

# 2020 VISION

First United Methodist Church Missouri City



This document represents nearly two years of praying, dialoguing and observing the present condition and potential of **First United Methodist Church Missouri City**. It is my desire to offer a plan to revise, strengthen and reaffirm the mission and core values to ensure the future of **FUMCMC**. The plan outlined comes after serving as Senior Pastor which has allowed me the opportunity to examine our people, ministries, facilities, money, resources and community. I hope this plan will help better focus our church on her overall mission and purpose.

The basis for the plan is based on the **Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations (Five Practices)**. This includes aligning all aspects of church operations, church ministries, resources and staffing. This is a critical element of this report. The thinking is that by adopting the **Five Practices** and organizing the church along those categories would well-position **FUMCMC** to impact our local community and world for Christ. Listed below are the general definitions for each of the **Five Practices**, borrowing from insights provided by Bishop Schnase.

### **Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations, Definitions**

#### **Radical Hospitality**

Radical Hospitality is the active, over-the-top desire to invite, welcome, receive and care for those who are strangers so that they find a spiritual home and discover for themselves the unending richness of life in Christ. It involves a restlessness caused by the realization that so many people do not have a relationship to a faith community.

#### **Passionate Worship**

Passionate Worship is worship that connects people to God and one another; worship that is authentic, alive, creative and comprehensible, where people experience the life-changing presence of God in the presence of others.

#### **Intentional Faith Development**

Intentional Faith Development includes high-quality learning experiences that help people understand Scripture, faith and life in the supportive nurture of caring relationships.

### **Risk-Taking Mission and Service**

Risk Taking Mission and Service includes the projects, the efforts and work people do to make a positive difference in the lives of others for the purposes of Christ, whether or not they will ever be part of the community of faith. It involves pushing beyond ordinary service and everyday missions to offer extraordinary opportunities for life-changing engagement with people.

### **Extravagant Generosity**

Extravagant Generosity describes practices of sharing and giving that exceed all expectations and extend to unexpected measures. It describes lavish sharing, sacrifice, and giving in service to God and neighbor.

### **Mission Statement, Purpose & Vision**

In *Matthew 28:19-20*, Jesus issued a charge to his disciples: *“go into the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”* John Wesley took up that charge 1800 years later as he directed a group of Methodist circuit riders to *“reform the nation and spread scriptural holiness across the land.”*

### **Mission Statement**

*The mission of First United Methodist Church Missouri City is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

### **Purpose**

*Changing lives, changing our community, and changing the world for Christ.*

### **Vision**

*2020 Vision: A Fruitful Congregation for Christ*

## **Core Values**

I believe essential to ensuring the future of **FUMCMC** is to identify Core Values that will guide us into 2020. These values will integrate with the church's organizational structure, ministries and vision.

### **Radical Hospitality**

*(Romans 12:9-21)* We offer the invitation and embrace of Jesus Christ to all people. We sense a calling and responsibility to pray and work to invite others and to help them feel welcome and supported in their faith journey.

### **Passionate Worship**

*(John 4:24)* We are honest before God and one another. We are open to God's presence and will for our lives. We earnestly seek to enhance the quality of worship in order to not only deepen our own faith, but also to allow God to use us and our congregation to offer hope, life and love to others.

### **Intentional Faith Development**

*(1 Corinthians 12)* We seek to equip our congregation for the unique mission God has given each person to accomplish. We seek to teach the Bible, the authoritative and truthful Word of God, through Small Groups (Bible study classes, Sunday school, small groups, social groups and support groups). We desire to teach special topics of interest to attract all people.

### **Risk-Taking Mission and Service**

*(Matthew 25:31-46)* We seek to offer ministry opportunities that stretch our congregation, causing us to do something for the good of others out of a deep desire to serve Christ because of the love He has shown us. Persons of all ages are encouraged to participate in the teaching and experiential components of these service ministries, including children and youth. We collaborate with other churches, denominations, civic organizations, social agencies and non-profit groups to make a difference in the lives of unchurched people in our community and world.

## **Extravagant Generosity**

(2 Corinthians 9:6-15) We speak confidently and faithfully about money, generosity and the difference giving makes for the purposes of Christ and the life of the giver. We emphasize mission, purpose and life-changing results with our spending. We seek opportunities to teach, model and cultivate generosity among children, youth and adults.

## **Goals**

The goals that are being identified are **Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs)**. In other words, these goals are God-sized, and many of them are intentionally not humanly possible. Only by the work of God's Holy Spirit will we reach them. The focus should not be the goals themselves, but instead should be on our congregation living out our core values. This, in turn, will enable us to do God's will and accomplish His purposes.

By the year 2020, with God's help, **First United Methodist Church Missouri City** seeks to:

### **Receive 80 Professions of Faith and/or Re-Affirmations of Faith**

This goal stands above all other goals. Professions of Faith and Re-Affirmations of Faith represent changed lives for Christ and lives that will never be the same. This is what it's all about. This is "the main thing." We need to remember that all other goals and recommendations ultimately trace back to Professions of Faith. Every member of **FUMCMC** can help with this goal. It is everyone's responsibility to do their part in creating an environment and culture that helps people find fellowship in Christ.

### **Attain 600 People in Weekly Worship Services on a Consistent Basis**

The size of worship services is not itself a direct measure of saved lives, but it does provide a measure of those that consistently seek to worship and glorify Jesus. This goal is not simply an effort to grow numbers, nor is it a goal that should dictate any type of building program.

### **Double the Number of Worshippers Involved in Small Groups**

Participation in some form of church Small Group is critical to sustaining one's life in Christ. There is a progression from the initial Profession of Faith, to participation in weekly worship, to consistent participation in a smaller community of people (Small Group).

### **Involve 80% of Worshippers in Ministry/Mission/ Service**

Continuing the progression from worship involvement to consistent Life Group participation and faith development, followers of Jesus are called to serve in the church, the community and beyond.

### **Retire All Debt**

Freeing the church from the financial burden of debt service will allow more of its resources to be applied to the goals and recommendations in this report. This goal is an enabler to effective missions, excellent faith development, passionate worship services and changed lives.

## **Next Steps**

The following **Next Steps** are grouped into two sets. The first set of steps fit neatly under each of the **Five Practices**. The second set of steps is more functional and foundational in nature, and may fit into multiple practices.

### **Radical Hospitality**

#### **Distinctive Branding**

In order to support the goals associated with Radical Hospitality, improve communications and increase our impact to the community, we need to develop and adopt a branding strategy for **FUMCMC**.

#### **Radicalize Hospitality**

By most accounts, the **FUMCMC** is known (*both internally and externally*) as a friendly church. Radical hospitality goes beyond being friendly and courteous; it surprises newcomers with a glimpse of the unmerited gracious love of God that we see in Christ. We need to teach our congregation that radical hospitality doesn't happen just during the "greeting time," but begins the moment a guest drives on to our campus. Our greeters and ushers will need to understand the important role they play in setting the tone of Radical Hospitality.

We must instill a spirit of Radical Hospitality within our membership and underscore the idea that it isn't just the responsibility of a few people, but takes the entire body of Christ to reflect this kind of hospitality.

### **Implement a Comprehensive Assimilation Plan**

We need an Assimilation Plan that ensures consistent and effective follow-up with guests, newcomers and inactive members.

## **Passionate Worship**

### **Examine and Evaluate Current Worship Services**

To encourage people to prioritize their lives and consistently attend worship, we must continuously and intentionally design our worship services to meet the needs of our community of faith. In order to achieve our Passionate Worship goals, we need to examine the current worship services times, structure and format. We must continue to offer a unified worship experience on a periodic basis and intentionally promote unity among all services.

## **Intentional Faith Development**

### **Communicate Class/Small Group Offerings, Offer Additional Options**

In order to reach the 2020 goals of Intentional Faith Development, we need to clearly articulate learning and fellowship opportunities. We must offer new classes and small groups that anticipate/meet the needs of our church and community.

### **Clearly Defined Discipleship Path**

We need to continue to be intentional about growing disciples at every age and stage of their Christian walk. In order to reach the goals of Intentional Faith Development, we must develop, implement and communicate a path to discipleship that will challenge adults, youth and children to further their faith development. We should ensure that members and newcomers clearly understand where they can plug in and develop as disciples of Christ.

## **Risk-Taking Mission and Service**

### **Address Local Community Needs**

In order to understand and impact our local community, we need to engage in the following:

**Awareness:** Establish programs to increase the awareness of needs in our community.

**Training:** Develop and promote training programs to educate and enable church members to take effective action in support of our community's needs.

**Action:** Intentionally align the outreach ministries to help meet the needs of our community.

## **Extravagant Generosity**

### **Communicate Financial Status**

One component of maintaining trust, with respect to how our church spends its resources, is providing an on-going, easily accessible, clear financial picture. In order to ensure church members are informed about the financial status of *FUMCMC*, we need regular communication regarding how the church is doing financially, what programs we support and highlight special opportunities to practice generosity.

### **Promote, Emphasize Biblical Stewardship**

In order to achieve the financial goals, we will regularly train and educate our members on Biblical stewardship. We will include specialized programs, sermon series and member testimonies that are relevant to all ages. We need to ensure that our members are offered opportunities to practice Biblical stewardship.

### **Debt Retirement Plan**

Our financial state impacts the ability to reach every goal we set. Freeing the church from debt will open up opportunities and allow us to launch new programs and ministries.

## **Foundational / Operational Communications**

**First United Methodist Church Missouri City** needs to improve communications, both internally and externally:

- Establish processes to ensure consistent and correct information delivery, and maximize the exposure to our church community.
- Make available to members and guests short summaries of Small Groups, missions, ministries, service opportunities, worship services and current events.
- Provide online access to church calendars to include general church events as well as administrative and functional area meetings.
- Ensure that all contact information related to Small Groups, missions, ministries and service opportunities are updated and available to members and guests.

When we think we have communicated the message enough, do it some more!

## **Efficient Church Structure**

One of the first major communication efforts should be aligning staff and congregation to the 2020 Vision. We need to articulate and communicate the goals and create teams (*with staff leaders*) for each of the **Five Practice** areas and communicate this alignment to the membership. It is vital to ensure that all church ministries have a staff point of contact, and integrate all church-related programs into the ministry structure. (*See proposed new structure*)