

HOLY SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH 2006 LONG RANGE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to help Holy Spirit Lutheran Church articulate a vision of ministry for a 10-year horizon, the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) took on a project to work with the staff, committees, and congregation to evaluate the progress of the church. The previous long range planning effort in the late 1990's needed updating and ministry goals needed refreshing. Through congregational surveys as well as staff and committee working sessions, we identified goals for our ministry over the next 10 years. Throughout this effort, our congregation's Mission and Vision Statement guided and shaped the goals and objectives contained in this report.

We see Holy Spirit Lutheran in a decade as a place that continues to inspire us, where serving fills everyone, and love gives us hope. We see it as a beacon of inclusion, grace and love to our neighbors, who are invited to come and grow the circle and enrich us all as they add their gifts. We see it as a place of laughter and tears where lives are shared and hearts are filled for everyone, from kids to canes. We see it as a place where our preaching, teaching and music all enlighten and stretch our living. We see it as a place where Jesus and God and the Holy Spirit add to our lives, heal us and free us for love. We see it as a place where we become alive in new ways with each passing year and serve the world because of it. We see it as a place where the Spirit moves and a place where we want to be!

As the ministry goals took shape, it became apparent that there were a few overarching challenges that we would be required to address to enable the vision of ministry developed by our ministry committees. Based on those challenges, the LRPC developed the following recommendations for Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. The recommendations are prioritized to allow the most significant challenges to be addressed first.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Structure around an **every person involved** philosophy: Our ministry goals and community will thrive or languish depending upon the participation and involvement of our entire congregation (those who are members as well as other active participants). In order to embody a philosophy of "every person involved," we must be structured to accomplish this.
 - a. Create an operations committee, made up of council officers and key staff, to address the business and operational issues of our church.
 - b. Refocus the church council on the role of ministry coordination and congregational engagement.
 - c. Create an involvement coordination committee and talent database to help match the gifts of our congregation to the opportunities in our ministries. They will create visibility of ministry opportunities and excitement around being involved.
2. Establish a long range **staffing plan** integrated with the ministry goals set out in the long range plan: In order to fulfill HSLC's ministry goals, we must be strategic about the evolution of our church's staffing plan to accommodate the

- addition of more Christian Education staff, ministry staff for an additional worship service, and a parish nurse.
3. Create an additional and **alternative worship service**: The desire to add a new, alternative worship service to extend the ministry of HSLC has been discussed for some time and was top of mind in much of the input provided to the long-range plan. It is time to put focus and attention on this goal and to begin working through the logistics to realize it.
 4. **Evangelism** needs new focus outside our congregation: We have completed an extensive facility enlargement and renovation. "Build it and they will come" works in the movies, but we live in a community which may appreciate an invitation into a nonjudgmental, inclusive atmosphere. Our evangelical focus has been on our own membership and new members. It is time to meet our neighbors without being offensive or strident, and share with them a community where they can experience the support and fellowship we know already.
 5. Establish an **annual long range plan review** and critique by the church council and Operations Committee: In order to continue to shape and realize HSLC's long-term ministry, it is important to establish a standing annual meeting of the Executive Committee to review the long range plan, evaluate progress made against it, make course corrections and establish annual action plans to achieve the long range vision.

The overall consensus of the Long Range Planning committee is that in order to achieve these highlighted goals, and the detailed goals which follow, we must do two other things:

Pay off the church mortgage: One of the key accomplishments of the previous long range planning effort is our newly remodeled church facilities. With these new facilities has come a new mortgage. In order to be able to fund the ministry goals laid out for our next 10 years, it will be important for HSLC to quickly plan for and pay off our church mortgage.

Increase focus on stewardship: Being good stewards of God's gifts to us – our time, our talents, and our resources – is a basic foundation of how we understand we are to live our faith every day. Refocusing our congregation on the importance of stewardship in our lives is fundamental to achieving our ministry goals.

Mission Statement and Theology

After working with many different groups at HSLC to challenge the Mission Statement, the LRPC believes that the Mission Statement correctly reflects the congregation's vision of our mission, and that no change is needed at this time.

*We are called by the Holy Spirit
to proclaim and embody the
inclusive, compassionate and challenging
love of God
revealed in Jesus Christ.*

What does this say about our theology as a Church? We are not literalists with regard to the Bible, but rather hold to Luther's vision of the Bible as a manger which holds the truth of Jesus Christ. The manger may be made of flawed boards and have inherent weaknesses, but it can still hold the light and the truth of Christ. In the same way, we are compelled to become biblically literate in order to develop an understanding of the truth. Because the truth cannot be found in individual verses taken out of context, we value education and lifelong learning.

We find in repeated examples in the Bible that God works through the Holy Spirit to unite communities in which God can make relationships directly with us, God's imperfect and fallible creations. We are called then to proclaim the love of God. We need to embrace others, inside and outside our congregation, to share with them the inclusive love of God. We need to support those less fortunate, building up our community to help all to realize wholeness in the compassionate love of God. We need to proclaim God's love, grace and inclusiveness while we dispel perceptions that God's love and Christianity are exclusive.

This mission is firmly rooted in the theology of our congregation and our pastoral leadership. Our theology is centered on the Gospel, and recognizes that Christ includes all people in his ministry as we should. We do not practice other religious forms, but understand that God has inspired many different ways to worship and it is not our place to judge them. We welcome and respect all who visit our church. While we practice worship services in which the Sacraments are administered and the Word is proclaimed, we encourage people of other beliefs to come and participate and share their vision with us. In fact, we need to mentor and support all people by encouraging them to share their stories and to realize that they are doing God's work.

The ministries of the Church should reflect our mission and theology. When we poll the membership, we realize how important the theology is to their sense of community. These values define our action in ministry:

- The **inclusivity** of the congregation is a highly important element, especially as proclaimed in the sermon messages and in our fellowship.
- **Outreach** into our community through our ministries is a critical and ongoing area of focus for the congregation. Social Ministry and Evangelism to our neighborhood are high priorities.

- **Connections** with youth and young adults through their needs and concerns, to make Holy Spirit Lutheran Church a welcoming, supportive environment for all.
- **Education** for all age levels is one of our great strengths. Education promotes lifelong learning, develops expanded biblical literacy and encourages us to apply what we learn in our lives.

All of these **values** flow directly from our Mission Statement and theology. The inclusive, compassionate and challenging love of God is embodied in our Evangelism, Social Ministry and Christian Education ministries. The Worship and Music ministry is focused on the Sacraments administered and the Word proclaimed, in a way that attempts to reach the greatest possible diversity of people on an equally inclusive footing.

1997 Long Range Plan Review

The 1997 LRPC recommendations were generated to guide HSLC's actions for 10 years. A summary of those recommendations and their implementation teaches us about the value of long range planning. While not all recommendations were implemented, there are many which were fully realized. The inspirational vision of the 1997 LRPC was perhaps more grand than the church's ability to enact them; however, it served as an excellent guideline, and provides ongoing guidance for us today.

1. **Community involvement:** Maintain a spiritual presence in the Kirkland/Juanita area. We have maintained this goal, but with the new facility completed, we can be a larger community resource and be more proactive in reaching out to the community.
2. **Membership:** The 1997 plan foresaw the potential to grow the congregation from 1000 baptized members to 2000 in 10 years. Our membership is presently just over 1400. We experienced lower growth during the remodel construction of the last few years, but we should be able to expand now that the facility is complete.
3. **Finances:** The old \$170,000 mortgage was paid off. This enabled us to tackle a dramatic facility remodeling.
4. **Facilities:** The facilities remodel has been completed, nearly doubling our space. The benefits are evident when we seat 160 for dinner in the new fellowship hall or conduct classes for 80 in our auditorium.
5. **Staffing and management:** We properly identified our staffing needs and filled the positions. Although we experienced significant turnover in 2006, we continue to identify the staffing needs for our ministry and work to fill the vacancies. The constitution was modified to allow the staff and council to work more efficiently, but this has only been partially implemented. We need to continue to streamline the church operations and be more efficient with the volunteered time and talents of our congregation.
6. **Worship:** We planned to accommodate increased attendance by augmenting our facility and by adding an alternative service during the week. The additional service has not become a reality to date.

7. **Social ministry:** Social ministry has been a strength at HSLC for a long time. The goals of the 1997 ten-year plan were met in full. Our ministry extended to mission trips to Romania and Honduras, quilts to Katrina refugees and extended support for local efforts to counter abuse and homelessness.
8. **Fellowship and Evangelism:** One goal was to standardize the new member training and incorporation into the congregation. Many advances have been made, but significant work remains. The most significant success in Fellowship during the last 10 years was the implementation of Koinonia Kitchen. This ministry has grown to 100+ diners sitting down to a meal in fellowship each week.
9. **Every member involvement:** The 1997 long-range plan placed a great deal of emphasis on the “Every Member Involvement” program. The constitution was changed to formalize this effort. We should focus on this emphasis, expanding it to include all who participate in the ministry at HSLC.
10. **Education:** The 1997 plan highlighted problems with confirmation, and the need to extend adult education in spiritual as well as health and wellness issues for adults. Many significant improvements have already been realized. Many opportunities still exist to extend this ministry.

The Long Range Plan is an effort to visualize the future. If history is not always accurate, our attempts at forecasting are generally less so. The 1997 plan was extremely helpful in initiating and guiding programs which have yielded excellent results for Holy Spirit Lutheran Church.

Individual Ministry Values

In reviewing the results of surveys and brainstorming sessions, the LRPC believes the answers seem to fall into categories represented by a set of seven large ministry groups. The LRPC met with each of the groups and helped facilitate their efforts to create a ministry plan with formalized goals and action plans for achieving them. We started our planning effort with each ministry group reviewing the HSLC Mission Statement and the Vision and Core Values statement developed by that group in the last LRP effort. Specific goals for each area of ministry emerged as we worked with the groups. Below are the core values of our ministries (the goals and the action plans associated with them are attached to this document as Appendix A).

Worship

Worship at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church is the cornerstone of our spiritual life and is our natural response to God’s love. Worship is a time to meet with God and experience the mystery of God’s presence through the Word proclaimed, the Sacraments administered, music, and prayer. We are committed to worship that is a meaningful expression of the liturgical traditions and that is open and accessible to all people.

Education

Provide educational opportunities that encourage lifelong learning, promote spiritual growth, and develop loving outreach to the extended community in accordance with the mission statement of the church.

Fellowship

Fellowship at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church strives to create an inclusive, compassionate spiritual community as God intends. Fellowship provides opportunities through intentional programs and by fostering a climate of hospitality for members and non members alike.

Evangelism

Evangelism is the task of every member, committee and activity at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. Evangelism is much broader than simply recruiting new members; it is the expression and embodiment of God's unconditional love in human community. We, therefore, tell of what God has done in Jesus Christ and we live out that message in our individual and corporate actions. Evangelism is "doing" the love of God in our church, community and world.

Social Ministry

Social Ministry is evangelism in action seeking to bring justice, peace, compassion and reconciliation to the world. Specifically, Social Ministry feeds the hungry, clothes the naked and houses the homeless by providing direct relief and by working with society's institutions which share similar goals.

Health and Wellness

We are driven to promote increased understanding of health and wellness for our members and local community through education and practice.

Youth

The youth of our congregation and the community are valuable participants of our church and are also a vital part of the body of Christ in the world. We at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church are committed to providing opportunities for young people to grow in faith and to experience God's presence by worshipping, learning, serving, and enjoying fellowship with one another. The congregation is committed to helping our youth become confident children of God.

Lay Caring Ministries

We understand that many in our congregation may benefit from a personal interaction with trained individuals during difficult or challenging times. Our congregation is committed to identifying and training those who are inspired to this service and will provide ongoing support as needed.

Stewardship

Members of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church are faithful and generous stewards of the gifts that God has given us individually and as a congregation. We live out the expression of Christian faith in our daily lives and engage in proportionate giving of our time, talent and treasure. We are committed to sharing our abundant gifts in faithful response to God to further support the mission of the church.

Appendix A

Worship and Music

Goals:

1. Addition of a fourth service at a different time and potentially with a different format than the existing services. This service fulfills the preferences of some existing members of the congregation as well as attracting new members to Holy Spirit.
2. Implementing the support for “micro service” groups. This would allow small groups of people to join together in lay-led worship away from HSLC using materials provided by our pastors and staff.
3. Create an online community of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. This reduces the load on the parking lot, and enables the core theology of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church to reach beyond our walls.
4. Evaluate the potential for alternate religious use of parts of our facility.

Planning:

- Goal 1: It will take a year to plan the service and one to two years for the service to develop a regular following.
- Goal 2: Make the weekly service available online as well as background information and additional analysis of the sermon for devotional reflection within a small group.
- Goal 3: Create educational materials and opportunities for “live” broadcasts with a significant community able to engage topics in an online forum.
- Goal 4: Review requests for facilities use by alternate religious expressions that would be consistent with our Mission Statement.

Christian Education

Goals:

1. Continue to build educational programs for adults that promote spiritual growth.
2. Build educational programs that are relevant to the spiritual life of young adults.
3. Enhance educational programs for youth and children.
4. Help parents fulfill their baptismal promises.

Planning:

- Goal 1: Continue to expand the curriculum with engaging, thought-provoking, and relevant programming. Include a set of programs that appeal to the non members and use appropriate communication channels to invite and welcome the community. Identify and groom non-staff leaders who can facilitate classes.

- Goal 2: Build a curriculum that appeals to the 18- to 30-year-old demographic and draw this group back to the church.
- Goal 3: Hire one or more staff members (stipend, part- or full-time) to fill the jobs of Confirmation Assistant and Children's Ministry director. Create opportunities for tutoring in academic topics (math, reading, science, social studies, etc.) and mentorship in life skills. Equip adult leaders to be more effective and confident in their teaching.
- Goal 4: Continue and strengthen class offerings and counseling in parenting techniques. The curriculum should include skills for parents of teens as well as younger children. Educate parents on how to fulfill their baptismal promises through a combination of class offerings, mentoring, print material, and other media.

Fellowship

Goals:

1. Develop a program of consistent fellowship events.
2. Offer a variety of events that would involve diverse interests.
3. Develop activities that help new members make connections with current members.

Planning:

- Goal 1: Start with at least quarterly events and look for opportunities to add additional, quality events. Requires a part-time staff professional and/or volunteer to oversee and coordinate events. Long-range goal would be monthly activities.
- Goal 2: Add and/or subtract events to serve diverse interests. Prior to the end of 2006, conduct a survey to define types of events of interest to the congregation. Over the next year, evaluate current offerings for response and improvement. Work with other ministries to evaluate what events might be shared and avoid competition.
- Goal 3: Over the next year, research ways to connect new members to activities within the church. Connect them to the leaders of our ministries on a personal level.

General Overall Goal: Increase the size of the fellowship volunteer support group so that the events can be increased without overburdening the committee or volunteers.

Evangelism

Goals:

1. Place four articles per year in local newspapers as well as weekly activity information.

2. Contact every visitor each Sunday.
3. Define sponsor expectations for new member sponsors. Extend expectations to encouraging new members to attend at least one activity with the sponsor after they have been received.
4. Increase the size of the Evangelism Committee to 10.

Planning:

- Goal 1: Start in 2007, after having located a lay volunteer with public relations experience to help support press kit development and identify contacts with local newspapers.
- Goal 2: Develop and schedule a group of volunteers to sit at an Evangelism table before and after each service to talk with visitors. Develop a network of at least 12 volunteers for once-monthly duty. Start September 2006.
- Goal 3: Begin revised sponsor activities and initiate a growth in the sponsor pool immediately through the ministry fair.
- Goal 4: Utilize the annual Ministry Fair as focus to generate new members for the committee.

Social Ministry

Goals:

1. General Social Ministry: Increase congregational awareness of and involvement in social ministries activities immediately [covered under timeline below].
2. General Social Ministry: Increase HSLC benevolence giving to 10% of the church's total giving.
3. Local Social Ministry: Increase HSLC's involvement in addressing housing needs in the Greater Seattle area, including active involvement in:
 - a. LATCH
 - b. KITH
 - c. Habitat for Humanity
 - d. Tent City
 - e. Eastside Domestic Violence
4. Local Social Ministry: Organize a volunteer chore service program to help address needs of elderly, disabled and shut-ins in coordination with HSLC's parish nurse and Lay Caring Ministry.
5. National Social Ministry: Develop planning and implement preparation for congregational response to disasters:
 - a. Disaster team trained and available for dispatch nationwide in response to major disaster.
 - b. Disaster "activity" planning for specific congregation-wide response to the needs of those people and places affected by disaster (e.g., blankets for Katrina / Rita survivors).
 - c. Plan for congregational response to local disasters, including help or housing for those affected.

6. Global Social Ministry: Increase HSLC's global outreach spending and mission involvement to alleviate world hunger and poverty, including needs for food, shelter, education, health care, etc.
 - a. Support Lutheran World Relief.
 - b. Support Heifer International, Church World Service, and other worldwide programs.
 - c. Annual mission trip to areas in need outside the United States.
 - d. Church World Service.
 - e. World hunger.

Planning:

Goals 1/2: Start implementation immediately.

Goal 3: Start implementation immediately. No staff resources are required, but this will require increased benevolence funding and/or special fundraising efforts.

Goal 4: Organize in one year, implement in two years. Volunteer staffed.

Goal 5: Initiate training in 3-5 years; make team available in 5 to 10 years. This program will need a coordinator (volunteer) and funding for emergency supplies and travel expenses.

Goal 6: Immediate and ongoing. Part-time staffing for mission trip coordination and fund raising to support benevolence contributions and mission trips.

Goal 7: Part time in 2–3 years, full time in 5–7 years. Generate compensation for nurse and supplies by congregation and directed giving. This will require a facility with outside access within the church.

Goal 8: Implement in one year and increase education opportunities as resources are available from volunteer staff.

Health and Wellness

Goals:

1. Increase understanding of the health and wellness needs of HSLC and the surrounding community.
2. Provide healthful tips in monthly newsletter.
3. Provide educational experiences to promote good stewardship of health and one's relation to mind, body and spirit.

Planning:

Goal 1: Visit and dialogue with churches in the area that have a thriving health and wellness program.

- Goal 2: Delegate a volunteer to research and write tips in newsletter (completed October 2006).
- Goal 3: Communicate with local hospitals and community resources.

Youth

Goals:

1. Establish a youth and family ministry committee relating to all the youth-related ministries at Holy Spirit.
2. Create fourth worship service with contemporary style and music and strong youth participation.
3. Provide youth opportunities for mission and service experiences locally, nationally, and globally.
4. Create and increase opportunities:
 - a. Intergenerational.
 - b. Family retreats.
 - c. Route 56 (our fifth- and sixth-grade ministry).
 - d. Oasis: Establish a regular weekly high school "youth group" meeting night.
 - e. Confirmation - Continue to develop the most effective balance between education and relationship building for our program.
 - f. Young adult/post high school events.
 - g. Young children and their families.
 - h. Elementary age children.
5. Create and increase educational opportunities for all age groups:
 - a. Faith formation.
 - b. Bible study.
 - c. Mentoring.
 - d. Adult volunteer training.

Planning:

Since all goals interact with other ministries, it is necessary to ensure the equivalent of a full-time staff position to support and coordinate youth activities with other ministries.

Lay Caring Ministries

Goals:

1. Implement training program in alternate years to train additional ministers.
2. Increase size of the group within five years from the current 10 to 12-14. Maintain the size of the group to meet the needs of our congregation. Diversify the minister pool to better serve the community. Resolve overlap between communion ministers and lay caring ministers.
3. Continue and clarify the pattern for the Longest Night service.
4. Link lay caring ministers with Lutheran Counseling Network. Create and establish a ritual of separation for end of sessions with care recipients.

5. Train young people in “active listening” skills to become “natural helpers.”

Planning:

- Goal 1: Identify people who are trained and are willing to train others.
- Goal 2: Create a list of potential lay caring ministers with the help of the pastors.
- Goal 3: Work with Worship and Music committee to ensure that the intent of the Longest Night service is achieved.
- Goal 4: Develop a plan for partnering with Lutheran Counseling Network over the next six months.
- Goal 5: Work with the Youth committee to provide training class.

Stewardship

Goals:

1. Establish year-round stewardship program.
2. Increase congregational understanding of the stewardship.
3. Improve ability to connect members to mission opportunities.
4. Lead all members to higher levels of proportionate giving.

Planning:

- Goal 1: Starting in 2007 and continuing annually, plan and implement year-round stewardship activities that lead to increased involvement and commitment of Holy Spirit members.
- Goal 2: Starting in 2007 and continuing annually, use various educational methods to increase understanding of stewardship through the use of classes, sermons, written materials, etc. Improve congregation’s biblical understanding of stewardship and move beyond needs-based giving.
- Goal 3: Starting in 2006 and continuing annually, improve the processes that connect members with volunteer opportunities. Ensure all new members are given the opportunity to engage in activities they are interested in. Hold annual ministry fair on Rally Sunday in September.
- Goal 4: Starting in 2006 and continuing annually, educate and encourage all members to give consistently and increase their contributions proportionately. Ensure all are encouraged to use automated giving methods (Simply Giving). Educate appropriate audiences on charitable giving options.