

WOODLANDS COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE (First Draft)

A REPORT FROM THE SESSION TO THE CONGREGATION, SEPTEMBER 2006

INTRODUCTION:

In recent months the Session, through its Long Range Planning Committee, has been developing a strategic 5-year plan for WCPC. The work consisted of a survey by a recognized international church consultant, a 2-day leadership conference led by a distinguished and respected Alban Institute consultant, a two-session congregational forum, and recommendations from individual committees of the Session and the church staff. We have constantly prayed for God's guidance throughout this process, that we might hear His plan for WCPC, not our own. The results of all these efforts have been summarized into this one report. It is intended to provide guidance for us all as we strive to be an effective instrument of God's will here at WCPC and in the world around us.

OUR CALL:

We believe that WCPC was called 25 years ago to play a significant role in developing a distinctly Christian character in the new and growing community of the Woodlands. It answered God's call with worship services, community outreach, establishment of an early learning school, leadership in Interfaith development, and a warm and caring church home for newcomers to the area. Under the leadership of its first pastor, Charles Hendricks, WCPC grew a faithful congregation and a beautiful facility to carry on its mission in the midst of a rapidly growing population.

Today, we are working through a process to help us discern God's will for this church. We are in the midst of a well-established community that we faithfully serve. We pray that we continue to grow in that service. We believe we are hearing, however, a call to become a church filled with more passion for the living Christ, one that speaks to members and visitors alike with *PASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY* as it seeks to transform lives, one that is in the business of *MAKING DISCIPLES*. It is this call that is addressed by this strategic plan.

OUR GOALS:

This strategic plan has been identified as a roadmap because it shows ways to a distant place. It is not a rigid schedule of actions, results, numbers and dollars, but a picture of what lies ahead. From it, we hope we can all see where we are headed, and thus head in the same direction. There are many alternative routes and intermediate milestones, but there is a single destination – a spiritually driven, Christ-centered, Disciple Making Church.

Our goals or milestones are measured by outcomes, not numbers. There will be signs of progress, as well as detours, along the way. We will recognize major progress has been made when we see the following outcomes.

OUR WORSHIP SERVICES WILL BE INSPIRING AND RELEVANT TO A WIDE RANGE OF WORSHIPPERS. This suggests that since not all worshippers are drawn to God by the same service, we may need to have different services for diverse groups, but never deviating from our reformed theology.

A MAJORITY OF OUR MEMBERS WILL BE AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF A HOLISTIC SMALL GROUP. Spiritual formation and growth happens most often through personal relationships. Discipleship is most often learned through spiritual mentoring and modeling by someone further along the journey. A most effective way to facilitate these relationships in a growing church is through holistic small groups; i.e. groups that nurture heads, hands and hearts; groups where individual believers can find intimate community, practical help, and intense spiritual interaction.

MOST OF THE CONGREGATION WILL BE ENGAGED IN MINISTRIES USING THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFTS. God has given each person unique spiritual gifts. The intentional discovery and employment of these gifts enables us to accomplish His purpose. The joy that proceeds from such ministry will move our congregation to becoming a more spiritually alive church.

EACH OF OUR GENERATIONS WILL BE ENERGIZED BY THEIR GROWING DISCIPLESHIP. As individuals grow spiritually, they become more committed to following Christ in their daily lives, and in turn their relationship with God deepens. As a church, we must find ways to express the Biblical message to each different generation in a distinctive manner that calls it to Discipleship. In responding to that call, each of our generations will become passionate about serving the Living Christ.

WE WILL BE MEETING THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN OUR MIDST. We are surrounded by a large community of God's people, including many who do not have a relationship with Christ. We will be sensitive to the spiritual needs of those around us, and will be led by the Holy Spirit to share God's message of life in Christ. As our spiritual passion grows, we will find new ways to identify and serve the needs of these people, helping them to discover and claim the immeasurable gift of Christian love and Discipleship.

OUR TRADITIONS OF LOVING RELATIONSHIPS AND OUTREACH WILL BE FLOURISHING. WCPC has always been known for its warm, caring congregation and its commitment to mission and outreach to the community and the world. Emphasis on spiritual growth and making disciples will bring new excitement and energy to our mission and ministry, while maintaining our cherished identity.

THE ELECTED OFFICERS WILL BE PROVIDING EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP. It is easy for church officers to become focused on "buildings, finances,

and activities” while neglecting their call to spiritual leadership. For passionate spirituality to be a discernable characteristic of our church, the Elders and Deacons must share the responsibility with the Ordained Ministers for building a spiritual congregation and making disciples.

ACTION PLANS

There are innumerable things that can be done in the next five years to help us on our journey to passionate spirituality. It will be the responsibility of the Session, working through committees, task forces, etc., to develop Action Plans consisting of broad goals critical to achieving the above outcomes. It is anticipated that the broad goals contained in the Action Plan would be approved by the Session and be a part of this report to the congregation. Specific programs or activities, (many ideas for which were developed by the recent congregational forums), to achieve the broad goals would be used by committees as they implement the plan. The Outcomes and Action Plans would remain relatively unchanged during the five year time frame. Specific programs would be started, changed or stopped as indicated by experience. But the Roadmap would continue to serve as a guide until such time as Church leadership discerns a need for change.

Examples of Action Plans might include such things as Developing a Small Group Ministry, Adding a Worship Service, A Spiritual Enrichment Program, Expanded Facilities, etc. The total number should be limited to a manageable number, say 5 to 10, of the highest priority initiatives to allow us to focus our available resources. They could include conceptual timing and important factors to be considered, but should not include a lot of details. When completed and agreed by the Session, they would be inserted in this section of the Report to The Congregation.

CONCLUSION:

Prayer, ongoing discernment of God’s will for WCPC, and leadership focus on becoming a church filled with passion for The Living Christ are essential elements of making these plans a reality. The plans in themselves have no value unless they help us fulfill our essential purpose of Making Disciples. With these thoughts in mind, the Session unanimously approves these plans and commends them to the Congregation.