

FIVE YEAR PLAN

ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JUNE, 2004

In the year 2000, St. John's established the Long-Range Planning Committee to come up with the first multi-year plan for vision and growth at St. John's. After a survey of both members and committees within the congregation, the committee made its first formal recommendation in 2001: the establishment of a Building Committee to address the many concerns over space and facilities.

With the launch of the Building Committee, Long-Range Planning turned to the programmatic aspects of the church, looking at our current activities, the demographics of the Dover area, and areas of church programming which remain undeveloped. We then worked to establish a statement and an image that would capture the essence of St. John's, and which would be a guiding principle for developing a formal plan. At Charge Conference in November, 2003, we adopted the following statement:

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, St. John's provides a loving and supportive God-centered environment where people with a variety of beliefs and gifts can become disciples of Jesus Christ through worship, study, witness, and service to the community and to the world.

Along with this statement, we adopted the logo of a tree, with a cross in its center, to symbolize a church that is an organic, strong, and ever-growing body, grounded in Christ. With the tree we adopted the motto: "Reaching up, reaching out, reaching deep." All ministry at St. John's is focused in one of these three directions: Reaching up to God, reaching out to others, and reaching deep into our own lives and experiences, both individually and as a church.

With that direction approved, we settled down to the final task of delineating a specific multi-year plan for St. John's. It is our expectation that a new strategic planning committee will take up the work of planning for the future—modifying this five-year plan as necessary and adding new visions and expectations as these plans reach fruition and new horizons unfold.

We propose that the church adopt the following five-year plan as a guideline for program and ministry at St. John's:

THE PLAN

I. *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 1 Cor. 12:4-6.*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To be equipped to assist all people associated with St. John's in fulfilling the call of God on their lives through discernment of their own gifts and passions.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Develop or select a gifts/passions inventory and a system for implementation of that inventory.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2006): Inventory the congregation and develop an ongoing plan for the inventory of all new members.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

II. *And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? Romans 10:14*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To have effective and current forms of communications in a variety of media for distributing information both with St. John's and to the larger community.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Evaluate current vehicles of communication and make specific recommendations for additions, upgrades, and improvements.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2006): Prioritize and implement recommendations in conversation with Finance, program areas, and the Building Committee.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with

administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

III. *Where there is no vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To have all constituents of St. John's conversant with our statement and symbol, and to have the tree be a recognizable symbol of St. John's in the Dover community.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Determine when and where our statement and symbol should appear, and to educate the congregation about their meaning and implications.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

IV. *And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another. Hebrews 10:24-25*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To have a variety of small group opportunities for growth and fellowship in the areas of worship, study, witness, and service to the community and to the world.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Establish a task force to develop a model for ongoing, multi-faceted small group ministry.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2006): Prioritize and launch groups based on interests and needs. Provide assistance and training as needed.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

V. *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Matthew 28:19*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To have all of the St. John's family fully embrace John Wesley's vision of "The world is my parish."

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Dec. 31, 2004): Adopt a major mission trip (local or global) with all church involvement.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Establish a process to provide ongoing service through local and global mission opportunities. Do fundraising and further plans for first mission trip.

THIRD STEP (To be completed by Dec. 31, 2006): First mission trip completed, celebrated, and evaluated. Process from Second Step engaged.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

VI. *Your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Joel 2:28*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To have a thriving inter-generational church community where seniors are loved, give and receive care, and are fully involved in the church's mission of worship, study, witness, and service to the community and to the world.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Evaluate the diverse needs of seniors, both at St. John's and in the larger community, and recommend specific action.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2006): Prioritize and implement those recommendations in conversation with finance and program areas.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

VII. *Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, "To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped. Revelation 5:13-14*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To provide God-centered worship where people with a variety of beliefs and gifts, schedules and learning styles, can become disciples of Jesus Christ.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): To be prepared to launch one additional, large-group study/worship opportunity.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2006): Launch the first step.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

VIII. *Teach them the statutes and instructions and make known to them the way they are to go and the things they are to do. Exodus 18:20*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To have a God-centered environment which equips leaders through ongoing support and training.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Establish a process for leadership training.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Jan. 31, 2006): Hold first training event.

ONGOING STEPS: Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

IX. *The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers. Psalm 24:1*

FIVE-YEAR GOAL: To be a church that manifests good stewardship of God's resources by living justly, giving cheerfully, and humbly acknowledging God's gifts.

FIRST STEP (To be completed by Jan. 1, 2005): Implement the usage of fairly traded coffee for all church events. Establish recycling system.

SECOND STEP (To be completed by Sept. 1, 2005): Develop or select a financial stewardship training program which includes the following:

- personal financial management
- debt reduction
- estate planning
- tithing
- planned giving

THIRD STEP (To be completed by Jan. 1, 2007): Show a reduction in church dependence on investment income, working toward 100% of the church budget funded by pledges.

ONGOING STEPS: Continue socially responsible investing and expand this practice where appropriate. Continue to reduce dependence on investment income until goal is achieved. Review, modify and update as needed in conversation with administrative and program areas of the church. Communicate the work in all available media. Invite involvement from the larger St. John's community.

Submitted by the Long-Range Planning Committee