

Calling ALL House of Prayer Members!!!

Do you have ideas for the future of the church? Do you want to help set the course for our congregation?

Today begins a 60-day process to solicit suggested goals from members for a vote and adoption at our congregational visioning meeting, to take place at the end of July/early August. These goals are important because they establish targets for our church to strive towards and will help define what projects we initiate in the future.

YOU Have a Stake in This Process - We CANNOT Do It Without Your Participation!! We NEED Your Suggested Goals!

For more information, please review the attached policies which describe each "Ministry Area" and define the minimum criteria that suggested goals must meet in order to be considered at the congregational vision meeting. You may submit as many suggested goals as you like. Two will be adopted for each ministry area at the congregational visioning meeting.

Please submit suggested goals in writing no later than July 15th, 2009 to the appropriate Ministry Coordinators:

Paul Larson - Faith Coordinator

(Education & Fellowship Areas; paul.larson@shell.com)

Christine Smith - Discipleship Coordinator

(Worship & Evangelism Areas; faithcmb9@yahoo.com)

Rebecca Johnston - Service Coordinator

(Community Service/Public Involvement & Church Stewardship Areas;
vrcajohnston@sbcglobal.net)

Defining Goals

- What is a “goal”?
 - A concrete, achievable target
 - Concrete = can be measured using an objective metric
 - Achievable = something within our authority and capability of doing
- Example Goals:
 - Increase average worship attendance by 20% over the next two years
 - Initiate a small prison ministry that will provide Bibles to inmates and will organize an inmate Bible study group
- Examples of what are NOT Goals:
 - Improve the lives of poor people in our community
 - Teach every child in Africa to read



A suggested goal should be generally be submitted that includes the following information:

- Your name
- Text of the Goal
- Primary Ministry Area

For example, it might read:

John Doe

“I ncrease average worship attendance by 20% over the next two years”

Worship Ministry Area

To learn more about how we understand our mission and how we define a “ministry area”, please review Bylaw 13 (pg. 3-4)

To learn more about how the visioning and goal selection process, please review Continuing Resolution 11 (pg. 5-6)

BL 13:

The House of Prayer Lutheran Church people area called and gathered by God to serve Him in the Clear Lake area under this mission statement ...”Grow in Faith, Make Disciples, Serve in Love” ... We understand this mission statement to mean:

- “Grow in faith” – To grow in faith means that we become more mature in our understanding of Scriptures and the Church, and we become more mature in our relationship with God, one another, and all creation. As in the transition from childhood to adulthood, growth in faith is marked by taking on greater responsibility and attaining a certain level of independence while yet remaining tied to and accountable to the larger community. Though not perfect, we strive to make good choices consistent with our understanding and which uplift our relationships, and we do not hesitate to confess our failings and to try to make amends for any harm which may result from our sins. “Growth” may come in many forms, but it is always a constant process throughout life. Likewise, “faith” may find its expression in a multitude of ways, but it is always a way of life rather than merely a belief.
- “Make disciples” – As modeled first by Christ’s example, and then by the examples of His apostles and countless other Christian witnesses throughout the course of history, making disciples first and foremost means sharing the gospel of Christ with others. This gospel is to be proclaimed to any and all peoples, irregardless of race, nationality, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, economic, social, or political class. It is to be proclaimed freely and boldly, respectfully and truthfully, in a manner that is consistent with Christian values and beliefs. Proclamation of the gospel can take many forms in word and in deed, but always its goal is to open the way of the listener to be receptive to the work of the Holy Spirit to bring them into the Christian faith.
- “Serve in love” – Christ is the epitome of serving in love, and this special type of love is sometimes referred to by the Greek word “agape”. Agape refers to a particularly deep, abiding, unconditional love which is marked by selflessness and self-sacrifice for the sake of others. In the same manner, we are tasked as His disciples to serve in love in the same way, giving of our time, talents, and treasure generously and without expectation of reward or recognition. We are to serve in love for the joy of giving, without complaint, in obedience to Christ’s command and example. This service in love can take many forms in word and in deed, but always its goal is to fulfill the needs of others within and outside the community of faith, in a manner that is pleasing to God.

Further, we understand that the ministry focus areas or priorities for this congregation, deriving from our mission, are as follows:

- “Education” – Christian learning and study of any type helps us to grow in our faith by helping us to better understand and appreciate God’s Word and His will for our lives. Because we are called to grow in faith throughout our lives, this ministry area encompasses all educational efforts (religious or secular) within which House of

Prayer is involved, from Sunday School and adult Bible Studies, to providing tutoring services and organizing book clubs.

- “Fellowship” – Enjoying the company of others within our community of faith is more than just a social activity – it helps us to grow in our faith by strengthening the bonds within the Body of Christ and by providing opportunity for us build deep relationships with others based upon our shared Christian values. In practicing fellowship, we mature as Christians and experience the living presence of Christ within our community’s midst. This ministry area encompasses all House of Prayer activities in which we gather together as a community, including dinner groups, game nights, prayer groups, and retreats.
- “Evangelism” – Proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed helps us to make disciples by giving ourselves as instruments of the Holy Spirit, providing others the opportunity and invitation to come to know Him as Lord and Savior. This ministry area encompasses all House of Prayer activities who’s aim is to share the gospel with non-Christians or non-practicing Christians, including mission trips, interfaith dialogues, and distribution of theological/Scriptural materials.
- “Worship” – Proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ in word and sacrament through formal worship helps us to make disciples by allowing all people to experience the living presence and grace of God, and to revere Him in accordance with His commands. Worshipping fosters reconciliation through forgiveness of sins, and draws us into relationship with Him through praise, peace, and prayer. This ministry area encompasses all House of Prayer activities in which Word and Sacrament are administered, whether in a formal church setting or in gatherings outside of the church building.
- “Community Service/Public Involvement” – Providing social services, striving for peace and justice, and encouraging responsible citizenship helps us to serve in love by involving the church in efforts that make a positive contribution to society without expectation of reward or recognition. It brings the agape of the kingdom of God into our world, and fulfills the needs of the people and situations that we encounter in a manner that is consistent with the Christian faith. This ministry area encompasses all House of Prayer activities who’s aim is to give of our ourselves joyfully, and may include feeding the poor, ecumenical/interfaith disaster relief efforts, voter education, creation care, Habitat for Humanity, and blood drives.
- “Church Stewardship” – Providing for the church’s financial, material, and administrative needs helps us to serve in love by joyfully working for the needs of the church without expectation of reward or recognition. It empowers the church to carry out its mission and enables congregation members to exercise and fulfill their duty to support the community of which they are a part. This ministry area encompasses all activities that support the operational needs of House of Prayer including property maintenance, general marketing/advertising/outreach, tithing and financial management, and church governance.

Continuing Resolution 11 (Congregational Visioning & Goal Selection Process)

11.01 – A “goal” is defined as an objective relating to the advancement of at least one of the congregation’s six ministry areas (as defined by the Constitution and the Bylaws). It must be considered feasible/achievable and contain a concrete metric by which it may be judged as accomplished or not accomplished.

11.02 – A “Suggested Goal” is defined as a goal submitted by a member of House of Prayer to the applicable Ministry Coordinator, which will be forwarded to the congregation for a consideration for adoption during the visioning process, following evaluation and confirmation that it meets the minimum criteria for goal adoption as established by the Church Council in this continuing resolution.

11.03 – An “Adopted Goal” is defined as a goal that has been approved for adoption by a simple majority of the congregation at a constitutionally called congregational meeting.

11.04 – On an annual basis, the Church Council shall lead the congregation in a visioning process in accordance with the Constitution and the Bylaws. The visioning process shall consist of the following steps:

1. No less than sixty (60) days prior to the congregational meeting called for the purpose of visioning, the Faith Coordinator, the Discipleship Coordinator, and the Service Coordinator will solicit suggested goals from the members of House of Prayer for each of their respective ministry areas. The method of solicitation is at the discretion of the Ministry Coordinators; however they are expected to communicate to the congregation members a clear timeline for suggested goal submission, as well as basic information regarding what constitutes a suggested goal and what does not.
2. The Ministry Coordinators will evaluate suggested goals from congregation members according to the criteria set forth in this continuing resolution. The Ministry Coordinators will make a recommendation to the Church Council as to whether or not the suggested goals meet the minimum criteria and should be forwarded to the congregation for consideration at the visioning meeting. The Church Council will affirm or reject the recommendations of the Ministry Coordinators by vote, in accordance with the criteria set forth in this continuing resolution.
3. No less than fourteen (14) days prior to the congregational visioning meeting, the Church Council shall publish all suggested goals that will be voted upon. Suggested goals that were not forwarded by the Church Council for a vote will also be listed, along with the reasoning for why they were not forwarded. The method of publication may be at the discretion of the Church Council, but it must be in writing and reasonable efforts must be made to make it accessible to all members.
4. No less than fourteen (14) days prior to the congregational visioning meeting, the Church Council shall publish a statement addressing the long-term outlook of the congregation. More specifically, the statement shall describe at a minimum: A) the Council’s view of the current health of the congregation as a whole, B) the Council’s view of the current financial health of the congregation, C) the Council’s view of potential opportunities for the congregation in the future, and D) the Council’s view of the calling of the congregation with respect to the community it serves and the larger Body of Christ. The Council may choose to,

but does not have to, include recommendations to the congregation as to which suggested goal(s) may best fit within this long-term outlook. The statement must be approved by the Council through a 2/3 vote. The method of publication may be at the discretion of the Church Council, but it must be in writing and reasonable efforts must be made to make it accessible to all members.

5. The congregational visioning meeting will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws. Following discussion of the Council's long-term outlook statement and the suggested goals, eligible members of the congregation will vote to determine which suggested goals become adopted goals. The top two suggested goals receiving the most votes in each ministry area will be considered adopted.

11.05 The criteria by which suggested goals will be evaluated and forwarded to the congregation for consideration at the visioning meeting are:

1. The suggested goal is consistent with all existing church doctrine and congregational policies
2. The suggested goal is consistent with all local, state, and federal laws
 - a. Exception: in the event that a goal is potentially in violation of a civic law, but the civic law in question is deemed to be in conflict with Scripture, council leadership may forward such a goal for congregational consideration if the following conditions are met: 1) adequate explanation/justification is provided which demonstrates that the civic law is in conflict with Scripture, in the best judgment of the Pastor and the council leadership, 2) an explicit statement identifying the civic laws in question and the potential ramifications of violating the law are provided, and 3) the Synod and national church leadership is notified of the conflict and the potential action to be taken
3. The suggested goal is properly classified under the appropriate ministry area
4. The suggested goal is considered feasible/achievable and contains a concrete metric by which it may be judged as accomplished or not accomplished.
5. The suggested goal is submitted by a member of House of Prayer

11.06 An adopted goal shall be in effect for a two year period. An adopted goal may be renewed and/or modified at a subsequent visioning meeting, at which time a new two year period will begin. The adopted goal may be discontinued if it is deemed accomplished prior to the end of the two year period. In the event that a subsequently adopted goal directly conflicts with an adopted goal still in force, the earlier adopted goal will be discontinued in favor of the most recently adopted goal.