

Strategic Plan--2022-and Beyond

St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School

The development of this strategic plan began in 2017 with gatherings of congregation members led by the newly arrived Pastor Arthur Bergren. During those twelve meetings with over 200 parish members, he asked three questions: 1) What are we doing well? 2) What could we do better? and, 3) Where do you hope to see St. Paul's in five years?

The responses to these questions led to the formation of a strategic planning team of seven select and diverse congregation members led and facilitated by Pastor Bergren and Dr. Allan Bernard, Congregation President at that time. This team met faithfully from March 2019 through January 2020 reviewing our mission statement and performing an analysis of St. Paul's strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats. The end goal of this planning team was the development of a new mission statement, core values for the congregation, and our vision for the future with objectives to achieve or accomplish this vision.

The new mission statement—*Living God's Love*, is played out in core values of *Love, Justice, Compassion, and Joy* along with the vision elements, which included *School, Worship, Children and Youth, Leadership, and Hospitality* were presented to the Church Council in November 2019 and approved for presentation to the congregation for consideration. A congregational meeting was held on February 9, 2020, and these elements of the plan adopted.

The time frame for the development of the objectives for the elements of the vision was presented at that meeting. The goal was to have each working board and committee develop specific objectives to accomplish the vision by April 2020, begin work to achieve the objectives during the remainder of 2020, and present periodic reviews to the congregation on at least an annual basis.

Then the COVID 19 Pandemic hit.

Work on the plan was suspended, thinking the pandemic would pass in a few months. This was not the case. Virtually all efforts focused on the revised needs to maintain our ministry during the pandemic. All in-person worship was suspended in March 2020 and was reinstated, on a limited basis in April 2021.

In September 2021, Pastor Bergren submitted his resignation to St. Paul's. The members of the congregation Executive Committee agreed the completion of this strategic plan was necessary and to be made a part of the congregational profile used as part of the new pastoral call process. Dr. Allan Bernard agreed to act as a consultant to the Church Council and help guide the process to complete the plan.

Work by the boards and committees began again in October 2021. Each was charged with the responsibility to develop objectives with, if at all possible, measurable action steps to accomplish the vision for each element. The following is the result of that effort, our Strategic Plan for 2022 and beyond.

The Mission, Values and Vision of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School

Our Mission:

Living God's Love

Our Values:

Love: Respecting and unconditionally caring for all humanity and creation.

Justice: Protecting the equality, dignity and human rights of all people.

Compassion: Showing unconditional mercy and support for all in need.

Joy: Living and serving in the peace and wonder of God.

Our Vision:(The Board or Committee responsible for action is noted in parenthesis following each objective)

School: Providing a Place Where Learning and Faith Go Hand in Hand.

Objectives to accomplish this vision:

Living God's love through hospitality, demonstrating Christ-like love in and around the community, school, and church. (School)

Conduct annual outreach activities.

Sponsor events to welcome new students and families

Promote fellowship throughout the organization.

Educate and reconnect families to each other and the school. (School)

Invite alumni to come in to talk to and focus on opportunities/reasons to keep kids here

Develop a survey of what families like, need, and /or want.

Educate parents regarding the Fruits of Spirit/Accountability Card system/K-6 highlights/disaster protocols/ brochures on the types of prayers.

Evaluate RETENTION DATA for Pre-School-Kdg and for 4-5th grade.

Ensure we are providing an inclusive Christ-like atmosphere. (School)

Develop a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)I policy to include environment, curriculum, and people.

Examine language adults are using with students and family.

Review all school publications for inclusiveness.

Evaluate all school posts for inclusiveness.

Increase awareness among staff.

Bias incidences-Do we call out bias? Accountability Cards—Is there another level which should be used? Evaluate how different types of bullying are handled.

Offer a comprehensive Christian religion curriculum. (School)

Develop criteria for guest pastors and follow the lectionary.

Get Ministry Staff more involved in worship.

Encourage parent fellowship in worship.

Invite church members back for participation in baptismal remembrance.

Gain a broader understanding of and develop ways to expand our Steeple-to-Steeple relationship with Wartburg College. (School)

Develop broader working relationships with Wartburg faculty, staff and students.

Identify and implement the Core Components of a high-quality early childhood program. (School)

Continue to support and maintain the Before and After School Care Program. (School)

Improve air quality in School and Parish Hall by 2024. (Property)

Add air conditioning to School by 2024. (Property)

Modernize all classrooms and media space by 2025. (Property)

Update Parish Hall to a modern gym and multi-purpose area for Church and School by 2024. (Property)

Update art room space, beyond 2026. (Property)

Worship: Rehearsal for Life by providing meaningful worship experiences enhanced by vibrant music participation.

Objectives to accomplish this vision:

Return to our pre-pandemic (year 2019) worship calendar. (Worship)

Bring back Sunday 7:30 am services within two years. (Worship)

Livestream special services and the 11:00 am Modern worship in 2023. (Worship)

Evaluate the possibility of creating a junior high/high school choir within the next three years. (Worship)

Evaluate the possibility of doing an Easter Vigil Saturday Service within the next three years. (Worship)

Purchase *All Creation Sings*, as a worship resource, within the next two years. (Worship)

Coordinate with boards to update the welcome information in pews racks and facilities by 2023. (Property)

Investigate and implement ways to improve the sanctuary sound system to overcome areas that are dead and lower quality listening by 2024. (Property)

Continuously work to improve air quality in the sanctuary. (Property)

Continually update the sanctuary space for modern worship, seating, and to be Church and School centered. (Property)

Children & Youth: Forming Faith through Love.

Our objectives to accomplish this vision:

Review and plan programming that effectively meets the spiritual needs of the families and youth in a post-pandemic society. (Family and Youth/Parish Ed.)

Meet as a Family and Youth Board and Parish Ed Board in joint session to determine first steps.

Create a committee to draft a survey to gather information about what families and youth feel is necessary to assist them in their faith formation.

Send survey by email to all families in the congregation.

Review responses and determine which families have not responded.

Board members will follow through by contacting families to encourage participation in the survey.

Meet as Family and Youth Board and Parish Ed Board to go through results, set goals and plan programming for the 2022-2023 and subsequent school years.

Continue the Saints Alive Wednesday program for youth. (Ministry Team)

Provide middle school and high school youth programs during the year. (Ministry Team)

Continue the Capstone Project for sixth-grade students (School)

Provide opportunities for fundraising so all students are able to participate.

Manage a trip to Washington, D.C. in a safe and meaningful manner.

Invite congregation members to participate by sharing their life experiences related to the armed services.

Include teaching to foster respect and thankfulness toward those who have served our country.

Support attendance of youth in the ELCA Churchwide Youth Gathering and Synod Youth Gatherings. (Fam. and Youth/Parish Ed.)

Provide opportunities for fundraising so all youth who desire to attend may attend.

Manage the trips to the gatherings in a safe and meaningful manner.

Update Room 121 with sound acoustic and aesthetics improvements by 2023. (Property)

Improve outdoor green space by 2024. (Property)

Update the Parish Hall for future uses, such as walking groups, and events geared towards family and youth by 2025. (Property)

Improve accessibility to Junior and Senior High rooms, beyond 2026 (Property)

Leadership: Moving Forward with a Vision of Compassion and Justice.

Our objectives to accomplish this vision:

Implement the staff/ministry model reorganization plan. (Executive)

Executive Committee to develop a plan for presentation to the Church Council. Plan should be adopted by the council before the formal Call Process for the Lead Pastor begins.

Complete job description revisions for existing and possible new positions by May 2022.

Prepare a detailed personnel transition plan for existing and any new employees by June 2022 with implementation milestones.

Complete the Call Process selecting a Lead Pastor to implement a ministry with a vision of compassion and justice. (Church Council and Call Committee)

Select a Call Committee after the staff/ministry plan is determined.

Begin consultation between the Northeastern Iowa Synod and the Call Committee within 30 days of Call Committee appointment.

Complete Congregational Profile and present to congregation for concurrence within 90 days of initial consultation visit.

Convey Congregational Profile to the Northeastern Iowa Synod and begin candidate consideration as soon as possible.

Inform the church members of local, national and international mission needs, encourage them to be involved, provide ways they can contribute, and be diligent stewards of St. Paul's funding to our ministry partnerships. (Mission)

Disburse all funds entrusted to the Mission Board by St. Paul's (Currently 1% of general fund giving.)

Request annual reporting from the agencies funded by the Mission Board

Provide a community meal every month

Submit a 'Mission Minute' to the weekly update every two weeks

Add a message to the announcements on Sunday morning a minimum of six times a year.

Consider a significant promotion when a large opportunity presents itself.

Include children in some mission opportunities

Present occasional temple talks regarding Mission opportunities

Use table tents, posters, etc. to inform the congregation of Mission opportunities.

Inform the congregation of the funding to ministry partners recommended by the Mission Board.

Continue to follow sound Annual Budgeting principles with the following actions (Finance):

Use Revenue Driven Budgeting - Annual planning establishes realistic revenue expectation (using past years' experience) and then prepares an equivalent expense plan.

Continue Congregational Tithing with at least 10% of Offering to Benevolences

Maintain school tuition rates at a level to assure funding for school staff salaries (teachers, aides, secretary, and custodians - not principal)

Seek to maintain staff salaries at levels that, although may be below private/public sector jobs, be internally consistent and commensurate with services provided.

Maintain teacher salary schedule grid in balance with revenue. We have strived to keep the base salary in the 70% range of W/SR base and then trend down to 60% at the higher end of the salary grid.

Practice good stewardship of church and school resources by maintaining an Operating Reserve of \$100,000 (approximately 5% of Budget) on April 30. (Finance)

If there is a surplus at the end of the fiscal year it is allocated as directed by Church Council (typically to the Capital Investment Designated Fund).

Continue Facilities Stewardship by providing approximately 3% - 4% of the annual operations budget for capital maintenance/repairs. (Finance)

Utilize the facilities maintenance budget during the fiscal year as a potential “adjuster” in cases where Net Income is falling short of the budget significantly.

Perform a monthly review of the Church and School campus, reviewing safety and infrastructure needs to verify operation of safety equipment and determine any maintenance needs. (Property)

Plan and coordinate annually any identified repair, update, or remediation of the physical facilities. (Property)

Review and update the Emergency Operations Plan in each even numbered year. (Property)

Conduct Inservice training of Emergency Operations Plan with staff and partners annually. (Property)

Coordinate and carry out an annual scrap metal collection drive. (Property)

Assist the Church and School leadership with funding future capital projects by 2023. (Property)

Review Congregation Constitution and By-Laws. (Executive)

Form and Ad-Hoc Constitution Committee by the end of 2022.

Complete review and make recommendations for change, particularly related to the function and responsibilities of the Boards and Committees. Combine Boards with similar missions and eliminate inactive Committees.

Present any revisions to the Church Council for consideration by the end of 2023.

Proceed through the congregation approval process with final consideration at the 2024 Annual Meeting. (April 2024)

Hospitality: Generously Welcoming All People with Compassion and Love.

Our objectives to accomplish this vision:

Welcome new members into the congregation and provide fellowship with existing members by creating opportunities for intergenerational interactions to grow and maintain our faith through Christian community. (Parish Life)

Coordinate the Sunday morning coffee time between services.

Plan, coordinate, and seek volunteers to conduct regular activities for fun and fellowship such as: Christmas Caroling in Kohlmann, Family Movie Nights, Book Swap, Easter Egg Hunt, First-Friday Picnics in Summer, Baseball Night at the Bucks, Bingo Night, Annual Congregation Picnic, Visitor Bags, Family Corn-Hole Tournament.

Improve wayfinding and welcome signing, both inside and outside of the building to help visitors move easily by 2023. (Property)

Install interactive video intercoms at entrances similar to Door 4 (SE entrance) by 2024. (Property)

Become a Reconciling in Christ congregation. (Executive)

Begin conversation with congregation before the end of 2022.

Join with a partner congregation and draft welcome statement in 2023 for consideration at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

Make Welcome Proclamation in 2024.

(For further information related to this topic and process visit website rwks.org)

Review and modify the website for St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School. (Executive)

Form an Ad-Hoc Committee of staff and members to research features and form for a revised site and prepare a summary description by July 2022.

Determine needed resources (staff time, consultant and funding requirements, or volunteers) to accomplish the changes within 60 days of completion of the summary description.

Complete revisions by the end of 2022.

Enhance St Paul's engagement in the Waverly community. (Executive)

Develop a plan by July 2023 to provide space to local nonprofits for operating and storage.

Present to the council for their consideration in the fall of 2023.

Present to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting in 2024.

Implement the plan as approved through the remainder of 2024.