

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Muncie, Indiana

VISION PLAN

(first draft – January 27, 2018)

MISSION – Our mission, as God’s people is to **gather** in worship, **grow** in faith, and **go** in service in the name of our Risen Lord.

VISION – Sharing God’s love, hope, and healing.

CORE VALUES – Worship, Hospitality, Wellness, Spiritual Growth, Outreach

PROCESS – This Vision Plan draft is a compilation of ideas generated by many members of the congregation during the past two years. The process to create this plan began following Pastor Jerry O’Neal’s arrival in 2016. In January 2017, he led the congregation’s annual Leadership Retreat, where we discussed God’s vision for Holy Trinity at the intersection of God’s story (the Gospel), our congregation’s story (culture), and the surrounding community’s story (context). The council then asked Pastor Jerry to present these ideas to the congregation and receive their input at a series of six cottage meetings; these meetings took place in May-June 2017 and reached approximately 30% of the church’s membership. Once those meetings were complete, the council then decided to engage a full-fledged Visioning Campaign to seek God’s “preferred and promised future” at Holy Trinity; the council formed a Vision Team and called Pastor Rick Rouse to serve as facilitator for the process. The campaign officially began on September 30, 2017, when Pastor Rick led an Orientation Retreat for Holy Trinity’s Vision Team, council, and staff to understand the process and begin gathering data. The Vision Team received the evaluations of the previously-mentioned cottage meetings and the summary reports of the Orientation Retreat breakout groups in the data gathering stage. Next, the Vision Team conducted six simultaneous Focus Groups on December 3, 2017, following worship for Youth, Parents of Young Children, Life-Long Members, Retirees, New(ish) Members, and Potpourri (a catch-all group). The six groups were asked to contribute their core values and vision for our church. The Vision Team studied the reports from the six groups and identified themes and common items. The team sought input from community leaders to help the team identify the most pressing community needs. The team was looking for the intersection between community needs and the strengths of our congregation. They created a first draft of the Vision Plan in January, 2018 and are presently awaiting the prayerful study and suggestions of church leaders and members of the congregation. The Vision Plan should be completed by June, 2018.

Purpose - To discern and embrace God’s preferred and promised future for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

Living Document - This draft is a “living document,” a compilation of ideas and common themes that have yet to be narrowed and prioritized. It will be further fine-tuned based on input from congregational leaders and members, and it will continually be updated and revised as God’s Spirit leads us to consider new opportunities. We invite your prayers and hope you will consider how God may be calling you to become engaged in this journey of faith that we share.

Vision Team – Diane Calvin, Nancy Carlson (convener), Erica Collins, Steve Donnellan, John Kelly, Dawn-Marie Oberly, Pastor Jerry O’Neal, and Carol Pinckney with guidance from consultant Rick Rouse.

Brief History of HTLC – Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is a single site congregation with a 129 year history steeped in Lutheran tradition and proud of its ELCA heritage. Presently, HTLC has one 9:00 morning service on Sunday and has traditionally participated in a mid-week service during Lent with two other congregations. Additional services offered at times include a mid-week Bible study, a healing service, an outdoor service, and services held in our Living Word Chapel. In the past, contemporary services were held monthly, led by our praise band, currently inactive.

Holy Trinity has occupied two different properties in Muncie and has been at the current location since 1961. Growth of the congregation and a well maintained but aging structure necessitate repair and expansion of the current facility in

the near future. A church committee, with the help of experts in the community, has done much work in the recent past to determine the church's facility needs and develop recommendations for future activity.

The seeds of community outreach and spiritual education were sown many years ago in this congregation, and activities supporting these missions are cornerstones of the life of this church. The people at Holy Trinity passionately do for others through Project Stepping Stone, Christmas Food Baskets, monthly Open Hands food distribution ministry, Deaf Ministry, CROP walk, Christian Ministries of Delaware County, sewing for missions, and Salvation Army bell-ringing. Several of these missions are shared with churches of other denominations in the community.

To facilitate spiritual growth, Holy Trinity offers educational activities, including Children's Sermons (KidsWord), Children's Church, Vacation Bible School, Adult Forum Bible study, Youth Group, new member classes, cell groups, Eucharistic team, and confirmation.

Holy Trinity has a strong ally in the Holy Trinity Foundation, which provides financial support for much of the ministry work done within the church and community.

Holy Trinity is a city church, residing on the edge of the Ball State University campus. This provides an opportunity for the church to work with the college community in new ways and to reach out to students as both mentors and friends in faith. The relationship the church has with the college is well seeded, with HTLC long providing financial outreach and member support for activities at Grace Village--Lutheran and Episcopal campus ministry.

After a long period of stability, pastoral leadership has been fluid and dynamic since early in the 21st century. The congregation experienced the retirement of one senior pastor and the death of another within a ten year period. These changes were painful and unsettling, but also resulted in personal growth within the lay leadership in the church. In addition to the loss of two senior pastors, several other dynamics have challenged HTLC to retain members. Population aging and migration have contributed to loss of congregation members, as has changing attitudes as population shifts away from mainstream churches to non-denominational or no church at all. This has especially impacted children's programs and activities, making growth of young families with children within the church body a priority going forward. Stability in pastoral leadership was restored when Pastor Jerry was called to Holy Trinity in the summer of 2016. Since then, we have seen renewed energy and vitality as we seek God's guidance for our future together.

The Vision Plan

Core Value 1- **WORSHIP**

Missional Objective - We share God's love, hope, and healing by offering the Word and Sacrament in regular worship each week. We value the Lutheran tradition, with participation for all ages. We celebrate with music to enrich each worship experience. We offer lay Eucharistic ministry, healing services, and leadership opportunities for all members according to their interests and abilities. We share our worship with full communion partner churches in our community.

Strategy – To spread the Good News more widely.

Opportunity – Offer more services for those who cannot attend current service.

Plan – Offer a 2nd service at a time other than Sunday morning.

Plan – Utilize Living Word chapel for small format services.

Strategy – To have greater participation in music/worship.

Opportunity – Gather and train participants at a Saturday Worship Training Fair

Plan – Gather and train a larger pool of acolytes.

Plan – Gather and train a larger pool of worship leaders, lectors.

Plan – Gather and train a larger pool for Altar Guild.

Plan – Gather and orient people who may wish to join choir or perform music.

Plan – Gather and train a larger pool for media and sound system operators.

Opportunity – Provide choir or ensemble opportunities for those who can't climb stairs.

Plan – Plan and rehearse a choir event outside the balcony choir space.

Strategy – Collaborate with full-communion church partners.

Opportunity – Conduct services and hold fellowship events with partners.

Plan – Form committee of partners to plan one or more church services.

Plan - Form committee of partners to plan one or more fellowship events.

Core Value 2 – **HOSPITALITY**

Missional Objective – We share God's love, hope, and healing by opening our arms in welcoming all people. Within our own membership, we offer numerous opportunities to connect with one another in fellowship. Additionally, we spread the Good News of Jesus Christ by welcoming the stranger passing by, immediate neighbors, community groups, and diverse populations, including the disabled.

Strategy – Provide welcoming and informational signage.

Opportunity – Erect an electronic sign on White River Blvd. and signs for side streets and parking lot.

Plan – Form a committee to determine needs and execute fund-raising and construction. \$\$\$\$

Opportunity - Provide informational signs for interior.

Plan – Form an interior signage committee. \$\$\$

Strategy – Make the building accessible for all people of all abilities.

Opportunity – Change entry (building program) using LEED certified ADA-approved building practices.

Plan – Form a building committee. \$\$\$\$\$\$

Strategy – Introduce immediate neighbors to our church

Opportunity – Join neighborhood association.

Plan - Attend Riverside/Normal City neighborhood meetings.

Opportunity – Create a neighborhood event/supper in parking lot.

Plan - Form committee (possible Thrivent grant for event).

Opportunity - Invite community groups to meet at our facility.

Plan – Building & Grounds Ministry revise building use policy.

Strategy - Welcome new members.

Opportunity – Develop a “friendship family” or “shepherding” program.

Plan – Pair new members with current members for information and fellowship.

Plan – Develop “welcome” kits or bags and hand to members when they join.

Strategy – Welcome visitors.

Opportunity – Develop plan for intentional follow-up to each visitor.

Plan – Hospitality Ministry will develop and execute plan for follow-up.

Strategy – Communicate messages well through various media.

Opportunity – Develop social media and media equipment utilization practices.

Plan – Media Ministry determines best use and timeliness of information on website, social media, in-house TV monitors, projector and full-screen, audio system & recording, information kiosk, email “push announcements” and newsletter.

Strategy – Connect current members with each other in fellowship.

Opportunity – Create new cell or koinonia groups.

Plan – Survey congregants to assess desires to join fellowship groups.

Plan – Divide those wishing to join into groups, according to demographics or meeting times.

Opportunity – Take a family vacation trip, like “Trek West” with fellow members.

Plan – Plan a “Trek West” to WMCA of the Rockies in Colorado.

Core Value 3 – **WELLNESS**

Missional Objective – We share God’s love, hope, and healing by demonstrating care for the wellness of the whole person – mind, body and spirit.

Strategy – Demonstrate care for physical wellness of members.

Opportunity – Initiate new programs to encourage physical health.

Plan - Collaborate with Healthy Community Alliance members in projects.

Plan - Programs such as walking group, blood drive, blood pressure check and others are managed through parish nursing and lay leaders.

Plan – Conduct healing services.

Plan – Provide literature (such as lead poisoning prevention) in information kiosk.

Plan – Offer speakers or workshops for physical wellness.

Strategy – Demonstrate care for mental wellness.

Opportunity – Collaborate with existing mental health groups.

Plan - Provide meeting room space for mental health groups or support groups.

Plan – Provide literature (such as recognizing suicidal tendencies) in information kiosk.

Plan – Provide office space for a mental health group.

Opportunity – Conduct healing services.

Plan – Invite public through media.

Opportunity – Offer speakers or workshops for mental wellness.

Plan – Invite public through media (possible Thrivent grant funding). \$

Strategy – Demonstrate care for spiritual wellness.

Opportunity – Provide small, caring groups to join.

Plan – Offer more cell groups or koinonia groups.

Opportunity – Offer workshops or retreats for spiritual wellness.

Plan – Provide information in kiosks.

Plan – Offer scholarships for workshop fees to members. \$

Core Value 4 – **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Missional Objective – We share God’s love, hope, and healing by providing opportunities for people to grow in their faith at all stages of their lives through Christian education, fellowship with other believers, prayer, Bible study, and discipleship.

Strategy – Provide Christian education for children.

Opportunity – Provide Children’s Church, Kids Word (Children’s sermon), and Vacation Bible School

Plan – Ministry of Nurture prepares calendar for volunteers and events.

Opportunity – Explore occasional Sunday school-type activities

Plan – Plan once a month activities.

Opportunity – Offer children’s fellowship activities

Plan – Hold social activities for children, such as Trunk-or-Treat, Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas crafts

Strategy – Provide Christian education for adults.

Opportunity – Offer intentional retreats for spiritual growth.

Plan – Organize a Lutheran Hills (camp) retreat.

Opportunity – Form WELCA group.

Plan – Those who went to national WELCA meeting hold information session.

Opportunity – Offer Bible Study.

Plan – Hold Bible study weekly after service on Sunday.

Plan – Offer Bible study mid-week during Lent.

Opportunity – Offer cell or koinonia groups.

Plan – Survey congregation to see who is interested and group according to demographics

Strategy – Provide Christian education for teens.

Opportunity – Offer Youth Group activities

Plan – Youth service projects, filling senior citizens’ (members’) needs.

Plan – Including youth in multigenerational projects, such as Muncie Soup Kitchen.

Opportunity – Offer Confirmation class

Opportunity – Offer trip to National Youth Gathering

Strategy – Support Christian education and fellowship for college youth.

Opportunity – Support Grace Village (Lutheran/Episcopal college organization)

Opportunity – Invite college attendees to participate in worship and outreach experiences

Strategy – Provide Christian fellowship with other believers.

Opportunity – Hold “themed” dinners, game nights, or other fun events.

Plan – Organize a “Trek West” type experience for families.

Strategy – Provide opportunities to develop disciples.

Opportunity – Offer Stephen ministry training.

Opportunity – Support those discerning call to ministry or seminary.

Core Value 5 – **OUTREACH**

Missional Objective – We share God’s love, hope, and healing by following Jesus’s call to serve “the least of these.” We offer needs-based, hands-on services to the poor, and we work for peace and justice in our community and the world.

Strategy – Collaborate with existing non-profits to care for the poor.

Opportunity – Work with outside non-profits to know what each is doing, so as not to duplicate effort.

Plan – Offer what we have to give to already-existing programs.

For example, a mobile farmer’s market vehicle could park on our lot during food distribution.

Strategy – Most members of HTLC will participate in some form of outreach.

Opportunity – Increase numbers of volunteers and leaders for each activity.

Plan – Participate in a church activity fair, informing and inviting members to join outreach activities.

Strategy – Communicate to congregation regarding outreach services and opportunities.

Opportunity – Post a board listing yearly outreach and how many were served.

Plan – Utilize Media Ministry for communicating outreach activities.