

# **2021 Strategic Plan Centennial United Methodist Church Roseville & St. Anthony Park**

## ***Mission Statement:***

*At Centennial United Methodist Church, we invite everyone to seek God in their lives by providing many pathways for creating authentic, active, thinking followers of Jesus who go out and build loving and just communities.*

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## Foreword

In May 2021, The Church Council appointed a team of twelve Centennial United Methodist Church members to develop a strategic plan that would guide Centennial's ministries for the next three to five years. Every effort was made to ensure that all voices were heard especially those often marginalized by society. Therefore, race, gender, LGBTQIA+, age, and representation from both campuses were considered in appointing the committee.

The Reverend Mary Kay DuChene, who specializes in helping congregations develop strategic plans, coached the Strategic Planning Team. Additionally, CUMC Pastors Brian Hacklander, Whitney Sheridan, and Jennifer Anderson advised the team.

The team used a data driven approach. The data sources were the results of the 2019 All-Church Survey and the twenty-eight follow-up interviews, the June 2021 financial report, and forty interviews conducted by the strategic planning team members between May and July of 2021.

Throughout the strategic plan development process, the team made every effort to preserve the traditions and values that are the foundation of CUMC's strong ministries. Therefore, the team first answered the question: Who are we as a congregation?

Next the team sought to identify areas for future focus that would ensure that CUMC remained vibrant and relevant in a dynamic world. Therefore, the team pondered the question: Who do want to become as a congregation?

And, finally, the team explored paths that the church could take to make what we hope for become a reality. Therefore, the team tackled the question: How can we get from where we are to where we want to be?

This report is organized into three sections. The first section details "Who We Are," that is, what do we value and prize as a congregation? The second section is "Where are We Going" and lays out the six strategic goals that the team has identified with possible approaches to reach these goals. The concluding section, "Plan Adoption, Tracking, and Reporting" details the framework to ensure implementation of the goals.

One special note: The Strategic Planning Team discussed the financial challenges currently facing CUMC. The team concluded that rather than identifying a specific financial goal, future planning efforts should focus on attracting new members, retaining current members, and engaging all members and guests.

The Team further concluded that when the Church Council adopts this plan and the implementation teams actively pursue implementation on the six goals, the church will grow, and members will be more engaged. This engaged congregation will in turn generously support the ministries of CUMC and the financial challenges will be met.

The Strategic Planning Team hopes that Centennial United Methodist Church will continue to be a source of faith formation, discipleship, and the creation of authentic, active, thinking followers of Jesus where ALL are welcome. We hope that the congregation finds this plan energizing and compelling as we move forward in the future at Centennial.

The team thanks the Church Council and the Ministry Staff for inviting us to serve and giving us the opportunity to dream for our future.

Respectfully submitted

The 2021 Strategic Planning Committee:

Trever Ball and Randy Oelschlager (co-chairs), Carolyn Gwi, Danny Mishek, Debby Newman, Derek Vandenburg, Erma Comstock, Jerry Matchett, Karen Ketola, Linda Barrows, Marsha Linden, Raquel Konzem

## Who We Are

Before we can move ahead, it is important to recognize where we are, and who we are presently. Following is the distillation of all the data the team gathered to develop this portion of the report.

As the congregation of Centennial United Methodist Church, we value....

### Faith Development for All Age Groups

Faith development and formation is a cornerstone of Centennial's ministries and includes reading and reflecting on diverse materials and welcoming questions as we grow together in our faith.

- For children, that includes Faith Walk
- For youth, that includes confirmation, mission trips, and fellowship activities
- For adults, that includes Bible study, book groups, mission and outreach activities and the Connectivity Group
- For all, lay leadership as well as the clergy are important for faith development
- Survey Quotes:
  - "We are a church that stands for something but allows questioning."
  - "Children's programs are key to the ongoing health of our church."
  - "I love to see our children and youth participating in various aspects of the morning services. This is a wonderful way to get them comfortable in front of crowds and to nurture a pattern of on-going church involvement."

### A Sense of Family and Community

Another strong foundation that makes Centennial special is the sense of family and community that we share. This includes acceptance of who we are individually and emotional support from birth to death.

- For young families support from "seasoned" parents.
- Everyone is involved in "bringing up" the children in the church.
- The church is important at key moments of our lives—marriage, births, deaths
- The church is an important source of support and encouragement in times of crisis.
- Intergenerational activities promote our family/community concept.
- Funerals are a touching way to share love and support for families.
- Survey Quotes:
  - "My church family is my chosen family, and they are there for me and I try to be there for them."
  - "Our church is special because there is a feeling of being part of a community."

## **An Opportunity to Love Our Neighbor with Socially Conscious Outreach**

Centennial has a strong mission program and has always sought to be on the forefront of social issues both within our church and in our community.

- A wide variety of opportunities to serve are available.
- We especially appreciate being personally invited to become involved.
- When invited, people will often participate in an activity outside their comfort zone.
- Service projects and mission trips are especially important for middle and high school students.
- Survey Quotes:
  - “When I’m working with other people on projects such as Habitat for Humanity, mission trips and the like, spiritual things come up and I build supportive and caring relationships with others.”
  - “Activities create a connection between members, forming a bond.”

## **Our Involved Pastors**

Throughout Centennial’s history, we have always had strong pastoral involvement and leadership. This leadership has helped in faith formation and building the sense of family and community through actions and involvement such as:

- Their thought-provoking sermons are related to the teachings of the Bible and relevant to today’s world.
- Their connection to our children
- Their non-judgmental stance
- Their support for our activities
- Their interactions with others
- Their belief in inclusivity and their willingness to preach about it from the pulpit
- Survey Quotes:
  - “I look forward to worship all the time. I find it often to be the highlight of my week.”
  - “Preaching is a strong part of both campus ministries as they teach and lead prayer and sacramental services.
  - “I like to say that every Sunday allows me a chance to reflect on the past week and press the reset button for how I want to improve the way I live out my faith moving forward. Taking time to reflect on sermons, while participating in activities with the church community, reassures me of the hope and life purpose available to us all.”

## **A Loving, Authentic, and Inclusive Community**

Centennial seeks to include everyone regardless of age, race, economic status, LGBTQIA+, or ability, and works to meet people where they are in their lives. At Centennial, when we say all are welcome, we really mean ALL. This is carried out through our activities:

- Reconciling congregation
- Racial Justice covenant
- Awareness of disabilities with the goal of full inclusion in all church activities
- Socially conscious
- Survey Quotes:
  - “I felt most connected when decisions are being made around being a forward-looking church such as becoming a reconciling congregation and racial reconciling congregation.”
  - “I feel a sense of community with like-minded people who want to make the world a better place.”

## **Our Music Programs**

Centennial has a variety of opportunities for people of all ages to engage in music to enhance their faith formation and share their talents in worship services. This augments the other aspects of Centennial’s ministries by:

- Engages us and connects us to the church and one another.
- Uplifts us.
- Involves all ages and in a variety of ways.
- Survey Quotes:
  - “I attend mainly for the wonderful music.”
  - “Thanks for the beautiful music.”

## Where We Are Going

Having defined who we are, it is important now to look forward to where Centennial can go, and how the church can live the mission of welcoming ALL people and creating authentic, active, thinking followers of Jesus who go out and build loving and just communities.

To achieve this, the following six goals have been identified.

### **Goal 1: One Church - Two Campuses**

Centennial United Methodist Church will fully embrace and implement the goal of One Church - Two Campuses through a shared mission statement and dedicated leadership that recognizes the strength in working together and acknowledges that there are varying pathways to become authentic, active, thinking followers of Jesus.

The shared mission statement will be pursued through a traditional service format at Roseville that utilizes choir, instrumental music, and bells to support the worship while Saint Anthony Park will pursue the common mission through band-led worship in a simplified contemporary service style.

This goal may be achieved through, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- Greater integration of the campuses on committees and in planning
- Greater integration of campuses in activities such as mission and outreach, children and youth, and social gatherings
- Joint hosting of outreach activities where both congregations will participate such as “Trunk or Treat” in the fall, the “Egg Drop” at Easter and the food pantry “Run 4 Neighbors” in August
- Creation of an environment where attendees of either campus are welcome at both
- Respect for individual differences and styles for each campus but a will to work collectively
- Consideration of staggering services at the Roseville and SAP campuses

Likely individuals or groups to be involved in implementing this goal:

- Staff
- The Worship/Music Committee and Worship Team
- The Communications Committee (if created)
- A special committee created to blend the two campuses
- Other committees or teams that wish to share ownership for this goal

## Goal 2: Communication

Centennial United Methodist Church will have a dynamic and engaging multi-media presence that provides effective and easy communication with church congregants and with the broader local, state, national, and international communities.

This multimedia presence may be achieved through critical infrastructure and technological investments, the creation of a volunteer committee, and possibly a new staff position to manage the multi-media assets and communications. Milestones for achieving this goal might include:

- Creation of a new and up-to-date web site that provides:
  - Information about Centennial and our two campuses
  - Information about the variety of worship services we offer
  - Information about the variety of engagement opportunities we offer
  - A simple interactive experience allowing those unfamiliar with Centennial to get a flavor for our church community and what we offer
  - A calendar highlighting all upcoming events with a simple process for people to sign up or register directly from the calendar
  - A simple tool that allows people to set up one time and/or recurring donations that can be automatically withdrawn from a designated bank account or charged to a credit or debit card at a time of their choosing
  - The ability to view and play archived services as well as connect to a live streaming service
- Creation of a mobile application that supports the functional aspects of the website and allows users to subscribe to updates and announcements as text messages, e-mails, and/or phone calls.
- Investment in technology and network bandwidth to support live streaming of services and activities such mission and community outreach from both campuses.
- Creation of a dedicated YouTube channel for our archived live stream services.
- Creation of a dynamic and constant social media presence across relevant platforms such as:
  - Facebook
  - LinkedIn
  - Twitter
  - Instagram
  - Snap Chat
  - TikTok
  - Other social media platforms as they evolve:
- Continued use of e-mail list services to contact members of the congregation.
- Greater use of printed materials to promote Centennial's activities and opportunities to those who do not have access to technology or who prefer written communication
- The creation of a paid staff position or reallocation of existing staff responsibilities to provide a communications/public relations leader who would be responsible for:
  - Keeping current the information on the website

- Coordinating the updates and announcements to the subscribers using the mobile app
- Ensuring that all social media content is consistent with Centennial messaging
- Coordinating with more traditional print media outlets such as local newspapers and news stations to advertise and promote the work at the church
- Managing of our electronic and traditional signage to effectively communicate with the community
- Providing training to group leaders and committee chairs and to the congregation on how to access information and use new tools as they are developed and released
- Communicating proactively on a monthly basis with group leaders, committee chairs, or their delegates, pastors, and web management resources to create, maintain, and promote opportunities to worship, serve, and learn
- Participating in Church Council meetings
- Considering whether they should allocate approximately 15% of their time to serve as a volunteer coordinator for various activities
- Creating a volunteer communications committee to assist the Communications/ Public Relations paid staff position
- Encouraging every member of Centennial to invite others to worship services, volunteer opportunities, and events

Existing teams and committees who may play a vital role in this achievement of this goal could include, but would not be limited to:

- The Audio-Visual Team
- The Worship/Music Committee & The Worship Team
- The Reconciling/Welcoming Committee
- The Mission Committee
- The Church and Society Committee
- The Finance Committee
- The Stewardship Committee
- The Centennial for Racial Justice Committee
- The Staff Parish Relations Committee

### **Goal 3: Faith Formation**

Centennial United Methodist Church will strengthen its mission of building authentic, active, thinking followers of Jesus through a variety of increased faith formation opportunities that meet people where they are on each of their faith journeys. Faith formation activities will include direct participation of members and non-members as they enable congregants to live out their vows of membership.

#### Underlying Principles: Vows of Membership

Particular emphasis will be placed on the vows of being “loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church and do all in their power to strengthen its ministries” (Vow 5), and “to faithfully participate in its ministries by their prayers, presence, their gifts, their service and their witness” (Vow 6) in faith formation efforts.

Progress in faith formation/growth may be accomplished by participating in many existing activities as well as developing new ones that could include, but are not limited to:

- small groups
- Bible study classes
- prayer teams
- volunteering
- lay leadership development classes
- worship
- book study group
- community outreach projects
- music ministries
- dramatic/arts ministries
- youth and adult missions
- intergenerational missions
- mentoring/counseling ministries
- feeding ministries

Existing teams and committees who may play a vital role in the achievement of this vision could include, but would not be limited to:

- The Mission Committee
- The Children and Family Ministry Team
- The Youth Ministry Support Team
- The Worship/Music Committee or The Worship Team
- The Centennial for Racial Justice Committee
- The Reconciling/Welcoming Committee
- The Church and Society Committee

## **Goal 4: Loving, Authentic, and Inclusive Community**

Centennial United Methodist Church members will be actively and openly living their commitments to be Reconciling and Racial Reconciling congregations. By actively living these commitments, Centennial will continue to create and foster a loving, inclusive community where ALL are welcome as valued, authentic individuals.

Underlying Principles: Centennial United Methodist Church is an inclusive community. We are all made in God's image. We believe God welcomes all people. We value diversity and recognize the sacred worth of each person, regardless of race, age, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental ability, economic means, marital status, education, or faith history. With open hearts and minds, Centennial United Methodist Church is a reconciling and welcoming congregation. If this is your first visit, welcome. If you are returning, welcome home.

Multiple activities will be needed to meet the inclusivity goals of our Reconciling and Racial Justice Covenants and honor the United Methodist Book of Discipline Inclusivity Statement, Section 6 as well as the Book of Discipline Social Creed.

Activities could include, but not be limited to the following four general areas.

### **Reconciling Congregation**

Visual indicators that ALL ARE WELCOME be placed outside at both churches. (Examples might be "All Are Welcome... All Means All," "Love Your Neighbor" and rainbow flags and/or universally recognized rainbow symbols.)

A link added to "All Are Welcome" on the front page of the church website that leads to a page of resources and current opportunities to be in service with the LGBTQ community.

Ensure that members of the LGBTQ community feel valued, welcomed, and included in all aspects of church life, including baptism, communion, marriage, and death. An emphasis needs to be placed on welcoming individuals as a part of God's beloved community rather than defined by their differences.

### **Racial Justice Covenant**

Set annual goal for progress in the "racial awareness continuum" to emphasize that Centennial opposes racism and racial hierarchy.

The representative from the Racial Justice Committee serving on the church council reports at each meeting.

A link added to "All Are Welcome" on the front page of the church website that leads to a page of resources and current opportunities to be active in anti-racism and racial justice in our community.

### **Inclusion of persons with disabilities in all church activities**

- Training for greeters, ushers, staff, and teachers to ensure welcome and full inclusion
- Universal disability/accessibility symbols and directions, placed outside and inside both churches, that include floor plans and directions at all entrances
- Assistive resources such as headsets, wheelchairs, elevators, ramps, large print material, and closed captioning
- Instructional bulletins readily available at both campuses
- Ensure that all areas in both churches are accessible
- A link added to “All Are Welcome” on the front page of the church website that leads to a page of resources and current opportunities to be in ministry with the disability community

### **Socially Conscious**

- Abbreviated news highlights offered during the service to increase knowledge of how one can learn more or take action as socially conscious Christians. (Examples include Pride parade, Disability: Not About Us Without Us, Black Lives Matter, Emma Norton, Habitat for Humanity, Keystone/Every Meal, Dorothy Day, Immigrant and Refugee Resettlement.)
- During fifth Sunday services an expanded version of news that includes videos of Centennial people in action, or a family friendly activity that helps us connect with neighbors, is provided.
- To invite learning, conversation, and social action, promote more widespread use of Centennial’s books, videos, and studies in which all are welcome and encouraged to participate.
- Encourage language usage in services and conversations that is inclusive and reflects how language has and continues to change. (Examples include using Creator rather than Father for God and replacing Thee and Thou with modern language.)

Teams and committees who may play a vital role in achievement of these goals include, but are not limited to:

- The Reconciling/Welcoming Committee
- The Centennial for Racial Justice Committee
- The United Methodist Women
- The Missions Committee
- The Church and Society Committee
- The Faith Development Teams
- The Children and Family Ministry Team
- The Youth Ministry Support Team

## **Goal 5: Mission and Outreach**

Centennial United Methodist Church will be recognized as a welcoming, supportive place for ALL throughout the local and worldwide community because of the actions we take within and outside the church walls. Centennial will be a place where everyone in the church will be involved in some form of mission and/or outreach activities that will encompass local, national, and international diversity.

Achieving this goal is based on expanding our concept of mission to include a variety of activities in addition to trips. A mission may take many forms and can take place wherever one is, serving one person or many depending on the need. Mission and outreach activities might include, but not be limited to:

- Offering services to neighbors (snow shoveling, mowing lawns etc.)
- Visiting/helping the homebound and those in care centers
- Offering programs of different perspectives (Gay Men's Choir, refugees etc.)
- Offering a variety of activities designed for youth participation or study
- Adapting continuing activities to social changes as they happen
- Doing more programs/activities outside the church and in neighborhoods
- Seeking and participating in international opportunities
- Participating in local, state, and national assistance projects as needed
- Offering study/discussion groups for multigenerational and diverse groups
- Including mission/outreach topics in sermons and music
- Including mission/outreach in all Faith Walk classes
- Inviting outsiders to programs/activities AND making sure they feel welcome

Each of the above ideas will require the commitment and cooperation of every Centennial UMC standing committee, team, staff, and lay member in order to be successful. Those closely involved, but not limited to, include:

- The Church and Society Committee
- The Reconciling/Welcoming Committee
- The Centennial for Racial Justice Committee
- The United Methodist Women
- Faith Walk
- The Care Team
- Compassion in Action
- The Worship/Music Committee & Worship Team
- All staff members
- The Finance Committee

## Goal 6: Worship and Music

Centennial United Methodist Church will maintain excellence in worship services and music programs and will continue to meet the needs of the congregation at both campuses by offering uniquely different experiences that reflect the makeup of the diverse congregations.

Regular reviews of services at both campuses should be conducted by staff and laity to identify opportunities for enhancement and improvement. Enhancements and improvements to services along with ideas on how to implement them could include, but should not be limited to:

- Determining the desired level of children and youth participation in the worship services and involving them at the desired level.
- Making sure there is a child friendly place for children to go during the service.
- Being accepting of and helpful to parents with young children in worship by understanding the struggles that parents encounter and helping parents feel comfortable bringing their children to worship.
- Continuing a virtual church option.
- Inviting more people to participate in worship such as doing the welcome at the beginning of the service and reading scripture thereby increasing the list of worship volunteers and involving others who want to participate but have not had the opportunity.
- Considering having our Pastors rotate between the two campuses.
- Developing a more inclusive church congregation by promoting awareness and celebrating the diversity of our community and world during our worship services and/or offering opportunities outside of worship to learn about different diverse groups.
- Considering offering a broader variety of services at Roseville.
- Considering introduction of more music styles such as modern hymns, modern Christian music, and music and media that celebrates diverse cultures. Services could focus on a single style of music or could incorporate different musical styles into the service.
- Exploring if / when / how to implement variety in the service at SAP. Feedback from regular Saint Anthony Park attendees suggests that there is no interest in adding traditional service options to their campus. However, enhancements could increase the appeal of those services to the broader community around Saint Anthony Park.

Existing teams and committees who may play a vital role in the achievement of this goal could include, but would not be limited to:

- Staff
- The Worship/Music Committee & Worship Team

## **Plan Adoption, Tracking and Reporting**

The Strategic Planning Committee considered three basic questions for successfully implementing the goals identified for action.

- How to achieve original approval and adoption of the plan?
- How to communicate and discuss the plan with all church members?
- How to track and report progress of achievements on a regular basis

First, the plan will be accepted as complete by the Strategic Planning Committee, then presented to the Church Council for approval. Following Council approval, copies will be made available to the membership by email or U. S. mail, pick-up at the two campuses and on the church web site for perusal.

A town hall discussion will be scheduled on each campus following a Sunday service in addition to a virtual session on a weekday evening to respond to questions and comments from congregants.

The Church Council would then appoint a support team to track and report actions toward achievement of the goals periodically. This support team should be balanced with members of the original strategic planning team and members of standing committees involved with achieving goals. A representative from the support team will attend Church Council meetings to provide monitoring updates on the progress being made or barriers being encountered by those working on goals.

In addition to the support team being a clear communications link between those working on goals and the Church Council, the support team will also provide periodic reports to congregants at worship services, in the Centennial News and on social media. In addition, they will present a progress summary report at the annual All Church Conference.

The original assignment for the strategic planning team was to develop a plan for the next three to five years. As progress/challenges are tracked, it will be important to keep that timeline as a central focus.