

Larchmont United Methodist Church Strategic Plan

2021

In early 2021, the Larchmont United Methodist Church (LUMC) Administrative Council (Council) appointed a team of church members to complete a Strategic Plan to move LUMC forward post-COVID 19 pandemic. The plan approved by the Council contains the Vision, Mission, Goals and Strategies necessary for LUMC to support the mission of the Virginia Conference – to make disciples of Jesus Christ for transformation of the world.

Although this document provides the framework for our Plan, the key to its success lies in the actions taken and decisions made by each and every member of our church family as we each do our parts as the body of Christ to carry out the strategies and achieve the goals enumerated below. We ask every church family member to prayerfully consider how to best be a part of these important changes at Larchmont. This Plan will be reviewed and revised periodically based on measured results.

Vision

The Vision outlines what we want LUMC to be in the future and represents the aspirations for our community of followers. This Vision will serve to guide our day-to-day activities and decisions. Our vision statement is the inspiration for the ultimate outcome of this strategic plan.

Vision:

To be a vibrant, engaging, and inclusive church that follows Jesus Christ.

Mission

The Mission defines the fundamental purpose of LUMC and describes how LUMC will achieve our Vision.

Mission:

Help seekers to begin in faith. Help believers to grow in faith. Help the community to thrive in faith.

Goals, Strategies, Actions

Goals are the outcomes that are designed to achieve the Vision. They tend to be long range and may outlive the timeline of the strategic plan. Strategies are specific statements that describe

activities designed to attain each goal over the life of the plan. Actions are the short-term projects, process changes, initiatives and programs that put the strategies into motion. This Strategic Plan also identifies performance measures to track progress toward implementing the actions.

The Goals for this plan are aligned with one of the three portions of the Mission statements for clarity. The Goal groupings for each Mission statement are listed below.

Help Seekers to Begin in Faith

- Communication Goal
- Outreach Goal

Help Believers to Grow in Faith

- Worship Goal
- Spiritual Growth Goal
- Fellowship Goal

Help our Community to Thrive in Faith

- Pastoral (Congregational Care) Goal
- Serving Others (Mission) Goal
- Resources

Help Seekers to Begin in Faith

Communication

Goal: Develop effective and open communication for all members of the church family, our community and area constituents to include written, verbal and electronic methodologies.

Strategy: Establish a communications team empowered to improve church communications; the team would be charged with developing a communications plan, including methods, metrics, and requirements, for presentation to the Admin Council within six months of its approval. Initiatives may include:

- A staff/volunteer follow up system for new contacts via telephone, email and/or mail,
- Use of social media, the LUMC website, and eLight newsletter to announce events, celebrations, awards, etc.,
- Youth participation through direct communication via youth specific social media and website accounts.

Strategy: Use social media and the LUMC website to increase the number of LUMC and community constituents that participate in Ministry, Mission and Fellowship offerings.

- Develop advertising/awareness campaigns inviting LUMC and community participants to join in Ministry, Mission and Fellowship offerings utilizing the LUMC database and/or analytics to determine year over year participant increases,
- Create and use Facebook, Instagram, and website campaign advertising utilizing analytics to determine audience penetration.

Outreach

Goal: By 10/31/21, develop an intentional annual “Outreach Plan” to create a system and culture of outreach at LUMC, enabling LUMC members to lead people to Christ through our church. Target groups may include local neighborhoods, military families, Higher Ed students (ODU), LUMPS, and scouting families.

Strategy: By 10/31/21, identify one or two new outreach initiatives for 2022 which aspire to meet the following:

- Local Impact – Builds bridges into the community,
- Interactional – Enables interaction with the community,
- Action-Oriented – Prioritizes “Doing” in a way which invites others,
- Intergenerational – Engages LUMC members from all age groups,
- Accessible – Easily engages new members of the congregation,
- Reputational – Enhances LUMC’s reputation in the community, leverages technology.

Help Believers to Grow in Faith

Worship

Goal: Offer 2 worship services weekly, by Oct. 2021 to include 1) traditional in-person worship, 2) alternative in-person worship. Grow worship participation by 10% between October 2021 and September 2022 as measured by average monthly participation (total of in-person and online attendees, for all services).

Strategy: Utilize a planning team for each worship offering to ensure that worship is vibrant and engaging.

- Planning team(s) may include the pastor, music director, technology director, lay leader and members of the Worship Committee,
- Alternative in-person worship may include venues such as the Fellowship Hall, outdoors,
- Worship plans are reviewed every six months.

Strategy: Continue to provide online worship to engage a digital congregation.

- Technology Director plans systems/assets required to support online delivery and works with appropriate committees (Finance, Staff Parish, Worship) to secure systems/assets,
- Technology Director recruits volunteers to assist delivery of online worship.

Spiritual Growth

Goal: Develop an intentional Discipleship Path that promotes personal, family, and church-wide spiritual growth.

Strategy: Offer pastor and laity-led small group programs that meet at traditional and non-traditional times that may include:

- Bible/Book studies,
- Small groups (life groups) such as United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, dinner groups,
- Studying, growing, and responding to issues of social justice.
- Coaching on discipleship that is used by more than 30% of the church's membership over the first half of 2022,
- Sunday School classes for children, youth, adults
- Youth groups

Strategy: Utilize a spiritual growth assessment tool provided by the Education Committee to develop discipleship paths for current and new congregants that result in increased participation in LUMC programs and ministry.

- Increase the number of small groups, classes, and Bible studies adding at least one new study each year,
- Increase attendance at small groups, classes, and Bible studies by 10% annually,
- Increase participation in children's programs such as choir, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School by 10% annually,
- Grow youth programs and ministry by 10% annually,
- Expand adult Sunday School offerings to increase participation by young, middle age, and older adults,

Strategy: Renew focus on Sunday School offerings that increase participation in Christian education by young, middle age, and older adults.

- Hold Sunday School at a time that allows congregants to attend Worship before or after Sunday School,
- Develop and deliver a new members/congregants group during Sunday School for the purpose of teaching new worshipers about Methodism, and spiritual growth opportunities such as Bible/Book studies, small groups, etc.

Fellowship

Goal: Initiate, plan, and execute church-focused events that bring members and non-members together for a common, usually social experience. Many of these events will be in coordination with other church teams.

Strategy: Coordinate with committees, small groups, and ongoing ministries to determine the selection and format of church-wide events, and to encourage smaller, organic events.

- Formulate an annual published calendar of ongoing/recurring events such as Spirit Sunday, Dinner Groups, 5th Sunday potlucks, etc.,
- Offer at least one event per month,
- Develop a more formal process to request Fellowship support (i.e., kitchen help, etc.),
- Publicize events via social media, eLight, website,
- Review which events are the most meaningful to participants,
- Increase 2023 participation over 2022 by 10%.

Strategy: Formalize, as a sub-group of Fellowship, a Hospitality committee to provide support to families in need during times of bereavement (i.e., memorial or funeral receptions), or weddings.

Help our Community to Thrive in Faith

Pastoral (Congregational) Care

Goal: Develop a Congregational Care Team to provide family and individual encouragement, prayer and support that results in retaining current and future members. The team will be established within three months of Admin Council approval of the Strategic Plan.

Strategy: Establish a homebound program that ensures the homebound have access to and involvement in congregational ministries.

- Visit with homebound congregants and constituents and demonstrate how to view website, pertinent social media and live streaming,
- Provide Zoom or other meeting links for those homebound who wish to participate in small group studies, bible studies, etc.,
- Provide training materials and resources for those team members engaged in homebound opportunities.

Strategy: Assist the clergy in supporting sick, hospitalized, or grieving families and individuals.

- Establish an online system that notifies the Team that a congregant is sick, hospitalized, or grieving,

- Utilize established online systems to schedule visits, provide meals and/or transportation, to those who are homebound, recently released from the hospital, or in crisis.

Strategy: Acknowledge/announce milestones such as weddings, graduations, retirements, promotions, etc. through use of print, eLight, and electronic media.

- Utilize the LUMC database to celebrate major life milestones in the LUMC community.

Serving Others (Missions)

Goal: Identify an ongoing mission program that will focus the gifts and graces of the membership in a united effort to become further involved in faith and LUMC.

Strategy: Evaluate the number and effectiveness of existing missional programs by using criteria that identifies 1) number of people helped, 2) how they were helped i.e. money donation, time donation, products/kits/food, 3) which internal group(s) sponsor a particular mission, and 4) community benefits.

- Conduct these evaluations annually to determine if a particular program continues to be supported by LUMC.

Strategy: By 10/31/21, identify a core mission focus for 2022 which aspires to meet the following:

- Local Impact – Builds bridges into the community,
- Interactional – Culminates in interaction with beneficiaries,
- Action-Oriented – Prioritizes “Doing” over “Giving” (hands on),
- Intergenerational – Engages LUMC members from all age groups,
- Accessible – Easily engages new members of the congregation,
- Reputational – Enhances LUMC’s reputation in the community, technology.

Resources

Goal: Ensure that LUMC programs and ministries have the financial, technical, facilities and human resources support to grow disciples within the greater community.

Strategy: Develop a technology work group made up of volunteers and paid staff that focuses on multimedia communications for in person, livestream and recorded worship and group presentations.

- Develop a plan and budget for staff support of technology needs,
- Purchase the necessary equipment to provide effective multimedia presentations,
- Develop a line item in the annual budget for software and equipment updates, replacement, etc.,

- Train volunteers and church staff to use the available technology equipment and provide in-services/training for all updates.

Strategy: By 2022, evaluate LUMC database needs to provide sufficient tools to serve our vision and mission.

- Utilize an internal or external consultant to help determine if ACS should continue as the LUMC database or if another database system should be explored,
- Align our paid staff and volunteers towards efficient use of the LUMC database.

Strategy: Determine the best way to ensure a full pastoral visitation ministry, providing care of members who are homebound, in the hospital or in nursing homes through regular visitation and the coordination of related ministries. Ministry needs include:

- Make pastoral visits as requested by the Lead Pastor, including the sick and bereaved in hospitals and nursing homes. Counsel with individuals and families on a short-term basis,
- Make follow-up phone calls to all shut-ins between home visits,
- Provide the Sacrament of Holy Communion to those who request it in their homes or nursing facilities,
- Encourage and train lay ministry in visitation,
- Serve as Staff Liaison with the Congregational Care Team, attending meetings, advising, training, communicating and facilitating ways they can bring ministry support to those in our congregation requiring additional relational care.

Strategy: Reorganize the current Nominations Committee to be the Lay Leadership and Development Team. They will assess the congregation to match members with ministry functions, thereby helping believers grow in faith and facilitating the vision and mission of the church

Strategy: Ensure the church physical facilities support the ministry of the church.

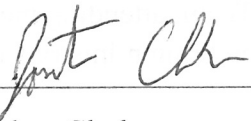
- Align the annual Trustees budget to ensure current and planned ministry needs are supported,
- Finalize the long-range capital plan process to maintain and improve our physical church facilities,
- Establish a funding plan for the long-range capital plan.

Strategic Planning Team

As this plan was developed, the congregation was notified that Pastor Scott Rimer was appointed pastor at Community UMC effective July 1, 2021. Pastor Fran Cooper was appointed to LUMC effective July 1, 2021. Pastor Rimer served on the team February-March. Pastor Cooper served from April until plan completion and approval.

Team Members:

Laura Averett	Jeff Paiste
Chris Burge	Pastor Scott Rimer
Pastor Fran Cooper	Jonathan Scott
Chas Etheridge	Liz Smith
Jeff Martin	Claudia Wade
Dan Morgan	

Approved:  Date: 8/15/2021
Jonathan Clark
Chair, Administrative Council

August 15, 2021