

Preliminary Strategic Plan for First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Eugene, Oregon

2008-2015

Original Draft April 2008 as Modified July 2008

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The purpose of this strategic plan is to aid in the implementation of the Future Story. There is more detail in the first two years or so of the plan because the unfolding of the later years will depend a great deal upon what is accomplished in the first two years and upon regular evaluation of progress and of the plan itself. This plan will be reviewed every 6 months in order to make adjustments as needed and to celebrate that which has been accomplished since the last review. Changes and celebrations will be shared with the congregation in a public way and, as possible, in a context of worship.

There are some descriptions in this plan that are repeated each year. This is because we do not assume that people following the plan in a given year will read the entire document.

The primary factor in the rate of forward movement is the congregation's *capacity* in terms of time, energy, and money. As the congregation grows, new time, energy and money will become available and a greater rate of movement will be achievable. Thus, for example, what might seem to be impossible in the fifth year of the plan (when seen from the perspective of the current day) will become quite do-able as the congregation steadily grows over the next five years.

First Christian Church currently has about 275 participating resident members and 175 in worship on average. Drawing on the Future Story itself, this plan aims to develop FCC into a congregation that is able to make a significant difference in Eugene and beyond and that has broken through the pastor-centered "glass ceiling" of about 200 in worship. Thus a goal is set of about 550 participating members and 350 in worship by the end of 2014, thus becoming a program-centered church. All are welcome regardless of socio-economic status, but those in the community who most urgently need to become a part of this community are well educated, theologically liberal or seeking an alternative to conservative theologies and attitudes, the un-

churched and de-churched (those who have previously been part of a faith community but who felt abused by exclusive, narrow or fundamentalist approaches or were in fact abused emotionally and/or spiritually).

As these new members are added, rather than merely assimilating new members into the *institution*, FCC will seek to assimilate people into the *faith* and into *faithful lives of discipleship* in which each member is doing ministry and mission in the name of Jesus Christ and of First Christian Church. This will be accomplished in part through the following key strategies:

1. Being led by a unifying, God-inspired vision. This is what the entire visioning process has been about this past year: reviewing this community's needs, this congregation's needs and gifts, and discerning a vision through prayer and dialogue. Out of this process of discernment, a unifying vision has indeed arisen: *to be a congregation that is transforming lives, Christianity and our world.*

This means that FCC will be engaged in mission in and beyond Eugene. Indeed, through our annual Mexico Mission and through our Region and our denomination, we engage in mission around the world. But the city in which we have been planted will be the *primary* focus of our hands on mission work.

2. Living our core values: an intentional community of diversity, equality, openness, boldness and humility that forms people of faith. We are a community that believes that our continuing vitality is dependent on investing our resources in issues of social justice for our community and our world, while also investing our resources in the spiritual lives of our members and friends and the spiritual life of our church. That means a community that walks for the homeless and also walks the Labyrinth. That means a community that works for living wages while also living in prayer, discernment and contemplation. That means a community that pays attention to inclusive language but also gives deep attentiveness to the Bible. That means a community that serves and works to change the world while serving each other and changing ourselves. We are constantly seeking to understand the deeper implications of God's grace and the mystery of life and seeking to embody it in our congregational life.

We will be engaged in mission in and beyond Eugene. We will maintain and deepen our commitment to local and global outreach. Indeed, through our annual Mission to Mexico and also through our Region and our denomination, we engage in mission around the world. But the city in which we have been planted will be the primary focus of our hands on mission work.

3. We will employ neighborhood groups for education, mission, fellowship and prayer. As our congregation and the Metropolitan area have grown, we have members living at greater distances from the church building. We will frequently seek to use these various locations of our members as points of engagement, program, and ministry, rather than insisting always that people drive to the building for all activities.

4. We will empower leaders and all individuals. FCC has typically been a pastor-centered congregation. As we become a program-centered church, we will seek to prepare, nurture, authorize and provide accountability for lay leaders and all individuals as we encourage every participant to identify their own gifts and to engage in ministry.

5. We will intentionally start new small groups that are designed to meet the needs of the community, potential new members, and current members. New small groups will be designed to appeal to the needs of both current members and the un-churched and de-churched who we are seeking to reach. The current (2008) number of small groups (in which participation is emotionally significant) is 22 serving perhaps 130 participants (see the Contextual Analysis). So, new groups are needed to accommodate the other half of our membership and our growth in membership over the next seven years. These groups will both support those who are members and draw those who are not members.

6. We will intentionally seek to double our average worship attendance from 175 to 350 and our participating membership from 275 to 500.

The Strategic Plan seeks to take into account the need for adequate staffing and other support as the congregation and its program and ministry grow. It is important to note that the congregation will not achieve the realization of the future story in a year! Rather, the plan seeks to help the congregation grow in effectiveness and size over the course of the next seven years.

The Strategic Plan/ Preliminary Draft

June 2008 – December 2008

Overall Goals for June 2008 – December 2008:

1. To present a preliminary strategic plan (Draft Strategic Plan) based on the Future Story to the board and the congregation for review, amendment (if needed), and affirmation.
2. To begin implementing the plan, with special emphasis on small group development and addressing some of the basic systemic needs of the church including organization, and program planning. As part of this emphasis, to begin using effectively an Annual Planning Event to develop a reshaped program (in line with the Vision) and to begin reducing the amount of time and energy spent in governance and program committees in order to free up members' time and energy for spiritual nurture and mission activity.
3. To add two adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant in order to stabilize current membership and worship attendance (from 22 groups in June 2008 to 24 minimum by the end of the 2008 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.
4. To complete the search process for selecting an associate minister who is committed to the Vision and to this strategic plan and who has experience in, or understanding and capacity to share pastoral ministry duties and especially to develop outreach ministries, small group ministries, leadership development and care of volunteers, and to help plan and coordinate worship.
5. To grow average worship attendance from 175 to 190 and to add 5 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to stabilize participating membership at 280.
6. To provide a sabbatical for Dan Bryant from June – August.
7. To negotiate additional parking space with Diamond and/or the Thai restaurant to offset the possible coming loss of parking spaces and/or accommodate coming growth.
8. To develop a strategy and goal for increasing FCC's endowment through the Christian Church Foundation.

June 2008

1. Dan goes on sabbatical through August.
2. The Visioning Team presents the Draft Strategic Plan to the church elders for reflection and affirmation and/or amendment..
3. A task force of current elders and elders-elect put together a personal interview-style survey instrument to be used in *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the interviews will be done in July through September and updated each year hence). These surveys will help identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and will provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Future Story and the Strategic Plan will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

These interviews may be done by the elders or by a combination of some elders and some other members who are interested.

4. The Visioning Team mails or otherwise delivers the Draft Strategic Plan to the church board members for use in their preparation of July board meeting.

5. The Visioning Team provides the Draft Strategic Plan to the general congregation with an invitation to attend discussions at the July board meeting. Emphasis is made on keeping time frames of the Plan flexible. Instructions are provided to members regarding the mechanisms in place for asking questions and providing other input to the Visioning Team.

6. Language in the Draft Plan is specifically amended by the Visioning Team to reflect the cessation of the position of Director of Youth, effective January 1, 2009.

July 2008

1. A “Communication Task Force” begins meeting bi-monthly to address the following: a) the need for ongoing improvement and updating of the web-site (notifications of changes/additions in the web-site will be sent to a list serve of interested persons alerting them to the need to check the web site for new information). Improvements will include self-directed educational materials being made available on site and regular updated posting of the church calendar, news of the small groups as well as the larger fellowship, etc.; b) the need for marketing and visibility (working with other committees as appropriate and needed): appoint and support a publicity person to communicate weekly with the area newspapers; develop flyers/door hangers; possible direct mailings to the zip code, etc. (these plans may be partially developed at the Annual Planning Event in October, 2008 and in June in following years; c) development of a common “look” to published and posted materials as a means of “branding”; d) input from those who do not use electronic media to determine and meet their communication needs; e) hanging of banners from the front porch bearing the words of the Vision and in a style compatible with the new branding “look”. Some funding needs to be made available to facilitate some website developments that may require outside services.

2. The Visioning Team presents the Draft Strategic Plan to the church board for reflection and affirmation and/or amendment.

3. A search committee is appointed to begin working toward the call of a full time ordained Disciples associate minister beginning January 1, 2009. This person will participate with Dan in the pastoral care of the congregation and have specific responsibilities in development of outreach ministries, small group ministries, membership assimilation and education, leadership development, and care and nurture of volunteers. The search will be church wide.

4. The Strategic Plan, as affirmed by church board, is presented to general congregation in congregational meeting, for discussion, reflection, affirmation and/or amendment. Emphasis is again made on flexible timelines, and on the general process, not on the details.

5. Conversations are undertaken with the Diamond Parking and the Thai restaurant for additional parking space in the face of the possible loss of government parking spaces.

6. Elders continue personal interviews.

7. The Visioning Team reenacts the Future Story, filming at Theo's, for use in home meetings during stewardship campaign.

August 2008

1. Elders continue personal interviews.
2. Youth Team meets to plan fall events.

September 2008

1. Dan returns from sabbatical.

2. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year's programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event ("Which programs and events are thriving?" "Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?" etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 22 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, a few new groups are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members. Perhaps two new groups can be added this fall.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as "Survey of the Old and New Testaments," "The Life and Times of Jesus," etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc. (A study of Diana Butler-Bass's book, "Christianity For The Rest of Us" is nearly completed with over 50 participants.)

One or another of these groups might be "interest based" (drawing on the findings of the interviews done with individual members during the summer). For example, those who are interested in evangelism might be called together to study Gay Reese's book, "Unbinding the Gospel" and then encouraged to develop individual ministries in evangelism which would be carried out in accountability to one another and to the church (perhaps through a relationship with a group, an elder, and/or a staff person).

One or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group.

Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

3. The Stewardship Committee meets to develop a stewardship campaign for the fall based on the Future Story.

4. Communications Task Force meets.

5. A task force of four or more people is formed to look at ways to provide opportunities for guiding our congregation into intentional spiritual practice. This could involve, for instance, ways of becoming a prayerful, discernment centered church. It might

include something like offering weekly prayer lunches at the church for downtown business people. It might include a course for our congregants using, for instance, Thomas Keating's teachings on how to do contemplative or centering prayer. It might include education on the spiritual practice of "radical hospitality" where the disenfranchised are included as true equals in the life of our church.

October 2008

1. A consultation with Christian Church Foundation is held to develop a systematic program to encourage endowment gifts to First Christian Church. A goal for endowment is set for the year 2015.

2. The budget for the current year is reviewed in light of the Strategic Plan to see if mid-year adjustments are needed, including needed funds for banners and website developments (to be determined).

3. October 21, the Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church's program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have "always been the workers" and will help to involve more people.

In future years, this will occur in early June, in order to plan the program for September through August.

4. The annual stewardship campaign, based on the Future Story, is implemented.

November 2008

1. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

2. Communications Task Force meets.

3. A consultation with a representative from Church Extension is held regarding the next phase of the building renovation. Topics considered in addition to general renovation include: creating a "main" entrance and a hospitality center to meet visitors, to add an elevator, preserve the stained glass, and maintain the organ. This consultation will likely lead to a capital campaign feasibility study in spring, 09'

2009

Overall Goals for 2009:

1. To add two adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant (from 24 groups in 2008 to 26 minimum by the end of the 2009 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.

2. To grow average worship attendance from 190 to 210 and to add 15 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to grow participating membership to 295.

3. To begin a leadership development initiative.

4. To begin the service of a full-time associate minister (selected in last half of 2008).

5. Begin an educational dialogue in the congregation regarding a new or recovered progressive Christianity that calls for true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice.

6. To begin preparation for a study tour with Dan to Turkey, Greece and Italy to explore the first-century Roman world.

7. To begin exploration of process to attain status of “Open and Affirming”.

January 2009

1. Communications Task Force meets.

2. A task force meets to review and to provide for (1) clear job descriptions for officers and staff; (2) training for leaders that includes core values, Disciples heritage, the history of FCC, the future story, instruction in how to lead a meeting both by Roberts’ Rules of Order and by consensus building, understanding organizational structure (including formal and informal power and authority), recruitment of volunteers and expressing appreciation, coordination of fund raising, establishing and maintaining accountability and conflict resolution (see model developed by Lindenwood Christian Church in Memphis, TN); (3) utilizing “worshipful work” (a term developed by Charles Olson in his books); and (4) the development of a “leadership track” that will help identify and nurture new leaders.

3. The new associate minister begins work. This person is committed to the Vision and to this strategic plan and has experience in, or understanding and capacity to share pastoral ministry duties and especially to develop outreach ministries, small group ministries, leadership development and care of volunteers.

4. The pastors and three members with theological education meet to design a framework and plan for theological exploration by members that will lead to a deeper understanding of progressive Christianity and its implications for FCC’s program, ministry and witness. This plan may include the development of classes, forums, lectureships, etc. Speakers and resources from outside the congregation may be utilized.

Some small groups may grow out of this initiative, but it must not result in merely having an ongoing small group or two reaching only a handful of members. The point is to engage the congregation *broadly*. The plans developed will also inform the Annual Planning Event.

February 2009

1. Develop and mass mail a flyer advertising the church and its Lenten offerings.

2. During Lent, the staff and key leadership begin offering a continuous membership class that repeats in content after every six sessions (so people can begin and end when they wish/are able). This curriculum should offer an overview of the history of the Disciples and First Christian Church, orient to all of the worship services (with particular attention paid to the origin and meaning of the structure and language of each service, since traditional and/or contemporary worship forms may be new to some or all participants), address the other offerings of FCC and the expectations of members (Christian growth, worship attendance, stewardship, etc.). The primary leadership of this class is by lay leaders.

March 2009

1. The Vision Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in April of what has been achieved to date.

2. Communications Task Force meets.

3. A Capital Campaign feasibility study is undertaken to determine feasibility, the case statement, and best timing.

4. The elders (or a combination of some elders and some other interested members) update the *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the information gathered through these interviews is updated each year in March thru May so the information gathered can be made available to the Annual Planning Event each June). These surveys identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Strategic Plan and other topics of interest will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

5. Assemble team to begin exploration of process to attain status of "Open and Affirming."

6. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

April 2009

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. After Easter, the staff and key lay leadership plan a monthly 90 minute "visitors orientation seminar" (with refreshments) to provide overview information of Disciples history and beliefs and the history and current offerings of First Christian Church. This event should provide interaction between visitors/prospective members and 3 or 4 key lay leaders as well as the pastoral staff. The seminars will be offered monthly beginning the second week of April. There may be months in which there are no or only one or two visitors who attend this seminar, but offering it regularly will begin to build attendance as new people feel welcomed.

3. Begin implementation of educational dialogue as planned in January (#4).

May 2009

1. A flyer is prepared to advertise Vacation Bible School for all ages to be bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2. 48 hour Staff Retreat to review the past year and look forward to the year ahead with emphasis on spiritual renewal and relationship building. This retreat will be led by the senior pastor and involve all ministerial, program and administrative staff.

3. A “mission consultation” is convened to review the current mission involvements of First Christian Church locally and globally and to develop a three-year plan for mission work locally and beyond. This consultation would address all aspects including contacting other congregations in the area to develop ways to work together in local mission and in domestic and/or overseas mission trips this year and beyond. The consultation will include the ministerial staff and 5 or 6 lay people (selected by the ministers and mission chair) representative of the diversity of the congregation. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each May, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. Locally the plan would be focused on Eugene and would be informed by discovering community needs, congregational abilities and gifts, and current offerings in the community. The plan may include projects such as expanding “Helping Hand” to include other congregations, providing help with mental and addiction problems (including training a core group of people to meet with those who tend to come at the end of worship services), providing new services that are needed due to shortfalls in county budgets and recession, and providing mission opportunities for college students. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

4. A “children’s ministry consultation” is convened to review the current offerings in children’s educational and other ministries and to develop plans for expansion of this area of programming. The consultation will include appropriate staff and 5 or 6 additional lay people (selected by the staff and education chair) to be representative of the diverse needs of the congregation’s children. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each June, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. The plan will address the education needs of all ages of children and will seek to teach on the basis of the distinctive characteristics of a Christian life. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

5. A “Youth Ministries Consultation” will be convened to develop programming and ministry for youth in the years ahead. 3-4 youth will be asked to serve in this consultation, in addition to the chair of Christian education and 2-3 other adults. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination.

6. A “Young Adult Ministries Consultation” will be convened by a minister to develop programming and ministry for young adults in the years ahead. 3-5 young adults will be asked to serve in this consultation. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination. Programming will provide for mutual support and fun and may include seminars featuring themes such as parenting, sexuality, finances, and marriage, being Christian and single, etc.

7. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year’s programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event (“Which programs and events are thriving?” “Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?” etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 26 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, two new groups (net) are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as “Survey of the Old and New Testaments,” “The Life and Times of Jesus,” etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better

understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc.

One or another of these groups might be “interest based,” or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group. Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

June 2009

1. The Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church’s program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have “always been the workers” and will help to involve more people.

2. Begin promotion of study tour with Dan regarding the first-century Roman world.

July 2009

1. The staff and elders will select 12 people to be mentored in a “Fellowship of 12” leadership development program that will run from September through August. This will mentor people into servant leadership and a broad understanding of the faith and of the heritage of our church. The group will meet monthly for review of the history of the church, Bible study, understanding the content and forms of worship, leadership methods and models, understanding the church’s governance, conflict resolution, etc. (Based on a model used by Lindenwood Christian Church in Memphis, Tennessee).

2. The ministers and the elders meet to review the current times and styles of worship services to decide whether to recommend changes in times and/or style.

August 2009

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in September of what has been achieved to date.

September 2009

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. During this month, the stewardship campaign will be built around the Future Story and will encourage members to increase their giving by 1% of their income.

October 2009

1. A “town hall meeting” is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

November 2009

1. A flyer featuring Advent/Christmas events is created and bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2010

Overall Goals for 2010:

1. To add two adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant (from 26 groups in 2009 to 28 minimum by the end of the 2010 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.

2. To grow average worship attendance from 210 to 230 and to add 30 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to grow participating membership to 325.

3. Continue an educational dialogue in the congregation regarding a new or recovered progressive Christianity that calls for true community, deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice.

January 2010

1. 48 hour Staff Retreat to review the past year and look forward to the year ahead with emphasis on spiritual renewal and relationship building. This retreat will be led by the lead pastors and involve all ministers, program staff, and the church administrator.

February 2010

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. A flyer featuring Lenten/Easter events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

March 2010

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in April of what has been achieved to date.

2. The elders (or a combination of some elders and some other interested members) update the *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the information gathered through these interviews is updated each year in March thru May so the information gathered can be made available to the Annual Planning Event each June). These surveys identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular

accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Strategic Plan and other topics of interest will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

3. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

April 2010

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

May 2010

1. A flyer is prepared to advertise Vacation Bible School for all ages to be bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2. A "mission consultation" is convened to review the current mission involvements of First Christian Church locally and globally and to develop a three-year plan for mission work locally and beyond. This consultation would address all aspects including contacting other congregations in the area to develop ways to work together in local mission and in domestic and/or overseas mission trips this year and beyond. The consultation will include the ministerial staff and 5 or 6 lay people (selected by the ministers and mission chair) representative of the diversity of the congregation. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each May, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. Locally the plan would be focused on Eugene and would be informed by discovering community needs, congregational abilities and gifts, and current offerings in the community. The plan may include projects such as expanding "Helping Hand" to include other congregations, providing help with mental and addiction problems (including training a core group of people to meet with those who tend to come at the end of worship services), providing new services that are needed due to shortfalls in county budgets and recession, and providing mission opportunities for college students. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

3. A "children's ministry consultation" is convened to review the current offerings in children's educational and other ministries and to develop plans for expansion of this area of programming. The consultation will include appropriate staff and 5 or 6 additional lay people (selected by the staff and education chair) to be representative of the diverse needs of the congregation's children. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each June, extending and maintaining a three year plan. The plan will address the education needs of all ages of children and will seek to teach on the basis of the distinctive characteristics of a Christian life. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

4. A "Youth Ministries Consultation" will be convened to develop programming and ministry for youth in the years ahead. 3-4 youth will be asked to serve in this consultation, in addition to the chair of Christian education and 2-3 other adults. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination.

5. A “Young Adult Ministries Consultation” will be convened by a minister to develop programming and ministry for young adults in the years ahead. 3-5 young adults will be asked to serve in this consultation. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination. Programming will provide for mutual support and fun and may include seminars featuring themes such as parenting, sexuality, finances, and marriage, being Christian and single, etc.

6. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year’s programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event (“Which programs and events are thriving?” “Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?” etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 28 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, two new groups (net) are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as “Survey of the Old and New Testaments,” “The Life and Times of Jesus,” etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc.

One or another of these groups might be “interest based,” or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group. Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

June 2010

1. The Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church’s program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have “always been the workers” and will help to involve more people.

July 2010

1. The staff and elders will select 12 people to be mentored in a “Fellowship of 12” leadership development program that will run from September through August. This will mentor people into servant leadership and a broad understanding of the faith and of the

heritage of our church. The group will meet monthly for review of the history of the church, Bible study, understanding the content and forms of worship, leadership methods and models, understanding the church's governance, conflict resolution, etc.

2. Foreign mission trip is undertaken by FCC. Non-church members (and perhaps other Disciples) are invited to participate.

August 2010

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in September of what has been achieved to date.

September 2010

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. During this month, the stewardship campaign will be built around the Future Story and will encourage members to increase their giving by 1% of their income.

October 2010

1. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

November 2010

1. Third week: A flyer featuring Advent/Christmas events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2011

Overall Goals for 2011:

1. To add two adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant (from 28 groups in 2010 to 30 minimum by the end of the 2011 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.

2. To grow average worship attendance from 230 to 255 and to add 40 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to grow participating membership to 365.

3. To add a part-time minister to work in areas deemed most needed.

January 2011

1. 48 hour Staff Retreat to review the past year and look forward to the year ahead with emphasis on spiritual renewal and relationship building. This retreat will be led by the senior pastor and involve all ministers, program staff, and the church administrator.

2. Personnel Committee and the pastors meet to plan for the calling of a one-third-time (or equivalent) program person specializing in needed areas.

February 2011

1. A flyer featuring Lenten/Easter events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

March 2011

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in April of what has been achieved to date.

2. The elders (or a combination of some elders and some other interested members) update the *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the information gathered through these interviews is updated each year in March thru May so the information gathered can be made available to the Annual Planning Event each June). These surveys identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Strategic Plan and other topics of interest will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

3. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

April 2011

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

May 2011

1. A flyer is prepared to advertise Vacation Bible School for all ages to be bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2. A "mission consultation" is convened to review the current mission involvements of First Christian Church locally and globally and to develop a three-year plan for mission work locally and beyond. This consultation would address all aspects including contacting other congregations in the area to develop ways to work together in local mission and in domestic and/or overseas mission trips this year and beyond. The consultation will include the ministerial staff and 5 or 6 lay people (selected by the ministers and mission chair) representative of the diversity of the congregation. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each May, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. Locally the plan would be focused on Eugene and would be informed by discovering community needs, congregational abilities and gifts, and current offerings in the community. The plan may include projects such as expanding "Helping Hand" to include

other congregations, providing help with mental and addiction problems (including training a core group of people to meet with those who tend to come at the end of worship services), providing new services that are needed due to shortfalls in county budgets and recession, and providing mission opportunities for college students. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

3. A “children’s ministry consultation” is convened to review the current offerings in children’s educational and other ministries and to develop plans for expansion of this area of programming. The consultation will include appropriate staff and 5 or 6 additional lay people (selected by the staff and education chair) to be representative of the diverse needs of the congregation’s children. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each June, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. The plan will address the education needs of all ages of children and will seek to teach on the basis of the distinctive characteristics of a Christian life. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

4. A “Youth Ministries Consultation” will be convened to develop programming and ministry for youth in the years ahead. 3-4 youth will be asked to serve in this consultation, in addition to the chair of Christian education and 2-3 other adults. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination.

5. A “Young Adult Ministries Consultation” will be convened by a minister to develop programming and ministry for young adults in the years ahead. 3-5 young adults will be asked to serve in this consultation. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination. Programming will provide for mutual support and fun and may include seminars featuring themes such as parenting, sexuality, finances, and marriage, being Christian and single, etc.

6. A “worship consultation” is convened to review the current worship offerings and any needed change, expansion, timing, etc. The consultation would include the ministerial staff, the music staff, 5 or 6 additional lay people chosen to be representative of the diversity of the congregation generationally, etc. This group will devise a three-year plan for current worship services to be enhanced and any additional services to be offered in a way that does not “cannibalize” current services but addresses identified needs as effectively as possible. New services of worship would be different in character from the present services: there might be a kind of “contemporary” service or contemplative (such as a Taize) – depending on perceived needs of the target audience. New services might be offered at a time other than Sunday. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event.

7. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year’s programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event (“Which programs and events are thriving?” “Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?” etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 28 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, two new groups (net) are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as “Survey of the Old and New Testaments,” “The Life and Times of Jesus,” etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better

understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc.

One or another of these groups might be “interest based,” or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group. Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

June 2011

1. The Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church’s program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have “always been the workers” and will help to involve more people.

July 2011

1. The staff and elders will select 12 people to be mentored in a “Fellowship of 12” leadership development program that will run from September through August. This will mentor people into servant leadership and a broad understanding of the faith and of the heritage of our church. The group will meet monthly for review of the history of the church, Bible study, understanding the content and forms of worship, leadership methods and models, understanding the church’s governance, conflict resolution, etc.

2. A domestic mission trip is undertaken by First Christian Church. Non-church members (and perhaps other Disciples) are invited to participate.

August 2011

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in September of what has been achieved to date.

September 2011

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. During this month, the stewardship campaign will be built around the Future Story and will encourage members to increase their giving by 1% of their income.

October 2011

1. A “town hall meeting” is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

November 2011

1. Third week: A flyer featuring Advent/Christmas events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2012

Overall Goals for 2012:

1. To add two adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant (from 30 groups in 2011 to 32 minimum by the end of the 2012 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.

2. To grow average worship attendance from 255 to 280 and to add 50 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to grow participating membership to 415.

January 2012

1. 48 hour Staff Retreat to review the past year and look forward to the year ahead with emphasis on spiritual renewal and relationship building. This retreat will be led by the lead pastors and involve all ministers, program staff, and the church administrator.

February 2012

1. A flyer featuring Lenten/Easter events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhood.

March 2012

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in April of what has been achieved to date.

2. The elders (or a combination of some elders and some other interested members) update the *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the information gathered through these interviews is updated each year in March thru May so the information gathered can be made available to the Annual Planning Event each June). These surveys identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Strategic Plan and other topics of interest will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

3. A “town hall meeting” is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

April 2012

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

May 2012

1. A flyer is prepared to advertise Vacation Bible School for all ages to be bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2. A “mission consultation” is convened to review the current mission involvements of First Christian Church locally and globally and to develop a three-year plan for mission work locally and beyond. This consultation would address all aspects including contacting other congregations in the area to develop ways to work together in local mission and in domestic and/or overseas mission trips this year and beyond. The consultation will include the ministerial staff and 5 or 6 lay people (selected by the ministers and mission chair) representative of the diversity of the congregation. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each May, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. Locally the plan would be focused on Eugene and would be informed by discovering community needs, congregational abilities and gifts, and current offerings in the community. The plan may include projects such as expanding “Helping Hand” to include other congregations, providing help with mental and addiction problems (including training a core group of people to meet with those who tend to come at the end of worship services), providing new services that are needed due to shortfalls in county budgets and recession, and providing mission opportunities for college students. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

3. A “children’s ministry consultation” is convened to review the current offerings in children’s educational and other ministries and to develop plans for expansion of this area of programming. The consultation will include appropriate staff and 5 or 6 additional lay people (selected by the staff and education chair) to be representative of the diverse needs of the congregation’s children. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each June, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. The plan will address the education needs of all ages of children and will seek to teach on the basis of the distinctive characteristics of a Christian life. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

4. A “Youth Ministries Consultation” will be convened to develop programming and ministry for youth in the years ahead. 3-4 youth will be asked to serve in this consultation, in addition to the chair of Christian education and 2-3 other adults. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination.

5. A “Young Adult Ministries Consultation” will be convened by a minister to develop programming and ministry for young adults in the years ahead. 3-5 young adults will be asked to serve in this consultation. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning

Event in June for coordination. Programming will provide for mutual support and fun and may include seminars featuring themes such as parenting, sexuality, finances, and marriage, being Christian and single, etc.

6. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year's programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event ("Which programs and events are thriving?" "Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?" etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 30 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, two new groups (net) are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as "Survey of the Old and New Testaments," "The Life and Times of Jesus," etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc.

One or another of these groups might be "interest based," or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group. Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

June 2012

1. The Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church's program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have "always been the workers" and will help to involve more people.

July 2012

1. The staff and elders will select 12 people to be mentored in a "Fellowship of 12" leadership development program that will run from September through August. This will mentor people into servant leadership and a broad understanding of the faith and of the heritage of our church. The group will meet monthly for review of the history of the church, Bible study, understanding the content and forms of worship, leadership methods and models, understanding the church's governance, conflict resolution, etc.

2. Foreign mission trip is undertaken by FCC. Non-church members (and perhaps other Disciples) are invited to participate.

August 2012

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in September of what has been achieved to date.

September 2012

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. During this month, the stewardship campaign will be built around the Future Story and will encourage members to increase their giving by 1% of their income.

October 2012

1. A “town hall meeting” is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

November 2012

1. Third week: A flyer featuring Advent/Christmas events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2013

Overall Goals for 2013:

1. To add three adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant (from 32 groups in 2012 to 35 minimum by the end of the 2013 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.

2. To grow average worship attendance from 280 to 310 and to add 60 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to grow participating membership to 475.

3. To add a part-time minister to work in areas deemed most needed.

January 2013

1. 48 hour Staff Retreat to review the past year and look forward to the year ahead with emphasis on spiritual renewal and relationship building. This retreat will be led by the lead pastors and involve all ministers, program staff, and the church administrator.

February 2013

1. A flyer featuring Lenten/Easter events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Personnel Committee and the pastors meet to plan for the hiring of an additional one-third-time program person.

March 2013

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in April of what has been achieved to date.
2. The elders (or a combination of some elders and some other interested members) update the *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the information gathered through these interviews is updated each year in March thru May so the information gathered can be made available to the Annual Planning Event each June). These surveys identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Strategic Plan and other topics of interest will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

3. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

April 2013

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

May 2013

1. A flyer is prepared to advertise Vacation Bible School for all ages to be bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Mid-May: A "mission consultation" is convened to review the current mission involvements of First Christian Church locally and globally and to develop a three year plan for mission work locally and beyond. This consultation would address all aspects including contacting other congregations in the area to develop ways to work together in local mission and in domestic and/or overseas mission trips this year and beyond. The consultation will include the ministerial staff and 5 or 6 lay people (selected by the ministers and mission chair) representative of the diversity of the congregation. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each May, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. Locally the plan would be focused on Eugene and would be informed by discovering community needs, congregational abilities and gifts, and current offerings in the community. The plan may include projects such as expanding "Helping Hand" to include other congregations, providing help with mental and addiction problems (including training a

core group of people to meet with those who tend to come at the end of worship services), providing new services that are needed due to shortfalls in county budgets and recession, and providing mission opportunities for college students. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

3. A “children’s ministry consultation” is convened to review the current offerings in children’s educational and other ministries and to develop plans for expansion of this area of programming. The consultation will include appropriate staff and 5 or 6 additional lay people (selected by the staff and education chair) to be representative of the diverse needs of the congregation’s children. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each June, extending and maintaining a three year plan. The plan will address the education needs of all ages of children and will seek to teach on the basis of the distinctive characteristics of a Christian life. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

4. A “Youth Ministries Consultation” will be convened to develop programming and ministry for youth in the years ahead. 3-4 youth will be asked to serve in this consultation, in addition to the chair of Christian education and 2-3 other adults. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination.

5. A “Young Adult Ministries Consultation” will be convened by a minister to develop programming and ministry for young adults in the years ahead. 3-5 young adults will be asked to serve in this consultation. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination. Programming will provide for mutual support and fun and may include seminars featuring themes such as parenting, sexuality, finances, and marriage, being Christian and single, etc.

6. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year’s programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event (“Which programs and events are thriving?” “Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?” etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 30 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, two new groups (net) are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as “Survey of the Old and New Testaments,” “The Life and Times of Jesus,” etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc.

One or another of these groups might be “interest based,” or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group. Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

June 2013

1. The Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church's program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have "always been the workers" and will help to involve more people.

July 2013

1. The staff and elders will select 12 people to be mentored in a "Fellowship of 12" leadership development program that will run from September through August. This will mentor people into servant leadership and a broad understanding of the faith and of the heritage of our church. The group will meet monthly for review of the history of the church, Bible study, understanding the content and forms of worship, leadership methods and models, understanding the church's governance, conflict resolution, etc.

2. A domestic mission trip is undertaken by FCC. Non-church members (and perhaps other Disciples) are invited to participate.

August 2013

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in September of what has been achieved to date.

September 2013

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

2. During this month, the stewardship campaign will be built around the Future Story and will encourage members to increase their giving by 1% of their income.

October 2013

1. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

November 2013

1. Third week: A flyer featuring Advent/Christmas events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2014

Overall Goals for 2014:

1. To add three adult small groups *net* in which participation is emotionally significant (from 35 groups in 2013 to 38 minimum by the end of the 2014 program year). These groups will be designed to appeal to current members and also to the un-churched, and the de-churched.
2. To grow average worship attendance from 310 to 350 and to add 75 *net new* members by baptisms and transfers to grow participating membership to 550.

January 2014

1. 48 hour Staff Retreat to review the past year and look forward to the year ahead with emphasis on spiritual renewal and relationship building. This retreat will be led by the lead pastors and involve all ministers, program staff, and the church administrator.

February 2014

1. A flyer featuring Lenten/Easter events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

March 2014

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in April of what has been achieved to date.
2. The elders (or a combination of some elders and some other interested members) update the *individual interviews* with participating members and other active participants (the information gathered through these interviews is updated each year in March thru May so the information gathered can be made available to the Annual Planning Event each June). These surveys identify interests, gifts, skills and experience and provide guidance for development of interest groups leading to individual and small group ministries of outreach and pastoral care (but always developed in a way that reflects the core values of the congregation and with accountability to the church through a group, elder, staff or other designated point of regular accountability). The survey will also ask about interests for possible small groups. In the process, members' questions about the Strategic Plan and other topics of interest will be answered (thus helping to improve communication).

It is tempting to do these surveys by mail or by handing them out on Sunday morning. However, it is important to do these by individual interview for at least two reasons: a) people are too modest to list their gifts and abilities on paper themselves, and b) it provides a pastoral contact between elders and individual members.

3. A "town hall meeting" is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

April 2014

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.

May 2014

1. A flyer is prepared to advertise Vacation Bible School for all ages to be bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

2. A “mission consultation” is convened to review the current mission involvements of First Christian Church locally and globally and to develop a three-year plan for mission work locally and beyond. This consultation would address all aspects including contacting other congregations in the area to develop ways to work together in local mission and in domestic and/or overseas mission trips this year and beyond. The consultation will include the ministerial staff and 5 or 6 lay people (selected by the ministers and mission chair) representative of the diversity of the congregation. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each May, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. Locally the plan would be focused on Eugene and would be informed by discovering community needs, congregational abilities and gifts, and current offerings in the community. The plan may include projects such as expanding “Helping Hand” to include other congregations, providing help with mental and addiction problems (including training a core group of people to meet with those who tend to come at the end of worship services), providing new services that are needed due to shortfalls in county budgets and recession, and providing mission opportunities for college students. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

3. A “children’s ministry consultation” is convened to review the current offerings in children’s educational and other ministries and to develop plans for expansion of this area of programming. The consultation will include appropriate staff and 5 or 6 additional lay people (selected by the staff and education chair) to be representative of the diverse needs of the congregation’s children. A three-year plan will be developed and reviewed annually by a similarly comprised group each June, extending and maintaining a three-year plan. The plan will address the education needs of all ages of children and will seek to teach on the basis of the distinctive characteristics of a Christian life. The plan may be further facilitated by, and generate agenda for the Annual Planning Event in June.

4. A “Youth Ministries Consultation” will be convened to develop programming and ministry for youth in the years ahead. 3-4 youth will be asked to serve in this consultation, in addition to the chair of Christian education and 2-3 other adults. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination.

5. A “Young Adult Ministries Consultation” will be convened by a minister to develop programming and ministry for young adults in the years ahead. 3-5 young adults will be asked to serve in this consultation. These plans will be shared with the Annual Planning Event in June for coordination. Programming will provide for mutual support and fun and may include seminars featuring themes such as parenting, sexuality, finances, and marriage, being Christian and single, etc.

6. Preparation for Annual Planning Event: Staff, officers and program chairs review the Strategic Plan, evaluate the current and previous year’s programming and prepare any relevant recommendations for the consideration of those participating in the Annual Planning Event (“Which programs and events are thriving?” “Which are declining and should either be renewed or terminated?” etc.). Small groups are a particular matter to discuss. What small groups need to be added in the coming year. There are currently 32 small groups for adults in which participation is emotionally significant (see Contextual Analysis for listing). Though the number of small groups is adequate for the number of participating members, three new

groups (net) are needed to appeal especially to those outside the church, including potential new members.

One or more of the new groups might be education oriented such as Bible studies (including short term studies on themes such as “Survey of the Old and New Testaments,” “The Life and Times of Jesus,” etc.; forms and styles of worship (helping people better understand the elements of various styles, which will help people get more out of worship currently and prepare people for the introduction of alternative worship services in years ahead later); Church history; Christian ethics; Centering Prayer; Care groups built around grief, single parenting, marriage enrichment, life transitions; other themes around Scripture, the spiritual disciplines, life issues, etc.

One or another of these groups might be “interest based,” or another of these groups may be a action-oriented mission group. Some of these groups will be offered at the church and some offered in homes located in various parts of the city so that members can invite non-members from those areas to these small groups, thus drawing new people into the small group life of the congregation (and later, it is hoped, into the worship and wider life of the congregation).

Resulting recommendations will be given to the appropriate APE planning groups.

June 2014

1. The Annual Planning Event: This will help provide better program coordination and lessen dependence upon monthly program committee meetings during the course of the year, thus releasing some time and energy for other projects. It will also help develop wider ownership of the church’s program by the congregation. This event may result in some expansion of programming, yet care must be taken to plan within capacity while also involving new members and longer term members in the planning and execution of the programs (not just those showing up for APE!). This will help alleviate burnout among those who have “always been the workers” and will help to involve more people.

July 2014

1. The staff and elders will select 12 people to be mentored in a “Fellowship of 12” leadership development program that will run from September through August. This will mentor people into servant leadership and a broad understanding of the faith and of the heritage of our church. The group will meet monthly for review of the history of the church, Bible study, understanding the content and forms of worship, leadership methods and models, understanding the church’s governance, conflict resolution, etc.

1. Foreign mission trip is undertaken by First Christian Church. Non-church members (and perhaps other Disciples) are invited to participate.

August 2014

1. The Visioning Team meets to review the Strategic Plan to determine any needed amendments and to plan for public celebration in September of what has been achieved to date.

September 2014

1. Public/worship celebration of what has been accomplished in the past six months through the strategic plan.
2. During this month, the stewardship campaign will be built around the Future Story and will encourage members to increase their giving by 1% of their income.

October 2014

1. A “town hall meeting” is held to keep members informed and to answer questions about the strategic plan and any other matters of interest.

November 2014

1. Third week: A flyer featuring Advent/Christmas events is bulk mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Some Assumptions and notes:

1. More small groups are added with each Annual Planning Event. It is best to over-plan a bit as two out of three small groups may take hold and continue, while one of three will likely be unsuccessful or will succeed but end after running their course in a year or a few years.
2. One-third ministerial staff positions are added as capacity allows. The assumption is that growth requires additional staff both to maintain and to increase. Adding a one-third staff person could mean increasing a one-third-time person to two-thirds-time or adding or any such combination as seems most helpful and appropriate. These persons may be ordained or lay ministers.
3. Domestic mission trips might be near Eugene, at Yakama, or somewhere else in the country. Foreign mission trips would be coordinated with the denomination. Non-members (including prospective members) would be welcome to take part in these trips (this would be very attractive to some in the community who might thus be drawn into association and membership). Preparation would be provided in each case for participants so that individuals learn about the deeper social-economic, political, cultural and theological issues inherent in each domestic or foreign mission setting (we don't want our missionaries to be arrogant or uninformed).
4. As the plan unfolds, it may be found that the designated months for specific events are not the best. As experience is gained, the dates of specific events in the plan may be changed to reflect optimum times, rates of change, etc. (This is one reason there are two designated times during the year for the Visioning Team to review the plan and how things are going.)
5. The congregation will regularly pray for what it needs in the way of visitors, new members, leadership, and other resources. (God *does* answer prayer!)
6. Many of the year to year details of these plans will be developed in the yearly annual planning event. That is, this is a *strategic plan* not a *program plan*.

7. The Stewardship Campaign may be planned during the Annual Planning Event. In any case, it should be planned by those interested in stewardship and not by those charged with maintaining a balanced budget (those charged with maintaining a balanced budget will nearly always look for ways to cut the budget rather than increasing the giving, since most of us feel more comfortable with cutting budgets than we do asking people to increase their giving).

8. In planning for the future in terms of finances, Hamm suggests including the following assumptions: a) build in 5% inflation annually; b) assume new members will begin by contributing 50% of what long term members are contributing, but will increase their giving by about 20% a year so that they will become “average” givers by the fifth year; c) assume that the outreach budget (including Disciples Mission Fund) needs to grow at the same rate (or greater) as the operating budget.

9. \$400,000 of a recent estate gift is undesignated, which means that either interest or principle can be used to help fund the operating budget/strategic plan. Principle should be used as needed (the “day of opportunity” is upon us and may not come again), tied with the implementation of an active endowment procurement program.

Other strategic ideas to keep before planners:

1. Up-grading of technologies periodically.
2. Co-mentoring of young and old by each other.

Other programs/ideas to consider:

1. Establish an “In-house Book Store” (with a “virtual” component as well) to sell books regarding the Disciples, church history, good Bible study resources, etc.
2. Religious Film Festival
3. Billboard advertising (highly efficient)

Pastoral Relations Committees

Pastoral relations are important to help ministers and congregations succeed in their common mission and ministry. The following assumptions are important: 1) the group should meet whether there is “anything to talk about” or not. By meeting regularly (at least quarterly, but avoiding December, August or July and the month in which Holy Week falls), the group builds trust and community and is then prepared to deal with any difficult subjects that may arise along the way. If they are not meeting regularly, the group is of little use when crisis comes; 2) the group should share the positive with the pastors as well as the negative; 3) a separate PRC is needed for each minister; 4) the minister should not “hand pick” the members of the PRC, but should be able to make suggestions of potential members and should have the right to veto any potential member he or she does not feel comfortable having on the PRC (*before* the person is asked to serve and without having to say why); 5) the PRC serves both to “telegraph” messages to the ministers from the congregation and to the congregation from the ministers.

Appendices

(Attach Future Story here followed by the Contextual Analysis)