

2010 | Estero UMC Strategic Plan Update

A look at where we have been, where we are, and what is on the horizon



ESTERO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WHERE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY CONNECT

Overview

Over the past few years, we have come a long way as you will appreciate reading through this document. As we look back, our connection to the community comes to the forefront as a result of our diligent efforts in outreach and hospitality. We are seeing more clearly that Estero UMC is a place where church and community connect. This is both inspiring and laden with responsibility to continue to build on the strong foundation that has been laid.

With this in mind, the Long Range Planning Committee is recommending an update to our vision and mission to better reflect our foundation and focus our prayers, gifts, and talents.

Vision: Connect church and community

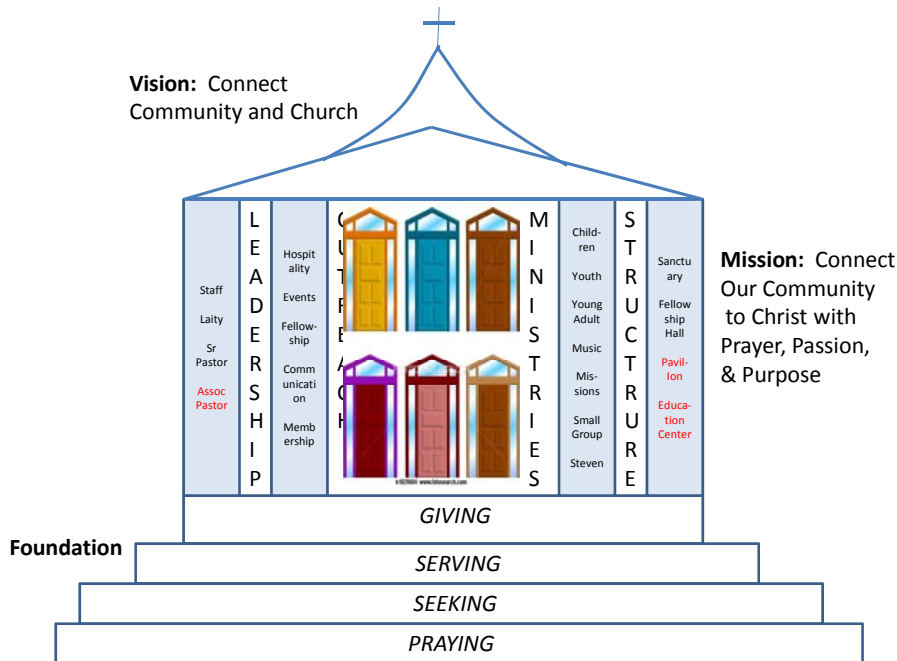
As we: Grow congregation of diverse individuals

Challenge toward spiritual growth

Focus on each generation

Optimize structure

Mission: Connect Our Community to Christ with Prayer, Passion, & Purpose



Where We Have Been 2008-2009

Grow Congregation of Diverse Individuals

Objective: All committees have 20% of membership from seasonal

- Committee composition of seasonal members ranges from 10 to 60% with the average at 30%. Electronic voting is being used to involve seasonal members throughout the year wherever they may be. Committee chairs who are seasonal are co-chairing with year round members to continue the committee work throughout the year.

Objective: Initiate Celebrate Jesus

- Over 3,000 homes and businesses were personally visited in June 2009
 - Invitations to attend EUMC were extended with 350 attending the block party
 - This will be a model for future invitations to EUMC sponsored community events (Easter Egg Hunt, Winterfest)

Objective: Achieve year round membership of 70% of overall membership by 2011

- Year round membership stands at 85% of overall membership as of Sept 2009
- In 2009, 90% (as of Sept 09) new members are year round.

Challenge Toward Spiritual Growth

Objective: Grow participation in missions locally, nationally, and internationally

- Mission trips to Cuba, Haiti, and UMCOR Disaster Relief –Sager Brown were completed. Of the 17 participating in these mission trip in 09, one was seasonal and 18 were year round. All three teams had members from other churches attend.

Focus on Each Generation

Objective: Develop a sports program for all ages

- A playground was built for children 2 to 12 years old
- A basketball goal was put up for the children and youth

Objective: Build a strong relationship with Boy Scouts

- The boy scouts as part of an Eagle project built the church sign on US41

Optimize Structure

Objective: Build a meditation garden

- The garden was completed in Dec 08. The columbarium is now available and other additions are ongoing.

Objective: Strengthen church communications

- Electronic mass mailing is being used by the church to send out meeting reminders, birthday and anniversary cards, newsletter notification and other key communications. This is saving the church over \$5,000 annually in deferred printing, paper and mailing costs.
- A new website for the church was launched with audio of sermons, newsletters, church calendar and with further updates planned
- The internal church electronic network was improved to offer wireless computer access, a computer available in the library for the congregation to use and email groups established for eVoting by committees.
- A director of communications position was created and filled to promote communications internal and external to the church

Where We Are January 2010

Grow Congregation of Diverse Individuals

Objective: Grow the NEST program to include 60% of both seasonal and traditional

- This is an ongoing effort to bring the entire congregation together throughout the year for various events

Objective: Grow seasonal membership to 30% of overall membership by 2011

- Seasonal membership stands at 17% of overall membership as of April 2009
 - Affiliate and associate memberships are being promoted to the seasonal congregation with a goal of 154 new members
- A membership committee has been established to focus on growing membership
 - Membership database is updated with reporting available
 - Visitor welcomes are extended with personal follow up delivering cookies and a phone call from the senior pastor
 - Afternoon/evening teas with a church tour and overview of activities and membership next steps will be offered to all third time visitors
 - Membership classes are offered throughout the year

Objective: Strengthen hospitality

- Igniting Ministries certification from FL UM Conference was awarded in Aug 09, identifying EUMC as a welcoming church (trained of greeters and ushers, welcome desk, signs to direct guests, and more; all to better extend a warm

welcome to visitors and members). Certification in years 2, 3, 4, 5 will be pursued.

Objective: Strengthen outreach

- Registration at events is improved to gather more information
- Canvass local neighborhoods with invitation to an upcoming church event
- Use of sign on 41 to invite community to church activities
- Visitor brochures highlighting all of our ministries/activities

Challenge Toward Spiritual Growth

New Objective: Expand participation in Weds morning prayer meeting.

New Objective: Use REVEAL to measure spiritual life of the church.

Objective: Create a culture of worship for each service

- Holiday programs/celebrations are being planned to include a Veteran's Day celebration, Christmas program, and Easter program
- Four dramas are planned for the worship services that reinforces the sermon
- Personal testimonies are being requested from the congregation relating to Emmaus, newly involved in a church activity, affiliate/associate membership, mission trip, small group, stewardship, etc from Sept through Mar
- Guest performances from other churches, community arts, FGCU music programs, local schools are being scheduled

Objective: Grow participation in missions locally, nationally, and internationally

- Mission trips are scheduled throughout the year at the national and international levels: Sager Brown - Jan 2010, Haiti - May 2010.
- Sunday school classes and small group studies are offered to prepare the congregation for missions
- The first annual mission conference to highlight the EUMC work in missions is scheduled for 27-28 Feb 2010 with a wide range of activities to increase awareness of missions and encourage support.

Focus on Each Generation

Objective: Offer programs from childhood to youth to church membership by end of 09

- An educational program (K-5) has been established with 10-15 children attending each week
 - Summer Rec camp runs during the summer months
 - VBS is scheduled in Aug each year
 - Children's choir began Sept 09
 - Themed rec days during the school year are on hold this school year

Objective: Develop a youth ministry program for ages 13 to 18

- Youth are meeting on Weds nights with 14 in attendance. They are focused on sports, missions, and fellowship.

Objective: Build a strong relationship with Boy Scouts

- Cub scouts have 35 boys and 31 parents participating. Boy scouts have 36 boys and 15 parents participating. Both troops help with many church events and host fundraisers and events.

Objective: Grow young family (20/30 somethings) memberships to 25% of overall membership by 2011

- Young adult membership stands at 10% as of Sept 09
- Volunteer opportunities for FGCU students at EUMC is underway
- Various events and opportunities are developing for young families
 - Marriage Retreat Weekend
 - Young adult Sunday School class
 - Singles and career small group
 - Various events for their children discussed under "Focus on Each Generation"
 - Celebrate Jesus extended an invitation to church to hundreds of young families
 - Class on "how to grow kids God's way"
- Registration at various events (Easter egg hunt/pumpkin patch/Winterfest) has been strengthened to provide contact information for church follow up

Objective: Offer a range of programs and activities for seniors

- UMC Men/Women's Clubs offers many activities for
- OWLS (older women living single) meet once a month for social activities

Objective: Establish a robust nurturing program by the end of 09

- A lay person visitation program to hospital and nursing home patients and homebounds is ongoing
 - A lay team visits and phones nursing home patients and homebounds each week
 - The hospital visitation team visits with those from the congregation and their family members who are in the hospital.
- A "bear ministry" provides teddy bears to be given to those who need hope
- Transportation ministry is underway
- Revitalization of the Stephen's Ministry is underway

Optimize Structure

Objective: Eliminate debt by the end of 09 – high priority

- The debt has been reduced by \$230K this year and loan now stands at \$841K. Donations and fundraisers are ongoing

Objective: Obtain regular giving commitments from at least 50% of membership by end of 2009

- A giving commitment was made by 11% of the membership for 09. Regular communications are being developed to inform the congregation about the use of their tithes and offerings.
- The annual stewardship campaign was developed and launched in Jan 09. Overall campaign was titled "Year of Jubilee" and runs through Jan 2010
 - Debt elimination has the theme of "I love dirt"
 - General fund theme is "Planting for the Future". Giving stands at \$355,000 as of Sept 09. Compared to the same time last year, it is \$45,000 below last year's giving. Financial statements have been sent to those in the congregation (50%) who have tithed and donated in the first half of the year. Six ministries of the church supported by the General Fund will be highlighted over the next six months.

What Is On The Horizon 2010 And Beyond

Grow Congregation of Diverse Individuals

Objective: Grow membership from seasonal and year round congregation

- A membership drive is needed

Objective: Offer a Saturday worship service – high priority

- Plans to build a pavilion on the grove property will be considered/launched this year. A casual/contemporary service will be offered from the pavilion on Saturday evenings with recorded music. The service will be focused on young families and those seeking to know Christ. It will be informal and loosely structured. It will grow and mature based on the commitment of those attending the service.
- Expanded praise band will be needed

Challenge Toward Spiritual Growth

Objective: Grow the participation of the congregation in small groups from 10% to 50% of the congregation by 2011

- Training for small groups leaders is held twice a year by Pastor Harris
- Small group leaders are meeting quarterly to share resources, concerns and encouragement
- A list of small groups is available with day and evening small groups focused around various interests, communities, and age groups

Focus on Each Generation

Objective: Develop a sports program for all ages

- Leaders for the programs are being sought

Objective: Establish a Celebrate Recovery program

- An initial piece of Celebrate Recovery is the new AA group of 60 people meeting at EUMC on M-W-F from 8-9pm

Optimize Structure

Objective: Establish endowment fund (for legacy gifts/other donations) – high priority

- An Ad Hoc Committee is established and will take a resolution to establish a Permanent Endowment Committee (PEC) to Charge Conference in Oct 09. The PEC will establish the legacy gift process and “how to” for our congregation.

Objective: Build an education center – high priority

- In order to grow both in numbers and spiritual maturity, an education center is needed. Plans are being developed.

Objective: Build a recreation center to support sports program for each generation

- On hold until debt is eliminated

Objective: Build a senior center

- On hold until debt is eliminated

Objective: Establish a preschool

- On hold until debt is eliminated

Objective: Establish the facilities for a worship satellite/student center on UMC property next to FGCU

- On hold until debt is eliminated

Distribution:

1. LRP – 10 Sept 09 – updated based on this meeting
2. Ad Council – 29 Sept 09
3. Charge Conference – Oct 09
4. Congregation – Jan 2010