

A Plan of Ministry & Action for University United Methodist Church

Vision: Feed My People: Body, Mind, and Spirit

We see UUMC as a living, teaching, diverse Christian community for all persons, a community that embraces its members, and the people of our neighborhood, region and world. We shall be known for our love, leadership, faith, actions, inclusiveness, and social witness. We shall be known for using our gifts, the gifts of our partners, and our holy place to feed all the people—body, mind and spirit.

Mission: We at University United Methodist Church are the hands and spirit of Jesus Christ transforming our neighborhood, our city, our world and ourselves.

Summary of Goals: Below you will see listed four goals for UUMC together with objectives and actions steps. We affirm spiritual growth as central to each of these four goals and essential to every aspect of UUMC life and experience. The goals are as follows:

- Goal 1.** To provide Sunday worship services that are lively and engaging; relevant; and spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually stimulating.
- Goal 2.** Maintain an effective outreach ministry, focusing on elimination and mitigation of the effects of poverty and on other life challenges facing those living in poverty, as we grow more fully in relationship with our neighbors while continuing to attract members from across the city and county.
- Goal 3.** Make UUMC a “community of learners” by providing opportunities for people of all ages that will nurture their spiritual and personal development.
- Goal 4.** Increase membership and provide for long-term financial stability and sustainability of UUMC by inviting, welcoming, and integrating newcomers into the life of the church and by practicing wise fiscal stewardship.

The plan calls for the timely development of specific action steps, evaluation of the plan by the Governing Board, routine periodic reviews and appropriate modifications based on results and needs.

Goal 1. To provide Sunday worship services that are lively and engaging; relevant; and spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually stimulating.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Offer a variety of worship and music styles in order to attract different audiences.
 - 1. Work with music leaders (director and organist) to develop and implement a plan for regularly featuring a variety of styles of music in worship (e.g. classical, gospel, and contemporary music for hymns, choral anthems, and special music).
 - 2. Arrange for guest musicians (soloists, instrumentalists) to participate in worship on a regular basis.
 - 3. Invite a diversity of interesting/exciting guest preachers to expand the voices and viewpoints presented.
 - 4. Support the use of inclusive, gender-neutral language in our service.

- B. Increase the number and diversity of persons involved in UUMC's worship leadership and music programs/groups.
 - 1. Make sure worship leaders (ushers, greeters, communion servers, liturgists, soloists, etc.) reflect the full diversity of both the existing congregation and congregation we envision for the future.
 - 2. Actively recruit new persons as participants in UUMC's existing music programs.
 - 3. Invite and support the formation of new music groups as opportunities arise.

- C. Continue to employ gifted, skilled and creative music staff who are open to a variety of music styles, able to work cooperatively with the pastor(s), able to lead a constantly growing music program, and able to bring out the best in others.
 - 1. Provide sufficient funding in the church budget to employ appropriate music staff.
 - 2. Review goals and expectations with present staff.

Goal 2. Maintain an effective outreach ministry, focusing on elimination and mitigation of the effects of poverty and on other life challenges facing those living in poverty, as we grow more fully in relationship with our neighbors while continuing to attract members from across the city and county.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Call upon the findings and conclusions of the Outreach Sustainability Report (prepared in Summer 2013) to advance the goals of that document.

- B. Create dynamic, hands-on opportunities for persons—especially young adults—to engage in outreach ministries.
 - 1. Identify and describe (via brochure, website, social media, word-of-mouth, etc.) existing and new opportunities for community service through UUMC: Friday Community, Community Breakfast, etc.
 - 2. Establish working ties with Syracuse University (e.g., Hendricks Chapel, Office of Student Life, etc.) to coordinate and promote volunteer service opportunities at UUMC.
 - 3. Establish mechanism(s) for promoting and recruiting volunteers from other United Methodist churches and other faith communities in the greater Syracuse area.
 - 4. Establish mechanism(s) for promoting and recruiting volunteers from the general public, including local schools.

- B. Continued UUMC membership and greater involvement of UUMC members in ACTS as a means of addressing issues of social justice and advocating for and enhancing quality of life for all who live in Syracuse and Central New York.

- D. Continue welcoming and supporting immigrants and refugees.

Goal 3. Make UUMC a “community of learners” by providing opportunities for people of all ages that will nurture their spiritual and personal development.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Offer Bible study and/or other educational and spiritual growth opportunities for adults as interest and leadership present themselves.

- B. Continue Sunday School program for infants through grade 12.
 - 1. Secure teaching teams.
 - 2. Purchase and distribute curriculum.
 - 3. Coordinate room space.
 - 4. Sustain contact with children and families with irregular participation.
 - 5. Maintain necessary supplies.
 - 6. Determine responsible persons (Steve Bacon for teaching teams, Don Betz for facility use).
 - 7. Evaluate in November, January and May.

- C. Encourage and maintain caring ministries and continue support for those who serve as caring ministers.
 - 1. Determine responsible persons (Gwen Tillapaugh-Fay and Craig French).
 - 2. Evaluate progress twice yearly.

- D. Continue Spirit Film fellowship and discussion (Nelson Price and Barbara Fought).
- E. Continue our efforts with special adult Sunday school class and their inclusion in our worship service.

Goal 4. Increase membership and provide for long-term financial stability and sustainability of UUMC by inviting, welcoming and integrating newcomers into the life of the church, and by practicing wise fiscal stewardship.

Objectives and Action Steps

- A. Create programs/activities for parents and young adults that enhance UUMC's relevance and appeal to 18- to 35-year-olds.
 - 1. Support development of a core group of young adults, including SU graduate students and their families, as a means of expanding offerings for and participation of this age group and attracting other young people from the wider community.
 - a) Create exploratory team including graduate students.
 - b) Focus first on new grad housing.
 - c) Plan open house event.
 - d) Identify their interests/needs.
 - e) Follow up with program/activities.
- B. Increase membership and congregational giving.
 - 1. Explore feasibility of expanding role of outreach coordinator to encompass both traditional outreach ministry and membership growth.
 - 2. Provide care of the membership in time of need.
 - 3. Maintain vigorous annual stewardship campaign.
 - 4. Use attendance registry to determine regular attendance as well as persistent absences.
- C. Maintain welcoming presence for all, including young families, and establish a routine welcome to visitors and travelers from the Ronald McDonald House and nearby hotels.
 - 1. Train ushers, greeters and congregation to be inviting, welcoming and hospitable, especially to newcomers and persons of diverse backgrounds.
 - 2. Keep nearby establishments (hotels, Ronald McDonald House) stocked with church brochures.
- D. Ensure that UUMC actively demonstrates its stance as a reconciling congregation by welcoming persons of all sexual orientations and

integrating them into the full life of the congregation, including membership and leadership.

- E. Use endowments and gifts to support current operations and provide for future financial stability of the church.
 - 1. Continue to review existing portfolio and income policy, and ensure persistent review of portfolio by trustees.

- F. Maximize income from use of the church physical plant consistent with the church mission.
 - 1. Continuously review tenant status and needs, and plan for any changes in order to maximize occupancy.
 - 2. Pursue grants to allow for capital projects to suit for tenant uses and to protect the church building and enhance its grounds.
 - 3. Maintain good church staff/tenant relations.
 - 4. Use space in order to make and encourage neighborhood and community connections consistent with our means and responsibility to the facility (ie., playground use by Ronald McDonald House, other community use short of paying for the space).

- G. Ensure that the church building is well maintained in order to support all activities.
 - 1. Trustees should continue annual survey and review of church facility.
 - 2. Ensure maximum handicap accessibility throughout the building, including the sanctuary.
 - 3. Find a viable way to provide access to the sanctuary on a regular basis for viewing and spiritual practice by members and visitors, which must include provision for safety and protection of the people and the building.

Action Plan – Determine responsible parties for accomplishing objectives within each goal and establish a reasonable and agreed upon time frame. Set priorities. Formally inform congregation and adopt plan.

Church Council must review evaluation of Plan – Plan quarterly with results provided to the congregation through direct e-mail or by the Chimes.

Plan Modifications – Based on results, modify plan semi-annually or as needed.

Last revised: January 2014