



**Fulfilling God's Promise
FVPC's Vibrant Ministry Plan
2020 – 2025**

Approved by
Session on
December 17, 2019

Presented to
Congregation on
January 26, 2020

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What is God calling us to be and to do in the next five years as the Body of Christ in the Fox Valley - with our MISSION, our MINISTRY, and our FINANCES?



ABOUT FVPC



OUR MISSION

Embodying Christ's love, we invite all to join us in serving God's creation, caring for each other and growing together in faith through worship and learning.



OUR VISION

In response to God's grace, we are an inclusive family of loving servants and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.



OUR VALUES

Love, Grow, Serve... Together



PLANNING JOURNEY

Throughout its history, God has remained faithful to FVPC, and the people of FVPC have responded in kind. This faithfulness has been evident in the last decade, as we expanded our physical plant and navigated our way through pastoral transitions with an eye on growing our ministries and impact throughout the Fox Valley.

Desiring to extend our faithfulness to God, in August of 2019, we embarked on a discernment and strategic planning process to provide guidance to session for how we as a church can best meet God's call to service, address our short and long-term financial health, and provide direction for a dynamic and sustainable future.

The Process Included:

- » Dedicating ourselves to prayer with weekly scripture & prayer guides
- » Three Sunday morning focus groups with members of the congregation
- » Conducting 143 individual interviews
- » Meeting with church committees to understand their unique perspectives
- » Planning retreat with 30 people, including: members of strategic planning team, interviewers, pastoral staff, deacons, & session members
- » Conducting extensive short & long-term budget analysis
- » Refinement of the plan by the planning team, pastoral staff, and committees of session.
- » Session approval of the plan December 17, 2019.
- » Thank you to all who participated!

A **Coordination Team** was formed and includes Jim Ludema, Scott Mortensen, & Dorene Tieche.

They are tasked with tracking the **Vibrant Ministry Plan** progress according to the implementation schedule recommended by pastoral staff and committees of Session.

Additionally, individual **icons** were created for **each area** of the ministry plan as a way of continuously **promoting** it and **linking** it to the **core mission** of our church.

Look for these icons in this report alongside each ministry area.

INSIGHTS & INSPIRATION

What Enables FVPC to THRIVE?

The first two questions we asked were:

1. What attracted you to FVPC?
2. What have been high point experiences?

We received several answers:

- ✓ Meaningful Relationships, Fellowship, and Caring Community *(mentioned 133 times)*
- ✓ Great Children & Youth Ministries *(mentioned 126 times)*
- ✓ Great Worship & Relevant Presbyterian Theology *(mentioned 122 times)*
- ✓ Welcoming Atmosphere & Good First Impressions *(mentioned 98 times)*
- ✓ Strong Connected Pastoral Leadership *(mentioned 95 times)*
- ✓ Mission, Serving Others, & Community Engagement *(mentioned 94 times)*
- ✓ Many Opportunities for Involvement Congregational Life *(mentioned 77 times)*
- ✓ Adult Christian Education & Spiritual Growth *(mentioned 52 times)*



“For us, the lowest points in our lives were also the highest points for us at FVPC: when my mom was in the hospital and when our son passed away. The head pastor immediately reached out, and the church family showed a great outpouring of compassion.”

“The love of this church always comes through when I spend time with its members.”



“When I lost my job, a fellow member called and got me out of the house. Sometimes we would get coffee and other times we would just walk. Sometimes we talked about jobs, sometimes we talked about other stuff. The Christian support and fellowship carried me through this dark time.”

“I joined a women’s group but didn’t have a ride. Another member of the group picked me up, and we created a lasting & meaningful relationship.”

“Kids can flourish here. The community always makes a place for our children, even when they are squirmy in the service.”



“One of the things that initially drew our family to FVPC was the large number of children during the service’s time for children, and the fact that children were waving to older members of the congregation as they came forward – a sign of meaningful intergenerational connections.”

“A real closeness among peers was achieved at a recent youth retreat and that made a lasting impression.” – Youth Member

“The music has always been a highlight of my worship experience; it’s when I feel closest to God.”

“FVPC is authentic and not flashy, and that is a draw. A very positive and welcoming community.”



“One of the pastors did our daughter’s wedding ceremony. The message was so personal that others commented on its beauty. I felt proud to belong to a church where the pastors were so connected with its members.”

“I was raised Catholic and was impressed that females could be ordained. I was excited for our daughter to have strong female role models amongst the pastoral staff.”

“Our current leadership is exciting; it helps me rejuvenate my faith to discern how to live out my faith in my daily life.”

“The whole church service project gave us that ‘wow’ feeling. It was a wonderful way to do something good in an accessible way and to feel involved and invested in the church family.”

“Worship is what draws me to FVPC. I enjoy the challenges of the sermons.”

“Anyone can go to a church to worship, but providing the opportunity to get involved in activities that brings them closer to the church family is critical.”

“I especially appreciated the self-discernment aspect of the adult education programs. And I really appreciated the close relationships with other members supporting me in daily life.”

“This congregation made me realize how close I am to God and I felt that God was leading me to be active in a congregation, which I love. I love the people and have many friends in the congregation. The church is a calm place in a chaotic world.”

Please Note: Quotes provided may be either a direct quote or a paraphrase of the interviewee’s comments. Silhouettes were placed at random.

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

We asked people to share their vision for the future of FVPC, a future of vibrant ministry within the walls of FVPC and in the broader community. These broad visions prompted ideas for specific ministry opportunities – ways of extending God’s love in our congregation and our world. We collected hundreds of ideas, many shared by multiple individuals. Powerful visions of a connected and engaged congregation emerged. Specifically, many people shared the following visions and specific opportunities:

1. Involvement in Mission & Service to the Community (*mentioned 138 times*)
2. Engaging Members in Fellowship, Ministry & Leadership (*mentioned 88 times*)
3. Energetic Children & Youth Ministries (*mentioned 64 times*)
4. Marketing, Communications, & Community Presence (*mentioned 62 times*)
5. Providing Care to Members of the Congregation (*mentioned 56 times*)
6. Strong Relationships with Pastoral Staff (*mentioned 53 times*)
7. Vibrant Worship and Preaching (*mentioned 52 times*)
8. Strengthening Diversity & Inclusion in the Congregation (*mentioned 48 times*)

During the October 12th planning retreat, we spent the bulk of the day working on vision statements and top recommendations for the future in six of the eight key ministry areas (2&3 and 4&5 were combined):

1. Involvement in Mission & Service to the Community
 2. Engaging Members in Fellowship, Ministry & Leadership
 3. Better Marketing, Communications, & Community Presence to Grow the Congregation
 4. Providing Care to Members of the Congregation
 5. Strong Relationships with Pastoral Staff
 6. Vibrant Worship and Preaching
- » Strengthening Diversity & Inclusion in the Congregation – It is an important ministry area and will be explored more fully by pastoral staff and the congregation going forward. As a congregation, we are committed to attending to diversity in all its forms, including race, ethnicity, gender and sexual identity, family and marital status, age, ability, and more.

MINISTRY PLAN DETAILS



MISSION AND SERVICE

Vision Statement

FVPC, grounded and guided by our discipleship in Jesus Christ, proclaim our transformative call to serve each other and the world. We live out this call through our active responses to all of God's people, regardless of age, gender, race, citizenship, sexuality, and ability.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Join with church & community partners in justice, advocacy, & care work alongside the LGBTQIA+ community.

Increase our care of creation by working with Presbyterians for Earth Care or other appropriate faith-based organization to become Earth Care certified (or equivalent).

Partner with Harrison Street Elementary on issues like housing, food, tutoring, & advocacy for immigrants.

Become more involved in responding to local, national, and international crises, human-made or natural disasters, mental health crises, violence or terrorism, health concerns, et cetera or make available resources known.

Intergenerational Mission Trip.



MINISTRY PLAN DETAILS

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE



Vision Statement

We provide care for members and pastors of the congregation by being a beacon of God’s light, love, and unity through: Balanced, God-inspired worship; Experience of gratitude/celebration/appreciation for people’s time, talents, gifts, and service; Member and pastor care that recognizes our diversity (age, background, economic, racial, sexual orientation, gender identity, political views, etc.) and brings us together; and Intergenerational Fellowship.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Cultivate a culture of gratitude that includes opportunities for members & pastors to offer & receive thanks for gifts of time & talent with a personal touch & in worship, as well as through regular “volunteer spotlights” or notes of thanks in the newsletter.

Leverage our communication tools to help church members learn about and from each other. Make Session, Presbytery, Synod, & General Assembly news available in our communications.

Provide excellent pastoral care coordinated by the Head of Staff & supported by staff & church leaders through a “parish and pew” or “shepherding” system. This would assign church leaders to communicate regularly with assigned households.

Study best practices in supporting healthy pastors & healthy congregations & lead the congregation in conversations & opportunities to put these in place.

Create periodic devotionals written by members.

MINISTRY PLAN DETAILS



COMMUNICATIONS AND CONNECTIONS

Vision Statement

FVPC is an engaged, thriving church community where multiple generations are comfortable, connected, & nurtured. The church offers multiple opportunities for conversation, fellowship, relationship building, & a place to address personal challenges, community needs, & spiritual growth. We support this with powerful & effective communication internally & externally.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Use available tools from the county, presbytery, or synod to review a demographic study of our geographic area to discover possibilities for ministry with local 19-30 year olds & developing a strategy to minister to them in Adult Education, fellowship, & mission work.

Create & implement an external marketing, communications, & community engagement plan, to tell the story of our ministry & mission in our community & invite others to participate with us.

Create & implement an internal communications plan across all relevant media types & communication opportunities to tell our stories of faith, ministry, & mission to each other to help us get to know each other better to further friendships & discipleship.

Strengthen & extend our welcome ministry in order to offer a warm greeting to newcomers, engage them quickly in the life of the church, & help them make personal connections with members.

Build relationships among the whole church family - members, friends, & staff - through intergenerational & age/stage specific fellowship opportunities & groups.

Plan events to help members of the congregation & community grow in their knowledge of & engagement with important topics of current interest in church & society.

MINISTRY PLAN DETAILS

WORSHIP AND PREACHING



Vision Statement

FVPC is a welcoming church that, through God-inspired worship, feeds the heart, mind, and spirit and provides balanced worship services and perspectives to increase spiritual growth, Christian discipleship, and diverse mission opportunities.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Review our overall worship experience with the goal of diversifying the modes & styles of music, ritual, & prayer used to include styles & practices that speak to & aid in the worship of a broader spectrum of our congregation.

Use worship planning teams to collaborate among worship staff & congregation members to create themes that guide seasons or series of worship & provide input & design leadership on music, artistic elements, & rituals that engage the whole congregation. Surveys of the congregation might be useful to determine what hymns, songs, or topics people are hoping to experience in worship.

Increase special services at times other than Sunday morning around specific occasions, seasons, or pastoral care needs.



MINISTRY PLAN DETAILS



CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Vision Statement

Our goal is that everyone, from children and youth to parents and mentors, would experience God's love, grow in their faith and learn how to serve others as they grow into and live out the role of discipleship.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

■ Intergenerational in Key Areas – While age & stage ministries have their place in our congregation, we also want to focus on opportunities that bring all ages together, particularly around service & worship. Continue to offer more opportunities for this faithful engagement throughout the year.

■ Youthful Leadership in the Congregation – Continue the process of equipping our young people into leadership roles on committees, as elders & deacons, in worship, in youth group settings, & in the wider community. Part of this process is looking at every ministry opportunity & ensuring our youth are present & able to attend. It could also include peer-to-peer leadership & mentoring within the middle & high school youth programs.

■ Engagement with Families beyond Sunday Morning – Create more areas for families to engage in the faith at home & outside of Sunday morning offerings.

■ Post-High School Ministry – Develop a strategy for ministering to & with recent high school graduates when they are away from FVPC & returning home for visits.

FINANCIAL HEALTH

Our final question addressed our congregation's short and long-term financial health. Financial wellbeing enables all our other work and provides the foundation from which we can serve locally and globally. Specific recommendations include:

- ✓ Grow Membership through Better Communication & Community Engagement
- ✓ Provide Regular, Clear, & Transparent Communication about the Budget
- ✓ Maintain Consistent Fiscal Discipline
- ✓ Challenge the Congregation to Increase Giving to the Operating Budget after the Capital Campaign Concludes in 2021
- ✓ Experiment with New Approaches to Stewardship
- ✓ Explore Establishing a Planned/Legacy Giving Program
- ✓ Provide Year-Round Age/Stage Appropriate Financial Education for the Congregation
- ✓ Bring in Outside Resources for Stewardship Leader Education



2019 Congregational Achievements

- Reduced expense budget by 6.4%
- Reduced budget deficit from \$95k to \$41k
- Increased returning & new pledges by 15%
- Created a standing Finance Committee
- Raised \$150k in Capital Campaign donations beyond existing pledges to pay off building debt by June 2021

2020 Congregational Goals



- Eliminate Operating Budget Deficit & Return to Balanced Budgets for 2021 & Beyond
- Invite Congregation (as able) to Increase or Accelerate Giving to Capital Campaign to Further Reduce Building Debt
- Provide Stewardship Education for Congregation & Stewardship Leaders

2020 BUDGET

2020 Budget Breakdown



26% Mission

26% Worship

15% Youth & Children Ministry

18% Adult Ministry & Pastoral

15% Communication & Admin

This budget was approved by Session on December 17, 2019.

		2019 Budget	2020 Budget
INCOME	Pledges	\$ 613, 151	\$ 612, 657
	Loose Offering	56, 000	55, 000
	Youth Offering	150	70
	Per Capita	14, 000	14, 000
	Facility Usage	6, 000	7, 000
	Fundraising Income	30, 000	5, 000
	Interest Income	1, 000	1, 250
	Endowment Income	-	-
	Miscellaneous Income	3, 969	3, 120
	Hinners Fund Music Contribution	-	2, 000
	FOTC Fundraising Income	-	2, 000
	Rummage to Mission	-	7, 000
	LWW Income to Mission	-	2, 000
	Committee Offerings	10, 400	8, 150
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 734, 670	\$ 719, 247
EXPENSES	Total Personnel	\$ 489, 585	\$ 474, 378
	Total Building & Grounds	135, 600	118, 100
	Total Adminsitration	110, 190	101, 300
	Total Education/Program	37, 950	31, 100
	Total Mission Giving	39, 300	35, 650
	TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 812, 625
RESERVE Add/(Subtract)		(\$ 77, 955)	(\$ 41, 281)

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN 2020



Mission & Service

- ✓ Partnership with Harrison St. Elementary
- ✓ Intergenerational Mission Trip
- ✓ Presbyterians for Earth Care



Congregational Life

- ✓ Devotionals Written by Members
- ✓ Broadening Pastoral Care
- ✓ Member Spotlights



Communications & Connections

- ✓ Flint Film Screening
- ✓ New Fellowship Events
- ✓ New Communication Plan



Worship & Preaching

- ✓ Online Lent Prayer Gatherings
- ✓ Additional Special Worship Services
- ✓ Worship Music Training Workshop



Children, Youth & Families

- ✓ Youth Led Connections to College Students
- ✓ New Events for Families
- ✓ Engagement Beyond Sundays



Stewardship & Financial Health

- ✓ Quarterly Face-to-Face Updates
- ✓ Year-Round Education
- ✓ Exploring a Legacy Giving Program

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TO FULFILL GOD'S PROMISE FOR FVPC

IMPORTANT NOTE

Full Report can be found online at
foxvalleypres.org/ministry-plan

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