

A Vision for Putting Westworth's Mission Statement and Values into Action

Approved by Westworth United Church Board February 24, 2015

Our Mission: to be the hands and feet of Christ within Westworth and beyond

We Celebrate Christian Faith

We Build Community

We Reach Out

Preamble

Through congregational and board meetings and retreats in 2013 and 2014, we have prayerfully discerned God's mission and values for Westworth United Church. In the fall of 2014, the Board envisioned what God was calling Westworth to be three years from now and how we might move towards this vision. Since that time a working committee, known as the Visioning Group, has worked to develop a strategy for the Church which reflects that vision. This has proven to be no small task. It has involved gathering further information, input and ideas from members of the congregation, the board, committees and our staff. What follows is a reflection of the values, commitments, ideas and aspirations of Westworth for the future. It does not represent the ideas or wishes of individual members of the Visioning Group. Rather, it is an attempt to summarize and distill the information that we received from all congregants. It was approved by the Board, on Feb. 24, 2015, as a working document that invites continuous evaluation and reformulation. It is a roadmap for Westworth that will help guide us on our way to becoming a dynamic ministry.

This is a vision document. We have been guided by our three values of Celebrating the Christian Faith, Building Community and Reaching Out. Our Christian tradition calls us to worship God and develop our own personal faith through study and prayer. The letters of Paul urge us, as a church family, to care for one another, respect our diversity and deepen our relationships. Jesus' teaching inspires us to walk with those on the margins of society and together live into the peace-filled, just reign of God on this earth, as it is in heaven. We believe that, as we are faithful to these values, we will be blessed by the Creator.

As we put Westworth's Mission and Values into action, we depend upon the involvement and commitment of everyone. We are seeking ways to celebrate and embrace our relationships with God, with everyone who is part of the Westworth community and those who are part of the larger community – our partners and others. We have looked at our congregational life and believe that together we can find ways to share our common understanding of life together, which will allow us to try new things, support each other, and continue to be a faithful and dependable partner for those who need us. A church is only as great as the sum of its congregants' gifts and participation. We are blessed with a richness of talents, abilities and wealth. If we can engage all of these gifts for the ministry of Westworth, God will be able to accomplish through us more than we can imagine. It does depend on all of us—even those who believe that their contributions are minimal. God gives each one of us spiritual gifts that are all needed for the building up of the body of Christ. We hope that you will recognize that there is a place among the goals, strategies and actions for each of us to contribute in small or large ways. The leaders of Westworth need the support of the rest.

This is meant to be a working document, a road map of sorts, for the Board, committees and the congregation, to follow as we seek to achieve our vision for Westworth. The proposed timelines are not hard and fast milestones. Rather, they are a progression of actions that build on one another. As we journey along this three-year road, we pray that the entire congregation will catch the excitement of the vision, and review, discuss and evaluate it regularly and enthusiastically. We will continue these discussions in the weeks and months to come, so that the plan evolves to reflect the goals we have identified. God is already at work in our midst bringing new possibilities and projects into reality and helping us build and strengthen relationships with other communities. "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43:19)

The Visioning Group is comprised of Arlene Hints, Liz Loewen, Barb Magarrell, Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd, Norm Snyder, Shirley Watts, Barbara Wynes, and Frank Wynes. Please feel free to contact any members of the Visioning Group with your comments and questions.

Values	Goals	Strategies	Actions	Timeline	Responsibility
We Celebrate Christian Faith through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thoughtful and challenging worship Opening ourselves to spiritual growth Encouraging all to share their gifts Inspirational music 	3-year goal: Be a congregation that is knowledgeable and passionate about our Christian Faith through exploration, worship and engagement.	1) Increase opportunities for the congregation to engage in faith-building activities.	Begin to explore new ideas for worship and small groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold ‘talk-back’ opportunities related to selected sermons/services Place an information nugget on our web-site to aid in faith formation, renewed every 2 weeks Learn about other faiths and our spiritual origins through opportunities other than regular services – small groups or special events Hold congregation-wide consultation on change of time of Sunday morning service 	6 months	Worship Communication CE, & Outreach, Worship, CE, congregants Worship, Board
			Implement tangible change in approach to Sunday worship service and other faith activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop small group concept for Westworth, including leadership and initiate at least 1 new group Develop leadership and choose study topics for further faith development groups Continue Men's and Women's spirituality; Vary worship service and style 	1 year	Congregation CE, Adult Ed. Worship
			Develop opportunities that challenge congregants to look for God working in their lives, within Westworth and beyond. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make education a priority for ALL AGES regarding practices of faith (e.g. prayer, hospitality, stewardship, gratitude) to increase both our understanding of these practices and our ability to provide leadership Offer varied services with liturgy and music that encourage reflection on individual faith 	2-3 years	All Board Committees Worship, Music staff

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			<p>practices, how faith supports how we act in day to day life and how we think about social justice issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer ways for congregants to further explore/practice their faith through action. 		<p>CE, small groups</p> <p>CE</p>
		<p>2) Identify opportunities to use music as an approach to faith building (versus worship)</p>	<p>Take our music to the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities for groups to share their music in public places • Expand musical experiences for children <p>Promote small groups focusing on music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify people who would offer leadership of small groups interested in music • Establish and develop at least 1 group focusing on a musical subject <p>Involve congregants in selecting music for worship services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan at least 2 services per year that would include music suggested by congregation members • Consider a musical fundraising performance 	<p>6 months</p> <p>1 Year</p> <p>2 Years</p>	<p>Music Director with Choir CE, Choir, Music Program Staff</p> <p>Music Program Staff</p> <p>Worship, Music Program Staff</p>
		<p>3) Offer dynamic programs that help children and youth grow spiritually and fuel their enthusiasm for attending church school and/or youth group.</p>	<p>Consider other alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research various -church school and youth programs within the United Church and other faiths • Investigate resources offered in terms of alternate curriculae to encourage and enhance -learning and spiritual growth • Evaluate our current Messy Church program 	<p>6 months</p>	<p>CE, CE Staff</p> <p>CE, CE Staff</p>

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			<p>congregants to actively be part of the welcome and engagement of newcomers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an annual “volunteer opportunity” event that would allow everyone to find out more about what they can do within Westworth • Undertake an ongoing assessment and matching of spiritual gifts with volunteer opportunities • Actively share what we do through different types of media to tell the community our story (signage, social media, local media and especially our website). • Seek out congregants with specific expertise in media relations and marketing to provide assistance in getting our story told (e.g. media coordinator and liaison). • Actively communicate Westworth’s activities, mission and values to the larger community through regular contributions to community newspaper, Presbytery weekly news, creation of permanent posters and banners etc. • Hold special services at various times outside Westworth (e.g. Assiniboine Park, hospital) • Consider holding one or two -Bible studies or other groups at private homes 	2-3 years	<p>Fellowship</p> <p>Membership, Fellowship, Stewardship Stewardship & Nominating, Bd.</p> <p>Communication, Board</p> <p>Communications, Board</p> <p>Communications, all Committees</p> <p>Worship, CE, congregants, UCW</p>

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		(3) Ensure Westworth members feel engaged with the congregation socially as well as spiritually	<p>Build a more effective support network for those inside Westworth – e.g. for those currently housebound, ill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage community members to offer ideas for activities they would support to bring others together Create 2 new events to be held by September, 2015 (e.g. Movie night; intergenerational events) Explore how Messy Church programming can be best utilized to connect participants Involve the congregation in the development of a plan that will determine the best way to divide the congregation into pastoral care groups (e.g. cell groups, elders system, etc.) 	<p>6 months</p> <p>6 months</p> <p>6 months</p> <p>2 Years</p>	<p>Pastoral Care, Membership, Fellowship, CE, congregants Communications</p> <p>all Board Comm.</p> <p>CE, Membership, Staff</p> <p>Board and congregants</p>
<p>We Reach Out by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively offering our time, talents and resources Advocating for social justice Demonstrating compassion Living our commitment to service in all our relationships 	<p>3 Year Goal: Have greater understanding, commitment to, and involvement in our relationships outside Westworth.</p>	<p>(1) As a congregation, become more knowledgeable of our activities with our current partners and assessing those relationships.</p>	<p>Identify our current relationships and assess how those relationships help us meet our goals for reaching out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive input from all our committees identifying the relationships and partnerships they have with external organizations Identify the time commitment, work required and how many congregants are involved in the support of each of these partnerships <p>Identify the needs and strengths of our partners that we might work with them to help achieve their goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite participation from partners, where possible, to share their stories and talk about what our partnership means to them Seek congregational input to identify 	<p>6 months</p> <p>1 year</p>	<p>All committees</p> <p>Committees/group connected to these partners</p> <p>Outreach, Pastoral Care, UCW, others</p> <p>All congregants</p>

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		<p>(2) Determine our commitments and how we can utilize our resources to better achieve our goals</p> <p>(3) Promoting our involvement beyond our walls</p>	<p>places/projects that would positively contribute to our mission.</p> <p>Determine how the people of Westworth might best assist and support our partners, given the identified resources we have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize our commitments taking into consideration our human and financial resources, and determine whether to continue each of these relationships. • Offer opportunities that appeal to a wide range of congregants. • Identify our resources – time and financial - that could specifically be used to find volunteers and build support for those volunteers who might be willing to offer their assistance <p>Determine how to facilitate greater involvement in working with our partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively look for ways to enrich our relationships to include more congregation members (e.g. establish an action table, education events and sermons, widen opportunities for volunteer engagement and include well-defined objectives) • Decide which Committee(s) could help with the work of communicating and promoting what we do • Develop a central place where volunteers could look for opportunities within and beyond Westworth • Consider how to offer pastoral care which 	<p>1 year</p> <p>6 months</p> <p>1 year</p>	<p>Outreach, Board Stewardship, staff</p> <p>Outreach, Board</p> <p>All committees</p> <p>Board, Outreach, CE, staff</p> <p>Board</p> <p>Outreach, Communications</p>

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			<p>reflects our goal of reaching out to the wider community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage our youth to be leaders in advocating for social justice issues • Continue to have a dedicated portion of our Thanksgiving offering go to a food-related charity; a portion of our Easter offering to Special Appeals 		<p>Pastoral Care, Outreach CE</p> <p>Stewardship, Outreach</p>
			<p>Ensure Westworth is recognized as a congregation that is actively involved in advocating for social justice and peace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become more aware of issues in the community, province, nation and world which call for an informed Christian response. • Plan an annual “Outreach ” Open House to highlight outreach projects and invite the community. • Meet with our City Councilor/MLA/MP to explore community needs that Westworth might take on • Raise awareness and understanding of issues relating to social justice and environmental stewardship. • Develop a media strategy to promote our activities • Deepen relationships with our Cuban partner church 	<p>2-3 years years</p>	<p>Board, Outreach, Worship</p> <p>Outreach</p> <p>Board, Property, Outreach</p> <p>Outreach, Worship</p> <p>Communications</p> <p>Outreach</p>