructing adults in the faith if they are new to Christianity. We could strengthen how we do refreshers for those have been away from church for an extended time or are from a very different background.
- We need to become more comfortable with talking about Grace and inviting folks to services and/or activities.
- We show broad support for our Pastors. We could do better on things like continuing education, regular Sabbaticals, and yearly taking stock of the role and ministry of the pastor.
- We are doing well with visioning and have a mission statement (plus vision and purpose statements and motto).

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- We do pretty well with stewardship of financial resources but could improve.
- We scored well regarding leadership of clergy and laity except for the arena of potential burnout of our lay leaders.

Many thanks to all 60 members who participated by filling out the Congregational Health Inventory! This was a substantial increase over the 44 who participated in 2013.

### **Grace's Values: Summary**

The highest priority Values from our Values vision event were, in order of priority, as follows (clarified by referring to the summary sheets from each group, merging some that were essentially duplicates and adding the votes together):

- Caring for others in the community / Social justice
- Worship
- Spiritual growth / Faith and spirituality
- Caring for those in our congregation
- Youth

Quite a number of other values were identified and are listed in Appendix C of this 2018 Vision Plan Addendum. One, for example, is diversity—diversity of people, diversity in styles of worship, diversity in ways of serving the broader community, diversity in activities.

### **Grace's Regional Community**

Grace is a regional church, being the only ELCA congregation to the northwest of Knoxville and east of the Cumberland plateau. The majority of Grace participants, individuals and families, live in Oak Ridge proper (~70%), while significant minorities live in the greater Clinton area (~13%) and in Knoxville/Knox County (~9%). Appendix D presents a map of our regional distribution based on GIS analysis of our most recent membership directory (as of August 31, 2016). This is not all-inclusive but should be a good representation of where our participants live.

Quite a number of non-English speakers live in the area served by Grace. East Tennessee has had an influx of Spanish speakers for a number of years. Grace Church is located in one of two areas of the greatest density of Latino households in Oak Ridge and is a 5-minute drive from the other area. Oak Ridge National Laboratory and to some extent the other DOE facilities attract a significant number of foreign nationals, either on short-term contracts or as permanent employment. Oak Ridge has quite a number of such people, especially Chinese-speaking residents, as a consequence. A large Korean-owned company in Clinton has a number of South

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Korean employees who reside in that area with their families. Some active refugee resettlement programs in Knox County add to the diversity of the non-English speaking population. In just 2 ½ years, Grace's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program has served participants from 17 countries.

Much of the following was summarized from a *Ministry Area Profile 2016* compiled by the Percept Group, Inc.

The defined study area includes ZIP codes 37830 (Oak Ridge), 37840 (Oliver Springs), 37716 (Clinton), 37748 (Harriman), 37763 (Kingston), and 37771 (Lenoir City). This area is representative, though not all inclusive, of the region served by Grace. The population is approximately 115,000, increasing by about 9% since year 2000. In the next five years it is projected to grow about 1%. Rural working families make up the largest lifestyle segment of this population, representing about 19% of this group. The lifestyle diversity of the population is extremely high.

The employment mix is estimated to be 60% white collar occupations and 40% blue collar. About 27% of the population is aged 35 to 55 years. 14% are aged 55-64, with about 22% of the population being retired. About 85% of those over 25 have a high school education, while 21.5% of those over 25 are college graduates.

Faith involvement preference for historic Christian religious affiliation is considered to be *very high*. Religious preferences are 41.5% Baptist, 10% Catholic, 12% Methodist, and 7% non-denominational Protestant, with smaller percentages for other denominations including 1.4% Lutheran. It is estimated that 25% of households are "Not Involved With Their Faith," while 44% are "Strongly Involved With Their Faith."

Average household income in the area is \$57,170 per year compared to the U.S. average household income of \$77,135 per year.

Further context is that Oak Ridge's average household income has been declining due to the prevalence of low-rent housing dating to the WWII Manhattan Project origins of the city. Over 50% of children in the Oak Ridge schools are on free or reduced-lunch/breakfast programs; this fraction has increased substantially in the past 15 years. A diminishing number of employees of the three area DOE facilities have chosen to reside in Oak Ridge in the past two decades or more despite the outstanding school system and rich cultural life of the city, due in part to a perception of higher property taxes and a lack of good retail venues. The latter should change with the newly-started mall redevelopment project.

Grace added an early worship service very early in its history; the church reached a total attendance of 151 in 1953 which grew quickly to well over 200 by the late 1950's and through the mid-1960's. Attendance then started to decline shortly before Pr. Crumley's departure, dipping to 150 in 1972, but then increased gradually to about 190-210 where it plateaued for a number of years. Total attendance grew after the addition of a contemporary worship service

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(June, 2000), reaching a peak of 245 in 2003. By 2008 it was down to 200 and since has gradually declined, averaging 135 in 2015. Attendance appears to have stabilized in 2016. Note that Appendix 3 of the 2015 Vision Plan presents attendance data for Grace, both total and for each of the three worship services, from 2000 through 2014.

## **GRACE'S FUTURE: MAY 4 VISION EVENT**

### **Community Leader Interviews**

Interviews were conducted with several community leaders in preparation for the May vision event and were presented in summary form at that event.

- Roundtable Discussion: Both Chuck Hope (City Councilman) and Keyes Fillauer (Chair of the OR School Board) recommended Grace periodically host an event called a Roundtable Discussion, where a church invites community leaders – council, chamber, commission, education – anyone who is a public servant to attend. This approach means that the public officials learn more about our programs and we learn more about what they are doing for us as taxpayers and the ones who elected them. This should include county and city because our members don't only live in Oak Ridge.
- Making Oak Ridge Attractive to Young Adults and Young Families: Both Chuck Hope and Keyes Fillauer mentioned the need for help making Oak Ridge more attractive to young people by hosting activities that would be enjoyable for young adults and young families. These should be done for their own sake, not to draw folks into membership.
- Reaching Out to our Surrounding Community: Chuck Hope suggested connecting with the Woodland Neighborhood Watch organization to learn more about the needs and characteristics of our surrounding residential area.
- Jerry Shattuck: Jerry stressed that Grace needs to find ways to attract more young people and young families.
- Helping Homeless: The United Way of Anderson County is focusing on ways to help the homeless population, according to Executive Director Naomi Asher.

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## Potential Actions (Ministries or Projects)

The Asset Mapping\* Exercise was a group brainstorming effort where we used our Congregation's values and strengths as guidance in listing assets (such as physical, individual, associations, institutions, or economic) that we might be able to use to create future projects or ministries. Small groups were organized to work independently to describe assets and associated actions. Each small group linked its assets with actions that could be taken to accomplish projects, and these were presented to the larger group. Members were then asked to rank the projects most valued and to indicate those to which they were interested in contributing.



The Potential Ministries or Projects (Action Items) identified in the Congregational Asset Mapping exercise, in order of priority (based on votes) included:

- Youth and Young Adults (15)
- Use of Empty Lot (15)
- Community Fellowship Activities (14)\*
- Woodland Community Events (14)
- Refugee Resettlement (9)\*
- Gardens Utilization (9)\*
- Strengthen Stephen Ministry (9)\*\*

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Disaster Relief/Domestic Mission Trips (8)\*  
Advocacy/Social Initiatives (7)  
Resource Room Development (5)\*\*  
Share our Facility (5)  
Coordinating Members' Interests (4)  
Use Upstairs Space/Community Activities (4)  
Enhance Atrium (1)

The items with asterisks had more than one member who signed up indicating an interest in working on that ministry or project (or seeing the congregation pursue it). Efforts to explore the potential for each are under way; two are in the process of implementation (Stephen Ministry and Resource Room Development) and Refugee Resettlement is being explored. Others may also be explored.

See Appendix E for descriptions of each of these Potential Ministries or Projects with their associated assets and a list of assets that were identified but not used in association with any project. Note that the assets listed were taken "as is" from session notes, and terms have not been further defined.

\*(Reference: *The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Gifts* by Luther K. Snow. Copyright 2004 by the The Alban Institute, Inc.)

## **OVERARCHING GOALS**

These three goals are discussed more fully on pp. 9-10 of the 2015 Vision Plan.

**Do outreach via relationships.**

**Become an inviting church.**

**Add small groups.**

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## COMMISSION GOALS

**Administering Commission: “MAKE GRACE ATTRACTIVE, ACCESSIBLE, INVITING”**



**Vision Summary: Strive to make our building and grounds just as warm and inviting as possible in order to “communicate maximum hospitality, an unmistakable sense of welcome, and complete accessibility.” \***

**Strategy: Evaluate all portions of our facilities, especially the education/community wing to determine needs for renovation or upgrade, in order that all will look as inviting as possible and best serve the evolving needs of our new and existing ministries.**

**Vision Outcomes: Have a renovated and freshened facility by the end of 2018 that will be welcoming and attractive to visitors and provide a venue for improved and expanded ministries, including for children and youth.**

\*Schnase 2007, p. 24.

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**The Challenge Before Us:**

Maintain and refresh church facilities to facilitate programs and attract new members.

- Update the Facility Improvement Plan in 2017.
- Prioritize needs and develop plans to accomplish the needed changes in 2017-2018 as funding is available. First priority is replacement of windows in the educational wing.
- Consider concepts for providing a new large multi-purpose space.

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## **Nurturing Commission: “MAKE DISCIPLES”**



**Vision Summary:** Form disciples, offering a variety of means for people of all ages to learn together in community.

**Strategy:** Nurture participants in the faith by giving them high-quality opportunities to learn together in a caring community, forming disciples as Jesus did.

### **Vision Outcomes:**

- Have an active and vibrant program of adult Christian Education, including Sunday School classes, Bible study options, small group discussion groups at church or in homes.
- Have an innovative program of Christian education and activities for children and youth, not limited to Sunday School and Youth Group.
- Have additional types of small groups for a variety of interests that both offer discipling, fellowship, and draw in others not already involved at Grace.

### **The Challenges Before Us:**

**Continue to strengthen Christian Education for all ages**

- Encourage all members to participate in spiritual formation during the Sunday School periods. Encourage a schedule permitting 60-minute period for Christian Education.

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- VBS: Work with other churches in the community to have an ecumenical Vacation Bible School as done in 2016.
- Create an opportunity for fellowship with teachers, children, youth, parents and others who participate in Christian Education. Hold a fellowship breakfast at the end of the school year (sometime after Pentecost) for these participants in 2017.
- *Restart the Youth Group.* [Placeholder]

Establish ongoing Fellowship activities.

- Continue with monthly Fellowship dinners.
- Collaborate with Proclaiming Commission to start new member dinners that subsequently would be spearheaded by previous group of new members.
- Institute Community Fellowship activities under auspices of the new Community Fellowship Team

Continue to support the Stephen Ministry program.

Proceed with trained Stephen Ministers, providing care to those who need it.

- If necessary, arrange for training for new Pastor.
- Recruit and train additional Stephen Ministers by the end of 2018.
- Have one to two more trained Stephen Leaders within the next several years.

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## **Proclaiming Commission: “DO EVANGELISM VIA RELATIONSHIPS”**



**Vision Summary:** Share our GRACE-based faith with others as we find ways to develop loving relationships via small groups as well as in one-on-one encounters

**Strategy:** Evangelism is sharing who we are and whose we are in personal and small-group relationships. We have been commanded to share our faith and we are blessed with a GRACE-based faith. We strive to be an inviting church, strengthening the ways we welcome visitors, and explore small-group approaches to draw others into Grace's activities and ministries. We plan to develop ever more loving relationships within our congregation and with others not yet a part of our faith community. Real love radiates joy and attracts others to a place of grace.

### **Vision Outcomes:**

**Strong and effective approaches to drawing in new participants including young families with children.**

### **The Challenges Before Us:**

Continue to work to become an “inviting” congregation

Evaluate approaches to doing outreach to unchurched or formerly churched persons via:

- Nashville ELCA congregation’s approach
- Alpha Program

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- Outreach coupled with The Way (a faith formation or catechumenate program)
- Reconciling in Christ (LGBT welcoming)
- Continue to provide “Welcome to the Neighborhood” bags
- Adapt such bags to give to first-time visitors after services

Strengthen all aspects of welcoming visitors

- Involve more congregation members in welcoming via greeting, being pew partners, buddies or mentors, making visits to homes, etc.
- Encourage Worshipping to add 8:30 a.m. ushers for exterior entrance doors
- Help train all greeters and ushers (safety and emergency preparedness issues, welcoming, etc.)
- Continue emailed Visitor Reports to Council, Commissions, Pastors
- Continue to send welcoming notes to all first-time visitors within a day or so

Help strengthen recognition of new members and introduction to the congregation

- Help (with Nurturing C.) to start dinner or luncheon for new members
- Put items in bulletin and *The Light* with names and contact information, brief sketch

Continue to strive to become better known to the community

- Expand participation in Pet Fest and Blessing
- Explore using ads in appropriate venues
- Look for other innovative means to spread the word about Grace's offerings

Continue to improve our website and Facebook presence, and use of other digital media

- Add new features to Grace website such as video of sermons and services

Work to enhance internal communications

- Support new Digital Communications Team in developing display monitors for entryways and keeping them current
- Form a Communication Ministry Team (small group)

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**Grace will have at least a few new small groups that draw in new participants, particularly unchurched or formerly churchd persons.**

**The Challenges Before Grace:**

Explore, collaboratively with other commissions, starting small groups that have an aspect of inviting and drawing in others not already actively involved in other churches

Offer a variety of groups that may have a focus on spirituality, learning, serving, sports, recreation, or the like, based on the passions of leaders

**Grace will continue to have a growing ministry to Internationals including refugees via English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction and acculturation help, and relationship-based outreach. The ministry will expand congregational involvement via education about acculturation needs and justice issues.**

**The Challenges Before Grace:**

Hold ESOL Classes with Child Care

- Enlist members to write a grant for child care funding and coordinator
- Recruit a coordinator for ESOL class support
- Provide continued publicity to the congregation and community via newsletter, bulletins, flyers, press releases etc.
- Involve more members in class participation as teachers and conversation partners

Learn about acculturation needs, share with congregation

- Rename, expand and revitalize the Hispanic Ministry Team
- Invite speakers to Ministry Team meetings (Alysa Medina, Paula Trujillo, others)
- Invite speakers to other congregation group meetings
- Explore justice-related needs of the Latino community and other immigrants

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**Serving Commission: “MAKE A DIFFERENCE”**



**Vision Summary:** Continue to find and enhance avenues of risk-taking mission and service through which participants can use their gifts to make a difference in the lives of those both near and far from Grace. We will improve the climate of hospitality around our serving ministries.

**Strategy:** Pursue ways to develop more of a relationship with those we serve.

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**Vision Outcomes:**

- **Improved hospitality associated with our serving activities.**
- **Even stronger and improved ministries of the Serving Commission by mustering the needed leadership, talent, and funds.**

**The Challenges Before Us:**

- Improve holiday basket distribution by better screening clients and seeking out alternative resources to better serve new and old clients.
- Continue with the food pantry, making improvements when necessary. This will include providing clients with fresh vegetables when they are available.
- Reach out to other Lutheran churches in the area for information on their Disaster Response Teams.
- Work with area veterans.
- Assist with Refugee Resettlement Team.
- Work with area Boy Scouts food drive.
- Continue to support the Mental Health Ministry Team.

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**Stewarding Commission: “GIVE JOYOUSLY AND GENEROUSLY”**



**Vision Summary:** Stewardship is about using our gifts of time, talents and interests, our presence, and our financial resources joyfully and with extravagant generosity in the service of ministries that spread the good news of God's love in Christ, nurture people in the faith, and serve our neighbors.

**Strategy:** Find ways to learn about people's gifts and interests and help them find ways to engage in the life of the congregation to use those gifts in their areas of interest. We will strengthen the shepherding program and find other ways to support the ill and bereaved. We will develop high-quality year-round stewardship education encompassing all aspects of stewardship (of time, talents, presence, and financial resources) and carry out effective stewardship campaigns.

**Vision Outcomes:**

- Improved and intentional ways to discover people's gifts and interests and have more people integrated more quickly into the life of the congregation.

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- **Functional shepherding zones and more involvement by shepherds and members, especially to support those who are ill or bereaved.**
- **An effective year-round stewardship education program and a high-quality stewardship campaign that encourages giving joyous and generous giving to the mission and ministries of the church rather than to a budget.**

**The Challenges Before Us:**

Strengthen Zones and Zone Shepherds and increase members' awareness of the shepherding arrangement

- Put articles in *The Light*.
- Put Zones and Shepherds on the website.

Explore ways to get more members and attendees involved in using their skills, talents, etc in church ministries.

- Publicize service opportunities and new ministries via website, *The Light*, church bulletins and announcements at worship services.
- Provide time/talent information to Cabinet and Commissions.
- Investigate audio/visual capability in church and make better use of such.

Explore ways to invigorate stewardship awareness year round.

- Put Stewardship articles in *The Light* on a regular basis.

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## **Worshipping Commission: “GLORIFY GOD”**



**Vision Summary:** As Christians, we worship the risen Christ; therefore, we will provide inspiring, passionate, celebratory and meaningful worship and praise services that glorify God; proclaim the risen Christ as our Lord and Savior; and celebrate the renewing power of the Holy Spirit in the church and in our lives. Our worship life is grounded in the rich heritage of the Christian faith and the traditions of Lutheran worship, around the Word and Sacrament. While acknowledging that through these means, God meets us in our faith journey, we are also committed to offering diverse forms of worship experiences to a new generation.

[See p. 17 of 2015 Vision Team Report for Strategy and Vision Outcomes]

### **The Challenges Before Us:**

#### **Continue Existing Goals:**

- Create a more attractive and welcoming worship facility by assessing needed upgrades and improvements and striving to facilitate same in a timely manner.
- Enhance the worship services by identifying and encouraging members with musical gifts to lead selected hymns and/or praise music.

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- Consider special activities/services, such as Taize, a labyrinth, inviting a praise band from another church to perform at a midweek service, and dramatic presentations.

Establish New Goals:

- Hold a Flower Festival event the weekend of May 6-7, 2017, organized by the Flower Guild & Worshipping Commission. We plan to invite area garden clubs to participate in various activities, e.g., a plant exchange, education opportunities, and a musical event on Sunday afternoon celebrating Reformation 500.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to provide sponsorship for a Lutheran college choir to visit Grace and present a concert by fall 2017. We expect to invite a congregation (s) to co-host the event. We are planning an announcement in bulletins and The Light in Aug or Sept asking for input from members with current connections with a small Lutheran college in our region; e.g., Newberry College in SC and Lenoir-Rhyne in Hickory, NC. We are also interested in instrumental ensembles, small Bell Choirs, drama or art groups.
- Work with Proclaiming Commission to develop a training event(s) for " Safety and Emergency" and " Hospitality and Welcoming" for ALL greeters and ushers. Suggestions include 2-3 brief sessions of about an hour and invite guest speakers from first responders (EMTs, police fire, others (?)) to do the actual training as part of community relations.
- Use the new Reformation 500 Sourcebook from Fortress Press, which contains a variety of ideas for planning worship services, education events, music festivals and connections with other Christians. A CD-ROM of reproducible, customizable content is also included. We plan to utilize these ideas in planning our Flower Fest and our sponsorship of Lutheran college choir concerts in 2017 and beyond!

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## **PROCESS: MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION**

A follow-up program will be continued, just as after the 2015 report, to track the actions and progress in achieving the established goals. A status chart will be posted in a prominent place at the church, and activities will be reported in *The Light*. The chart should be updated on at least a quarterly basis.

Corrective measures will be taken in cases where progress is not being made, and consideration will be given to discontinuing activities if resources can be spent more effectively in another area. Periodic updates of the vision and strategy will be recommended.

### **Vision for Tomorrow Team Role**

The Vision Team will be responsible for preparing a written summary of progress toward meeting the goals for the January semiannual congregational meetings. It will prepare a chart to post in visible locations and keep it updated on progress toward our goals. It will prepare interim progress reports for *The Light*.

### **Council Liaisons' Role: Accountability**

The Congregation Council has supported the Visioning process to encourage enthusiastic and active engagement by members.

Council liaisons to the Commissions will be tasked with monitoring progress on the goals, helping Commissions access needed resources, and helping them stay on task with regard to accomplishing their goals.

### **Next Planning Cycle**

We recommend that this addendum be revisited, progress assessed, and it be updated in 2018-19 for the three-year period of 2019-2021. The draft plan should be ready to submit to Council for its initial review by August 1, 2019, in order to be ready for adoption at the September 2019 semi-annual congregational meeting.

We further recommend that a major planning effort take place every nine years, at which time the mission, vision and strategies be reassessed together with goals. This should be followed by three three-year planning cycles that build on the new plan from the comprehensive planning effort.

August 16, 2016

## **APPENDICES**

- A. History Timeline
- B. Congregational Health Inventory Results
- C. Grace Values
- D. Grace Extended Community Map
- E. Potential Actions (Ministries or Projects) and Assets