

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF PUYALLUP (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) MINISTRY PLAN

OUR GUIDING VISION

First Christian Church of Puyallup is a gathering of diverse individuals called by God to live as a blessing in our own neighborhoods and in the world.

We dream of being a faithful community of God's people whose spiritual practices of worship, prayer, study, and ministry nurture those who are seeking to live in the way of Jesus.

Believing that every follower of Christ is gifted by God, we dream of being a family in which each person discovers their gifts and is supported in sharing those gifts with the world.

We experience God's welcome in our celebration at the communion table and dream of being a reflection of that welcome in our acts of acceptance, forgiveness, generosity, justice and peacemaking.

ROLE & MISSION

Guided by the Holy Spirit, we are a community of faith, committed to following God's call. As followers of Christ we will work together to nurture the spiritual development of each person, as we use our varied spiritual gifts to be a reflection of God's love in the world.

KEY RESULTS AREAS & GOALS

Spiritual Formation

Goal: To honor and nurture the spiritual lives of individuals, wherever they are in their faith journeys, by engaging in meaningful worship, cultivating a communal life of prayer, creating a learning environment, and committing to share our experiences.

Goal: To create a community in which all people are in the process of understanding, developing, and employing their spiritual gifts for ministry.

Community Formation

Goal: To be a welcoming community which reflects God's hospitality in our relationships with one another through mutual support and respect, forgiveness and loving kindness.

Goal: To celebrate the great variety of people who make up our congregation, we will welcome the gifts of all, from the very young to our seniors, as we commit to learn from the wisdom and experiences of each other.

Goal: To be a listening community in which open communication fosters inclusion and involvement.

Ministry & Witness

Goal: To live out the love of God through Christ Jesus in all of our thoughts, words, and actions.

Goal: To equip followers of Jesus to share their faith stories.

Goal: To have each individual in our congregation engaged in a ministry that connects their calling to God's work in the world.

Goal: To have an active ministry that begins at our front door and spreads through our neighborhoods to the far corners of our world.

Connecting with our Neighborhood

Goal: To strengthen our relationships with our neighbors.

Goal: To become a church that reflects the changing neighborhood in which we live.

CORE BELIEFS & COMMITMENTS

We believe in and are committed to:

- Sharing God's love
- Being in community with one another
- Living as followers of Jesus Christ
- Working in partnerships
- Welcoming others
- Practicing justice and peacemaking

PARTICIPANT GROUPS

As we carry out our mission, we will partner with:

- Existing church groups
- Neighboring community
- Other churches and organizations
- People with needs we can meet
- Groups and individuals who use our building and property

LIVING INTO OUR MISSIONAL VISION

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to God's self through Christ; and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

SPIRIT-FORMED LIVING

Worshiping Community

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. (Colossians 3:16)

Our hoped for future: A deepening spiritual life wherein individuals and congregation are nurtured through worshipful experiences.

A desired outcome: Participatory worship reflects our understanding that liturgy is *the work of the people*.

Action plan: Form a Worship Discipleship Team for planning and implementing worship.

- The pastor and Worship Chair will invite team members with interests and spiritual gifts
- Planning involves study, research, prayer and worship
- Keep as a priority creating varied worship opportunities for people of all ages and faith experiences
- Use a variety of communication methods to describe and invite participation in ministry
- Create a feedback, input and evaluation process
- Key planners will engage in an annual review of the area of worship and spiritual practices

A desired outcome: Individuals are cultivating a worshipful life through meaningful communal worship and a deeper understanding of the role of worship in the life of the believer.

Action plan: Provide ongoing education opportunities on elements of worship and spiritual practices.

- Sermon emphases or series
- Worship and Faith Formation Discipleship Teams will work together to plan short-term studies
- Newsletter articles

Action plan: Encourage small groups to incorporate worship into their gatherings.

- Worship Discipleship Team will connect small group leaders with worship resources
- Worship Discipleship Team will model worship and work in its own planning process

Charting our course:

- Worshipers grow in enthusiasm and understanding of worship elements
- More small groups are weaving worship practices into their regular sessions
- Attendance grows, leaders emerge
- Regular updates from the Discipleship Team will be shared with the congregation
- Some discomfort may be voiced by those who are not comfortable with change

Learning Community

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what the will of God is – that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)

Our hoped for future: All individuals are proactively engaged in a lifelong process of learning and growing as followers of Christ.

A desired outcome: We are a vibrant learning community.

Action plan: Form a Faith Formation Discipleship Team for planning and implementing faith formation.

- The pastor and Education Chair will invite team members with related interests and spiritual gifts
- Planning involves study, research, prayer and worship
- Coordinate and oversee learning venues
- Use a variety of communication methods to describe and invite participation
- Key planners will engage in an annual review of the area of faith formation

Action plan: Develop a comprehensive Faith Formation process.

- The pastor and Faith Formation Discipleship Team will develop a holistic faith formation program
- Offer creative avenues for the variety of ways people learn
- Occasional all-church retreats provide opportunities for in-depth exploration and relationship building
- Encourage intergenerational relationships through mentoring partnerships and occasional learning opportunities
- Areas for study include but are not limited to: worship, spiritual gifts, denominational identity, spiritual practices, how to read the bible, theological issues, current social issues

A desired outcome: Lay leaders are trained and empowered to be effective.

Action plan: Faith Formation Discipleship Team will develop an ongoing process in training lay leaders.

- Recruit according to spiritual gifts
- Provide access to resources
- Clearly define responsibilities
- Provide ongoing training to equip leaders

Charting our course:

- Leaders and participants are growing spiritually
- Congregants grow in recognition of spiritual gifts and use of them
- Study attendance increases
- More individuals express a desire to lead
- Lay leaders communicate growing confidence in their abilities to lead
- Number of opportunities for involving all types of persons increases
- Regular updates from the Discipleship Team will be shared with the congregation

MISSION-CENTERED LIVING

Living as Servants

So, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. (John 13:14-15)

Our hoped for future: We are striving to follow in the way of Jesus who led by being a servant. Understanding our call to be servant-leaders, we live in such a way that all of our words and actions, our very being as individuals and as a faith community, embody that compassionate way of Jesus.

A desired outcome: We live out our faith in serving... each one in accordance to our abilities and gifts.

Action plan: Create an informed community on current issues and justice concerns.

- All Discipleship Teams will prioritize community, regional and global networking.
- Faith Formation Discipleship Team will plan and implement opportunities for small groups and special studies to explore current issues
- Worship Discipleship Team will look for ways to incorporate awareness of justice issues into worship; pastor will weave topics into sermons as appropriate
- Faith Formation and Outreach Discipleship Teams will work together to host speakers and special events to raise awareness

Action plan: Support and encourage participation in ministries that reflect justice and care.

- Outreach Discipleship Team will oversee the implementation of matching individuals' gifts and abilities with ministry opportunities, e.g. a resource and ministry matching bulletin board
- Outreach Discipleship Team will oversee the creation of short-term projects that meet current issues of justice and care in our community, matching abilities and skills with ministry projects
- Outreach Discipleship Team will provide support to current ministries of our congregation, through networking with other faith communities, communication support, connecting ministries with resources, and encouraging broader participation
- Outreach Discipleship Team will encourage ministry participants to reflect on their experiences and how they relate to their own faith formation
- Outreach Discipleship Team will encourage the congregation to celebrate our successes

Action plan: Encourage new ministries that are in keeping with our Missional Strategy and reflect our calling

- Outreach Discipleship Team provides avenues for new ideas to be put in action
- The process empowers individuals to start, recruit, develop and do
- Multiple communication streams promote new ministries

Charting our course:

- More people express a growing awareness of current justice issues both in our local community and beyond our borders
- Growing numbers of people are involved in service through short-term projects or longer term commitments
- Partnerships with other faith communities and organizations are strengthened

Welcoming and Listening People

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor... Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. (Romans 12:9-10, 13)

Our hoped for future: We care for each other and grow trusting relationships through open communication, hard work and joy-filled endeavors. Our one-anothering is evident and welcoming to friends and guests.

A desired outcome: We talk about our faith... with one another, with our friends and families -- not in a heavy-handed way, but as a reflection of the love we've experienced.

Action plan: Worship and Faith Formation Discipleship Teams will encourage and integrate opportunities and models for faith sharing. (See *Appendix for specifics.*)

A desired outcome: We reflect our faith in our ways of interacting with others. We work hard at forgiveness, acceptance, generosity and being in compassionate relationships.

Action plan: Meetings and gatherings will model relationships that are respectful and inclusive.

- Council will model the use of a group covenant in its meetings, encouraging other groups and teams to adopt similar norms (modeled after Center for Parish Development or other)
- Decision making involves open communication and consensus
- Because one of our core beliefs is to be in community with one another, we will commit to making it possible to disagree openly and struggle together to find solutions which all of us can support

Action plan: Faith Formation Discipleship Team will support exploration of hot topics in safe, welcoming environments. Topics will arise from a variety of sources, e.g. Elders, Outreach and Faith Formation Teams, Council, Book Club. Faith Formation Discipleship Team will help facilitate venues and responsible groups. (See *Appendix for specifics.*)

Action plan: Churches just want to have fun... We will find ways to bring God's laughter and Christ's joy into all our work and play.

- We will not take ourselves too seriously
- We will work together with a sense of joy

Charting our course:

- Speaking of faith will become more of a way of life
- More people will feel listened to and that their perspective is valued
- Enthusiasm will spill over into our daily lives and into our relationships outside of our faith community
- Some discomfort may be felt and/or voiced by those who are uncomfortable about the change

GENEROUS LIVING

A Spirit-led People

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:7)

*We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us:
prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation;
the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. (Romans 12:6-8)*

Our hoped for future: We celebrate the diversity of gifts in our community, recognizing that each has been gifted by the Holy Spirit for the equipping of the body of Christ.

A desired outcome: We are in the process of understanding, developing and employing our spiritual gifts in ministry.

Action plan: Develop a small group process for study and discernment of spiritual gifts.

- Faith Formation Discipleship Team will select curriculum and materials
- Faith Formation Discipleship Team will recruit leadership
- Supported by sermon series
- Encourage broad involvement in discernment process

Action plan: Tracking and implementation of spiritual gifts

- Outreach Discipleship Team will develop a tracking system
- Outreach Discipleship Team will develop a process for sharing the information with ministry leaders
- Process will include looking at ways to encourage spiritual gifts in ministry, for example, a possible Gifts Ministry advocate, overseer, conscience, steward, leader, keeper, guardian, champion, agent...
- Ministry leaders recruit with a priority on matching spiritual gifts
- An annual assessment of the process of discerning gifts and matching individuals with ministries will take place by the Outreach Discipleship Team

Charting our course:

- Congregants grow in recognition of spiritual gifts and use of them
- A spiritual gifts tracking system is in place and is effectively matching the spiritual gifts of individuals to places of service
- The emphasis upon spiritual gifts may cause some discomfort with those who are uncomfortable with the new direction

A Building for the People

For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. (Isaiah 56:7)

A hoped for future: Our building and grounds are seen as tools to be used towards the fruition of our Guiding Vision and are achieving their full potential through use by many groups.

A desired outcome: We understand our building and grounds to be a gift from God and previous generations for the good of our community. In addition to the ministries of our congregation, a variety of ministries and groups that connect with our neighbors are using our facilities for gatherings, meetings, and ministry.

Action plan: Property Discipleship Team and custodian oversee ongoing maintenance and upkeep of building and grounds to support current ministries and host groups.

- Current needs are assessed and upkeep schedule maintained
- Communication avenues with other ministry teams are strengthened
- Property Discipleship Team develops long-range plan for adapting the facility to better support current and future ministries
- Key planners will engage in an annual review of the area of property management

Action plan: Develop process for determining appropriate uses of the building and for actively communicating our usage policies with potential groups or ministry partners.

- The council will develop a building usage policy in alignment with our Missional Strategy and ministries
- The process will cover interpretation and communication of policies

Charting our course:

- Building and grounds are viewed as an available asset for ministry
- The facility is a bustling hub of activity for a variety of groups

Sharing Ourselves

Moses then called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful one to whom the Lord had given skill, everyone whose heart was stirred to come to do the work; and they received from Moses all the freewill offerings that the Israelites had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept bringing him offerings every morning... (Exodus 36:2-3)

A hoped for future: We are a community of individuals who enjoy sharing our talents and resources with others. We believe that we are gifted to give.

A desired outcome: People are participating in the kingdom of God according to their abilities and skills.

Action plan: Create avenues for encouraging and sharing resources and talents.

- Outreach Discipleship Team will develop a system for communicating and sharing resources, eg. surveys, database, bulletin board
- Church Council will encourage team leaders to recruit individuals according to talents and spiritual gifts
- Outreach Discipleship Team develops and/or encourages short term projects designed to utilize the talents and resources of the congregation

Charting our course:

- Individuals are becoming comfortable in sharing their talents
- A greater number of people are involved in ministry
- An abundance of skills are known and utilized

A Generous People

*Be generous when you worship the Lord, and do not stint the first fruits of your hands.
With every gift show a cheerful face, and dedicate your tithe with gladness. (Sirach 35:10-11)*

All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. (Acts 2:44-47a)

A hoped for future: Puyallup means "generous people." We are living into this name and into our Guiding Vision's stated desire to live generously. Each person has a good understanding of FCC's ministries and the financial resources needed to support them. Acting on the biblical principles of generosity, abundance and trust in God, individuals are displaying a desire to support our congregation's ministries. Fair Parking income is no longer a necessity for our sustenance and our outward dispensation of it is increasing annually.

A desired outcome: Financial support to all areas of FCC's ministries is increasing.

Action plan: Seek ways to increase our financial stewardship.

- Stewardship Discipleship Team is formed, recruiting members according to their spiritual gifts and talents

- Stewardship Discipleship Team will develop a year-round strategy for strengthening our culture of giving
- Supported by sermons
- Encourage a deeper understanding of financial stewardship in worship and in small group opportunities
- Stewardship Discipleship Team will develop a communication strategy, e.g. our financial situation, avenues for giving including planned giving methods, ministry needs
- Partner with other organizations and explore additional revenue streams for supporting congregational ministries
- Annually increase the percentage of Fair Parking income designated for mission

Charting our course:

- General fund giving is increased
- Overall financial giving is increased for FCC ministries, Disciples-related ministries, and other ministries related to our guiding vision
- Our ability for outward gifting grows

APPENDIX

Welcoming and Listening People

A desired outcome: We talk about our faith... with one another, with our friends and families -- not in a heavy-handed way, but as a reflection of the love we've experienced.

Action plan: Worship and Faith Formation Discipleship Teams will encourage and integrate opportunities and models for faith sharing.

- Small groups
- Communal worship
- Mentoring relationships
- Print resources (journals, art)

A desired outcome: We reflect our faith in our ways of interacting with others. We work hard at forgiveness, acceptance, generosity and being in compassionate relationships.

Action plan: Faith Formation Discipleship Team will support exploration of hot topics in safe, welcoming environments. Topics will arise from a variety of sources, e.g. Elders, Outreach and Faith Formation Teams, Council, Book Club. Faith Formation Discipleship Team will help facilitate venues and responsible groups.

- World Café
- Movie discussions
- Group studies
- Home gatherings