

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**Ann Arbor, Michigan**  
**Strategic Plan—2017-2020**  
*October 17, 2017 revision*

***The intention of this Strategic Ministry Vision is to live into the Purpose Statement and Core Values.  
During the 3-year period, 2018-2020, we will intentionally discern the “next big” projects for Zion.***

**Guiding Biblical Verse:**

Mt 25:40—What you have done to one of the least of these, you have done unto me.

**Purpose:** Know Christ, Grow in Christ, Make Christ Known

**Core Values:**

1. Justice for all people and God’s creation
2. Energy to reach out to the unchurched with the message of Christ
3. Spiritual maturity that comes from intentional discipleship
4. Understanding the radical nature of God’s grace and living in it
5. Service to those who are in emotional, spiritual, and physical need

**Vision**—Zion is a faith community known for spiritual maturity, as well as a willingness to engage in dialog with other faith traditions and beliefs for the sake of leading diverse audiences to understanding the radical nature of God’s grace. Engagement with diverse audiences happens as we strive for justice and serve our neighbors.

**Ministry Result Areas (MRA)** Core Values Supported are in ():

- Education (3/4)
- Worship (2/3/4)
- Service (1/5)
- Leadership Development (3/4)

## Executive Summary of Goals

### Education

- Create a strategic education plan to reach all ages for enhanced faith formation that draws our local community
- Encourage Zion members to participate in at least one faith formation activity annually
- Launch a periodic “dig deeper” inter-generational lecture, discussion, and fellowship activity with a renowned speaker with invitation to the community
- Launch at least one “community based” education experience

### Worship

- Grow participation in online worship experiences and develop and implement strategies to learn who these worshipers are in order to deepen our engagement with them
- Explore and determine if a new worship service targeting millennials/college students could take place and possibly be off-site
- Expand the Wednesday worship experience as an entry point for people looking for community
- Expand diversity in attendance and leadership of worship experiences
- Increase the number of people in worship attendance
- Expand opportunities for faith exploration in worship experiences

### Service

- Achieve Service as the defining characteristic of Zion
- Identify local service opportunities where Zion can build deep, long-term relationships and those relationships receive the majority of time/attention/resource.
- Enhance Zion’s role as a leader in Ann Arbor among faith communities for Care of the Earth
- Work with community leaders to identify the “next big thing” for Zion
- Expand VBS to include an afternoon option with day camp staff to reach more from the community
- Continue to evaluate the needs of Zion’s community and discern new ministries to better provide for ongoing pastor care and ministry within the membership of Zion.

### Leadership and Stewardship Development

- Grow lay leaders to carry on and expand ministry
- Make Zion known, both within Ann Arbor and across the synod, as a place where youth leadership is valued and modeled
- Be the strongest congregational participant in the Synod Campaign
- Develop stewardship among members and fully fund depreciation and benevolence

## Goals/Options—

1. MRA—Education—Pastor Vicky
  - a. Goal—Create a strategic education plan to reach all ages for enhanced faith formation that draws our local community—*Plan complete by July, 2018*
    - i. Option - congregation-wide —Quarterly events for each age group designed to bring a friend—*Launch in fall, 2018*
    - ii. Option - congregation-wide —Each week an entry point for someone who is not engaged in long-term education program—*Begin January, 2018*
    - iii. Option - for adults and young adults (out of high school)—*Establish timeline within the Education plan*
      1. provide discussions and educational programs addressing big questions, no matter how controversial and no matter what doubts they raise;
      2. provide educational and discussion programs that promote Christian living, whether or not they cover traditional Christian content (*e.g.*, providing educational programs and discussion on both traditionally Christian topics such as Bible education, as well as other relevant topics such as violence in schools, family-planning, gay marriage);
      3. provide educational and discussion programs outside the walls of Zion (*e.g.*, at coffee shops, surrounding cities, other churches or meeting places);
      4. provide educational programs and discussions at Zion that are open to the local community and draw into the Zion building individuals of all beliefs and at all stages of their faith journeys (*e.g.*, opening Zion’s doors to programs that aren’t expressly Christian education, but that could be used to make connections, such as programs related to financial planning, beer brewing, parenting);
      5. continue the growth of small groups as a source of peer-led spiritual education;
      6. train and educate individuals in the Zion community to grow as leaders in the church and especially to lead in helping Zion to strive to reach this Strategic Ministry Vision (*e.g.*, being welcoming, participating in service, etc.)
      7. partner with other organizations in the community (*e.g.*, other churches, non-profits, education providers) in providing content and forums for education related to Christian living.
    - iv. Option - for children (age 3-5 grade)
      1. A program that draws families and
        - a. includes fun/vibrant facilities that provide an up-beat and welcoming space for children to begin their faith journeys;
        - b. encourages and facilitates interactions among families with young children in the Zion community outside the walls of Zion;
        - c. is led by trained and motivated teachers, helpers, and other supporters that are fueled by a culture of volunteering in Zion’s educational programs as part of an individual’s faith journey

- b. Goal—60% of Zion members participate in at least one faith formation activity annually by 2019
    - i. Option— measure baseline participation in 2017
    - ii. Option - Benchmark all the opportunities available for faith formation by March, 2019
      - 1. dedicated faith formation time for all generations
      - 2. congregational book reads—twice per year
      - 3. 2 monthly movies for discussion as a congregation
      - 4. Uganda video class—text study from week before.
      - 5. Small groups
  - c. Goal—Launch a periodic “dig deeper” inter-generational lecture, discussion, and fellowship activity with a renowned speaker with invitation to the community (start with two in 2018)
    - i. Option—create a marketing plan to engage the community
      - 1. Establish goal for number of non-Zion members who participate
  - d. Goal--Launch at least one “community based” education experience (coffee shop/pub theology or other) by the end of 2018 with a defined target audience
    - i. *Hold on this goal until it is determined what Samaritas is doing with Campus Ministry*
2. MRA—Worship—Pastor Jim
- a. Goal—Grow participation in online worship experiences by 15% per year and obtain contact information for 5% of the online community in order to continually engage them with the ministry
    - i. Option—benchmark current users by end of 2017
    - ii. Option—develop and launch marketing plan to attract non-Zion members by end of 2018
    - iii. Option—Grow engagement of online community with non regular attenders engaging at least one on-site worship service per year or submitting an online prayer request
  - b. Goal—Explore and determine if a new worship service targeting millennials/college students could take place and possibly be off-site—begin exploration in late 2018
    - i. Establish a task group for this to discern community needs and how Zion is positioned to address them
  - c. Goal—Expand the Wednesday worship experience as an entry point for people looking for community
    - i. Option—Launch an Alpha course with this group by January, 2018
  - d. Goal—Expand diversity in attendance and leadership of worship experiences
    - i. Option—include young/old, wealthy/poor, racial, and ethnic differences
      - 1. Benchmark in 2018 and show progress in 2019
  - e. Goal--Increase the number of people in worship attendance by October, 2018
    - i. Option—Benchmark attendance in 2017
    - ii. Option—Launch a marketing plan to increase number of first time visitors by 20% in the first quarter of 2018

- iii. Option—Host an annual hospitality workshop for key leaders to increase connections made in worship by September, 2018
  - f. Goal—Expand opportunities for faith exploration in worship experiences
    - i. Option—Determine whether to continue and expand dialog time at sermon
- 3. MRA—Service—Pastor Vicky
  - a. Goal--Service will be the defining characteristic of Zion by the end of 2020
  - b. Goal—Identify local service opportunities where Zion can build deep, long-term relationships and those relationships receive the majority of time/attention/resource. Possibilities include, e.g.
    - i. Coffee cart
    - ii. Jacket drive
    - iii. Project Grow garden
    - iv. Food and faith garden
    - v. Homeless community
    - vi. Mobile transportation
    - vii. Refugee Assistance
      - 1. Discern which are the key service activities by December, 2018
  - c. Goal—One additional international service opportunity is developed as a close partner (beyond Haiti)
    - i. Option—15 people per year visit
    - ii. Option – a quarterly virtual engagement happens
      - 1. Quarter 1—prayers of the church written and prayed by partner
      - 2. Quarter 2—special offering
      - 3. Quarter 3—Ministry outcome story shared at time of offering
      - 4. Quarter 4—Other
        - a. Launch in 2019
  - d. Goal—Zion is seen as the leader in Ann Arbor among faith communities for Care of the Earth by 2020
    - i. Option—one project per year is identified in the facility that enhances care for the earth
    - ii. Option—Every other year, host a Caring for Creation lecture that attracts at least 75 members of the community who are not Zion members
    - iii. Option—advocate in the community for creation care
    - iv. Option—take an energy audit
  - e. Goal—Work with community leaders to identify the “next big thing” for Zion by December, 2019
    - i. Option—create a plan for implementation after it is defined
  - f. Goal—Expand VBS to include an afternoon option with day camp staff to reach more from the community
  - g. Continue to evaluate level of care for Zion community and discern new ministries to better provide for ongoing pastor care and ministry within the membership of Zion.
- 4. MRA—Leadership and Stewardship Development—Pastor Jim

- a. Goal—Grow lay leaders to carry on and expand ministry
  - i. Option—Pastor Jim will mentor 15 Zion leaders per year to deeper discipleship (launch in Winter, 2018)
  - ii. Option—Mentored leaders will then become mentors themselves.
  - iii. Option—In partnership with the synod, Zion will host a lay leader academy each year
    - 1. Discern with the bishop in 2018
    - 2. First event in 2019
- b. Goal—Zion will be known in Ann Arbor and across the synod as a place where youth leadership is valued and modeled (Pastor Vicky)
  - i. Option – 6 youth will be mentored annually to deeper leadership with at least 2 who are not youth group leadership
    - 1. Launch winter, 2019
  - ii. Option—At least 2 youth annually will be invited/sent to discern potential gifts for ministry at a ELCA sponsored event
    - 1. Launch 2018
  - iii. Option—Vocational discernment will be a critical component of youth programming
    - 1. Launch by Fall, 2018
  - iv. Option—25% of all worship services will have leadership from youth beyond that of acolyte/crucifer
    - 1. Launch by fall, 2018
- c. Goal—Be the strongest congregational participant in the Synod Campaign
  - i. Option—Provide funding annually to complete a \$150,000 commitment by 2020
  - ii. Option—Invite congregational members to make a direct commitment to the campaign with a 4-week appeal utilizing synod materials and the bishop preaching on commitment Sunday in the Spring of 2018 or 2019
- d. Goal—Zion will develop stewardship among members and fully fund depreciation and benevolence
  - i. Option—Zion will consider participation in Stewardship for all Seasons (SAS) with the synod
  - ii. Option—40 families or individuals will consider Zion in their estate plans by December, 2020, in accordance with Zion’s Gift Policy
    - 1. Tactic—Wills/planning workshops offered twice per year
    - 2. Tactic—Newsletter articles and recognition for those who have included Zion in estate planning