



# Providence

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United Methodist Church

## **Strategic Plan**

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## Message from the Senior Pastor

Dear Providence Family,

It has been a joy working with you over the last seven months. I've spent much of that time listening and observing you do ministry. And I must say that I'm excited to have joined you.

Work on our Strategic Plan was well underway when I came to Providence. One of my best days since arriving here occurred on the August Saturday when our Strategic Planning Committee began to pull things together into the final plan. My observations that day were that: our Bob James (Church Council Chair) and Reverend Leigh Anne Hagerman (Executive Pastor) have done a beautiful job of leading this exercise; many persons, representing the whole of our conversation were involved; and there was much passion around the process.

Since that day I have been a part of the tweaking of the plan, and I must say that I'm thrilled with it. Of course, with the way the world changes so quickly now, any plan becomes less of a specific guide the farther we move from its inception; but our leaders have sought to take every precaution to look through futuristic lenses so as to prepare for those changes.

It is my prayer that we use this Strategic Plan to both challenge and guide us as we move forward: "Loving God. Worshipping Boldly. Changing Lives."

May we bless others with God's love and grace,

*David S. Melton*

Dave Melton

Senior Pastor

Providence UMC

## Who We Are

Providence United Methodist Church is the outgrowth of a Sunday night prayer group that met for the first time in 1953. The first worship service was held in January 1954 at Sharon School. The Rev. Frank B. Jordan, District Superintendent of the Charlotte District, preached the first sermon entitled "No Other Foundation." The first Sunday School classes were held on May 2, 1954. The name of the new church was selected by ballot from among names suggested by the members.

The founders of Providence intended to construct a permanent home for the new church on four acres of land located at the intersection of Providence Road and Sharon Lane in a growing residential area on the outskirts of Charlotte. The land was donated by the Charlotte City Mission Society of the Methodist Church. During the summer of 1954, plans were approved for a building containing a sanctuary and classrooms. Construction began on October 3, 1954. The building, a wooden structure, became known affectionately as "The Brown Building". The building and its furnishings cost \$85,000 and was first used for worship on January 9, 1955. The following Sunday, 181 people received certificates of charter membership.

In 1958, construction of a two story brick education building was completed. This building was later expanded in 1984. In 1962, the church began construction of an imposing, new brick sanctuary. In 1964, the congregation moved its worship services from The Brown Building to the new facility. The Brown Building continued to be used for Sunday School classes and scouting activities.

In 1995, the church undertook construction of a major physical expansion to serve its growing membership. The new addition included a chapel, additional Sunday School classrooms and a multi-purpose auditorium. The existing education building was renovated. Construction of the new addition necessitated the razing of The Brown Building 40 years after it was opened.

In 2014, Providence merged with St. John's United Methodist Church, a smaller congregation on Monroe Road, and one with whom Providence had a long-standing relationship.

Today, over 50 years after its founding, Providence has grown to a church of over 2,200 members on two campuses. An average of 720 persons attend the four Sunday morning worship services. Although Providence has increased in size, it has retained the friendliness and family atmosphere of its small church beginning.

## **Why We Need a Strategic Plan**

Strategic planning is the process by which an organization envisions its future and develops an action plan to achieve that future. Providence adopted a strategic plan in 2010 that would guide the church for the next 5 years. With the conclusion of this plan in 2015, a new plan was needed to discern God's direction for the next 3-5 years. The strategic plan is meant to help us both plan for the future, and to do a better job – to focus our energy, to ensure our members are working toward the same goals, and to assess and adjust our direction in response to a changing environment and the vision to which we feel God is calling us. A strategic plan can be thought of as a roadmap: it charts the direction for us as a church, and guides us as to how we are going to get there.

While we realize that no statement or document can speak for everyone at Providence, we feel commonly grounded in our love for God and neighbor, and our desire to see Providence continue to reach out to those around us. This strategic plan is rooted in an extended period of prayer, reflection, discussion, and planning among elected members of the congregation and the church staff. It is a reflection of our shared hopes and dreams, our common concerns, and the ways we can put our ideas into action. Informed by your contributions throughout the process, we trust you will find it as authentic, bold, and visionary as we feel God is urging Providence to be.

As you read through the plan, we invite you to do so with an open mind, positive attitude, and prayerful demeanor. We believe that Providence moves forward into a future with great opportunities.

## The Process and the People Behind It

According to the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (paragraph 252), “the church council exists to create and supervise the strategic plan for local congregations so that each congregation fulfills its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” This twofold function includes both leadership and management. Leadership is the visionary, “big picture” work that assesses critically where our congregation is at the present moment, where God is calling it to be in the future, and what resources will be required to move from our current reality into the desired future. Management is the essential “detail work” that must be accomplished on a daily basis to make the congregation effective and to fulfill the strategic plan.

Therefore, the 2015 Church Council, clergy and director level staff, and a handful of at-large members, became the body that formed the Strategic Plan Committee. We met together at least once each month, sometimes on Saturdays, beginning in February 2015. At these sessions, we participated in exercises designed to help us both understand where we’ve been, and where we want to see our church in the future. We performed a classic SWOT/O analysis – designed to assess our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats or obstacles.

We also conducted a congregational survey, which gave us further data on the hopes, dreams, and frustrations for Providence of those participants who took the survey.

The group felt our current mission statement is a good explanation to the world of our reason for existing. Therefore, it was not changed. However, our vision for our church, or where we wish to be in the next few years, was developed based upon the work we did together and the results of the survey. The group developed a vision statement that was further reflected upon and revised by a subcommittee. The vision subcommittee brought back a proposal for a vision statement that was then adopted by the committee at large.

From all these data – survey responses and workshop analyses – common themes began to emerge. It was from these common themes that our goal groups were formed. The goal groups also met together over the summer to identify goals and strategies within each ministry area. The work of the goal groups was shared with the committee at large, and compiled into this strategic plan.

It is our hope now that you will review this plan and prayerfully consider what God may be saying to Providence about where He wants to guide us.

## Survey Findings

In order to collect widespread input concerning the future of Providence, we conducted a survey of the congregation. This survey provided us with feedback in assessing who we are and where we see ourselves going, and gave us a baseline as we visioned into the future.

The survey was available both in hard copy format, and online. The link to the online survey was made available on our website, as well as emailed to all individuals on our email distribution list. Hard copies of the survey were made available at the Welcome Desk, and published as such in The Voice and the worship bulletin.

Below is a summary of the findings:

There were a total of 316 responses, or 42% of active attendees. Overall, this is a very good participation rate for a congregational survey. Very few youth participated in the survey, and respondents under the age of 40 were not well represented.

Although the vast majority of respondents reported being somewhat to very satisfied with Providence and would recommend Providence to others, a primary reason cited for hesitating is the lack of programming and events for families with children or younger age demographics.

In thinking about where improvement is needed in the church overall, striving for excellence, efficiency, and effectiveness in management practices was cited, as well as the need to evaluate ministry effectiveness in order to make adjustments. Ongoing communication regarding church activities, and our financial position, was also believed by many to need improvement.

In the Spirituality section, Providence was interested in knowing how we could help the congregation grow in faith. The top answers were:

Improve my experience of God in worship

Equip me to study the Scriptures (This also coincides with the survey statistic that reported that 19% of respondents have never read the Bible).

Equip me to pray

Connect me with an opportunity for meaningful service

Overall impressions of the church tell us that there was an overwhelming agreement that worship at Providence is engaging and challenging and the congregation likes the direction the church is moving. There is room for improvement, however, in the area of single adult ministries.

Improvement is also needed in communicating processes and policies of the church to its members.

In the area of Discipleship, higher priorities included having study groups dealing with contemporary issues, followed by study groups dealing with theology and the Bible. Of lesser importance were literary/culture groups and recreation/athletic groups.

In thinking about family ministry and how to get more families involved, childcare is an issue. Forty-one percent of those respondents who had children at home stated they will sometimes need childcare.

In the area of Mission and Outreach, respondents felt strongest about the community homeless needs. The three highest priorities for respondents for how we can be involved in community and social needs were:

- Providing us with ways we can volunteer for local community service organizations

- Giving money to support global mission efforts

- Giving money to support local missions

In thinking about the main campus facilities' general condition and aesthetic appeal, no major improvements were believed to be needed.

At our St. John's campus, the primary needs that respondents believed should be addressed were:

- Connection with the Providence campus

- Providing for basic needs of the community, and teaching English as a second language

- Education

- Facility Repair

The majority of respondents felt that the one thing we do best is worship and music, followed by being welcoming and friendly to all, and support of missions and discipleship. Respondents suggested that areas to be strengthened include a strategic plan/direction for the church, followed by missions, hospitality and fellowship, and youth ministry.



## Our Mission

The mission of our church is the reason we exist. Also known as a purpose statement, the mission of the church should drive the vision.

During our strategic planning process, we did not feel the mission of Providence has changed. We still believe our mission is: **to be a growing body of Christ, glorifying God and serving others.**

## Our Vision

A vision statement articulates where we want to be and what we are working toward as a congregation. It answers the question: where is God calling us? It is aspirational and will guide our activities over the next three to five years.

The vision statement adopted by the Church Council is:

**To love God by worshipping boldly and to change lives by enabling all to share their gifts.**

This vision statement was then further refined, with the focus on being both inspirational and memorable, into an adopted motto or brand statement:

**Loving God. Worshipping Boldly. Changing Lives.**

The Church Council believes both versions of the vision statement are useful. The first version will be used primarily for internal use as a strategic planning and evaluation tool. The second version will be used primarily for external audiences.

## Our Opportunity Areas

Throughout the strategic planning process, seven areas were identified as “opportunities” on which our church should focus its attention over the next few years. Each opportunity area identified goals or desired outcomes that guide us toward actions needed to achieve our vision. The areas are described in more detail in following individual sections -- Worship, Community, Communication, Serving, Giving, Discipleship, and Inclusivity.

## Opportunity Area: Worship

Worship is where we express God's worth to us in our lives. At Providence, we believe worship, in whatever style we prefer, is essential to create an atmosphere in which the word of God may flow and God may move in our lives corporately and individually. To this end, the following goals have been identified. Areas of responsibility are noted in parentheses.

Goal 1. Increase worship attendance 5% annually (Senior Pastor).

### Strategies

1. Provide a variety of meaningful worship opportunities that are creative, inspiring, relevant and accessible to people of all generations and diverse backgrounds while maintaining a unified identity as one Providence family through the traditional service, The Net, and St. John's Campus (Worship & Committee and Senior Pastor).
2. Establish a rotation of ministerial staff through all worship services, traditional and alternative, so that all Providence worshippers have an opportunity to become familiar with all Providence staff (Senior Pastor).
3. Use a variety of styles of religious music (e.g. , spirituals, jazz, early American hymns) within worship services and beyond (e.g. Hotdogs and Hymn Sing program at P.O.W.) (Pastoral Staff and Director of Worship & Music)
4. Develop cooperative worship opportunities with St. John's UMC congregation (Pastoral Staff).
5. Include lay people as liturgists, communion servers, musicians, speakers, or other roles in worship services (Worship & Music Committee).

Goal 2. Support and strengthen the Net (Worship & Committee).

### Strategies

1. Evaluate the current performance against the original goals and objectives established at the initiation of the Net. Annually identify strengths and address weaknesses in such areas as theological integrity, adequate and reliable staffing (both paid and volunteer), attendance, and financial stability (Senior Pastor, Worship & Music Committee).
2. Provide professional development and training for leaders (paid and volunteer) of The Net consistent with that provided to leaders of the traditional services (Senior Pastor and Staff Parish Relations Committee).

3. The Senior Pastor will work directly with The Net pastor to coach and develop sermon preparations to insure they are consistent with United Methodist teachings and beliefs (Senior Pastor).
4. The Senior Pastor and the Net Pastor will periodically rotate places on Sunday to expose the Net to the Senior Pastor, and the members in the traditional services to the Net pastor (Senior Pastor).

Goal 3. Provide meaningful opportunities for children and youth to participate in and lead worship (Worship & Music Committee/Children & Family Ministries).

#### Strategies

1. Consider new ways to include children of all ages in meaningful participation in and leadership of worship (e.g. day school worship, children's worship bulletins, children and teens as ushers, liturgists, and other leadership roles.) (Department of Worship & Music and Department of Children & Families)
2. Implement a review of the children and youth choir model and schedule to identify strengths and address weaknesses in an effort to insure that it is meeting the needs of children, parents and music staff (Worship & Music Committee).
3. Review children's worship readiness program in light of new worship opportunities (e.g. The Net). (Department of Children & Families)

## Opportunity Area: Community

In order to consider a church their home, individuals need a sense of belonging. Providence believes that our individual spiritual and life journeys are enriched by being in community with one another. This includes entering into loving and trusting relationships with one another. This opportunity area includes the ministry areas of fellowship, families, small groups, and single adults. Areas of responsibility are noted in parentheses.

Goal 1. Provide multiple opportunities to gather together socially and enjoy warm, Christian fellowship (Director of Discipleship & Evangelism).

### Strategies

1. By September 2016, establish and support a ministry for single, young adults that meets at least twice monthly. (Discipleship Committee)
2. By September 2016, establish and support a ministry for adults over 35 who are single or single again. (Discipleship Committee)
3. Increase the development of Life Groups by 3 per year. (Discipleship Committee)
4. Beginning in 2016, hold at least 2 church-wide fellowship activities each year. (Discipleship Committee)
5. Beginning in 2016, have three “pot luck” meals each year to encourage churchwide fellowship. (Discipleship Committee)

Goal 2. Develop a 3 year program of educating the congregation of the changing age groups within our congregation and community, with special emphasis on senior citizens. (Congregational Care Committee)

### Strategies

1. Beginning in 2016, identify the needs of senior citizens and others in need among our congregation and community. Communicate this information to our members. (Congregational Care Committee)
2. During the second year, hire an additional individual to assist the pastors in pastoral care . (Staff Parish Relations Committee)
3. Mobilize small groups to assist in providing care to aging members. (Congregational Care Committee)
4. Continue weekly visitation by clergy in retirement/nursing homes (Pastoral Staff).

## Opportunity Area: Serving

Serving is one of the primary ways we put our faith into action. Providence seeks to connect people of all ages with opportunities to serve others in a variety of ways. We also seek to use more efficiently our limited financial resources to create higher levels of impact and engagement with mission organizations and opportunities. Our passion is for both local and international missions, and these areas of focus to guide our missional efforts: development, basic needs (hunger, housing, healthcare, water, and transportation), and education. Areas of responsibility are noted in parentheses.

Goal 1. Engage 50% of the active membership in at least one mission activity each year (Missions Council).

### Strategies

1. Introduce at least one international mission trip opportunity in each year of the strategic plan.(Missions Council)
2. Organize and communicate multiple mission opportunities to small groups beginning in 2016, allowing them to connect and become actively engaged in hands-on missions. (Missions Council and Communications Coordinator)
3. Develop a methodology for reporting missions activity by the end of July 2016.(Missions Council)

Goal 2. Annually increase the amount of financial support for missions such that a minimum of 10% of the operating budget is allocated to Missions by 2018 (Finance Committee).

### Strategies

1. Publicize mission opportunities and the positive impact on individuals that we address throughout the budget and stewardship campaign process (Missions Council and Stewardship Committee).
2. Communicate mission successes and the impact on the community and the world (Missions Council).
3. Develop an annual funding plan for missions based on our budgeted amount, and provide the funds as needed throughout the year for the agencies we support (Missions Council and Finance Committee).

Goal 3. Use the financial resources of Providence to create higher levels of impact and engagement with grants to missions and also in support of Providence's hands on engagement (Missions Council).

#### Strategies

1. Focus local mission activities and funds in 5 key community needs: hunger, housing, healthcare, water, and transportation (Missions Council).
2. Maintain a minimum of five community partner agencies that support the key community needs identified above for the next 3 years, reevaluating each year, to enable the most engagement and impactful giving (Missions Council).

## Opportunity Area: Giving

At Providence, we believe that stewardship is a necessary component of discipleship. To this end, we desire to encourage, equip, and educate our congregation to recognize God's ownership of all we have, and to use these resources for God's glory. The manner in which we spend our time, use our gifts, and give financially to the Kingdom through the church is a reflection of our testimony and our relationship with God.

In ministry, it is not uncommon that needs exceed available financial resources. This is especially true at Providence as we continue to grow in both size and ministries. To accommodate this growth in ministry, we recognize that we must also continue to grow in our financial stewardship.

Goals in this area are categorized as Endowment and Planned Giving, Finance, and Stewardship. Areas of responsibility are noted in parentheses.

Goal 1. Increase the Providence Endowment to \$3 million over a three year period. (Endowment Committee)

### Strategies

1. Reinstitute and redesign the Heritage Society, with a goal of promoting the endowment to the congregation. (Endowment Committee and Executive Pastor)
2. Utilizing the Foundation of the Western North Carolina Conference and other resources, educate the congregation on ways to make a planned gift to the endowment. (Endowment Committee)
3. Hold annual workshops on planned giving, both on and off campus. (Executive Pastor and Endowment Committee).

Goal 2. Increase transparency and communication with the congregation regarding church finances (Finance Committee).

### Strategies

1. Provide a financial report at each church council meeting and inform the members of the congregation that they are welcome to attend. (Finance Committee)
2. Conduct and communicate the results of an annual audit. (Executive Pastor and Finance Committee)
3. Publish monthly Voice articles summarizing current financial statistics and trends. (Executive Pastor and Finance Committee)
4. Produce an annual report for the church, to be distributed as a bulletin insert, summarizing financial data and results for the year end. (Executive Pastor and Finance Committee)

5. Expand the ways in which members can make contributions. (Executive Pastor)
6. Educate the congregation in the various ways they can make contributions. (Executive Pastor and Finance Committee)
7. Manage financial risk by updating and documenting financial processes. (Executive Pastor and Finance Committee)
8. Prepare and communicate the budget to show missional impact by ministry area. (Executive Pastor and Finance Committee)

Goal 3. Increase the number of giving units by 5% each year, and the total dollar amount of giving by 4% each year. (Stewardship Committee)

Strategies:

1. Implement a program of financial stewardship for children and youth. (Director of Children's Ministries and Youth Pastor)
2. Preach a minimum of four sermons per year on financial stewardship. (Senior Pastor)
3. Publish a monthly stewardship column in the Voice and worship bulletin. (Executive Pastor/Finance Committee)
4. The Stewardship Committee will meet with 2 other large or similar size churches each year to discuss best practices. (Stewardship Committee)
5. Implement a focus group approach to stewardship, both to teach about stewardship and to hear feedback from the congregation regarding stewardship. (Stewardship Committee)
6. Educate the congregation about stewardship by offering at least one class on stewardship as discipleship each year. (Executive Pastor and Stewardship Committee)
7. Hold an annual stewardship campaign each year as a means of teaching the congregation stewardship. (Senior Pastor and Stewardship Committee)



## Opportunity Area: Discipleship

God still desires disciples today—ordinary people whom God can use to do extraordinary things. We acknowledge that we are always in a process of learning – learning more about Christ and what that means for us as His creation. We believe that Providence should partner with everyone as we all actively pursue fulfilling the Great Commission. Areas of responsibility are noted in parentheses.

Goal 1. Address the discipleship needs and opportunities of the congregation, as outlined in the congregational survey. (Discipleship Committee)

### Strategies:

1. Equip the congregation to study the Scriptures by providing short term Bible study groups throughout the year, including but not limited to Disciple Bible study (Discipleship Committee).
2. Equip the congregation to pray by offering prayer workshops or events annually (Discipleship Committee).
3. Provide study groups focused on Christianity and contemporary issues (Discipleship Committee).
4. Use POW as a forum for providing opportunities for discipleship (Discipleship Committee).

Goal 2. Enable people in their 20's and 30's to grow in their Christian faith (Discipleship Committee).

### Strategies:

1. Establish connection points for young adults via Life Groups, new Sunday School classes, etc. (Discipleship Committee)
2. Solicit young adult leaders to help plan and develop the connection points above and to promote them through their circle of friends (Discipleship Committee).

Goal 3. Involve 50 percent of active worshippers in a life group by the end of 2018. (Discipleship Committee)

### Strategies:

1. Hold Life Group fairs twice per year in the Atrium, beginning in 2016. (Discipleship Committee)
2. Begin a Quarterly Starting Point program to promote all discipleship opportunities including Life Groups (Discipleship Committee)

3. Encourage active promotion from within the existing groups (Discipleship Committee).

Goal 4. Educate the congregation about its responsibility in making disciples (Senior Pastor).

Strategies:

1. Identify persons with a talent for evangelism by conducting a Spiritual Gifts Inventory by the second quarter of 2016. (Director of Discipleship & Evangelism)
2. Offer evangelism training sessions to help develop skills and offer tools to increase participants' comfort levels in talking about faith. (Director of Discipleship & Evangelism /Senior Pastor)
3. Communicate regularly from the pulpit the necessity of following Jesus' directive from the Great Commission in accepting responsibility for making disciples. (Senior Pastor)

## Opportunity Area: Inclusivity

As United Methodists, “we recognize that God made all creation and saw that it was good. As a diverse people of God who bring special gifts and evidences of God’s grace to the Church and to society, we are called to be faithful to the example of Jesus’ ministr to all persons. Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the life of the Church, the community, and the world. Thus, inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination.” (The United Methodist Book of Discipline).

Goal 1. Create and celebrate an inclusive church (Senior Pastor).

### Strategies

1. Keep the Church Council and the congregation aware of the church’s commitment to racial/ethnic, and gender inclusiveness (Senior Pastor and Church Council Chair).
2. Identify the variety of racial/ethnic and cultural groups in our community. Share this information with Church Council and the various committees of the church (Communications Committee/Senior Pastor).
3. Review current ministries of the church to determine whether or not they address the needs and interests of all of our members and the people living in the community. Adjust ministries or create new ones as appropriate (Senior and Executive Pastors).
4. Publish the United Methodist definition of inclusiveness in the church’s newsletter and on its website. Promote the church as one that welcomes women and men of all races and cultures (Communications Committee).
5. Preach sermons on issues related to tolerance and inclusivity (Pastoral Staff).
6. Provide opportunities for fellowship at least twice a year that will help build an ongoing relationship between the church and diverse members of the community. Invite a speaker to talk about their experience.
7. Make a difference in the world by providing financial, volunteer, and other forms of support to projects and groups that work to end discrimination (Discipleship Committee).

Goal 2: Build a stronger partnership between the members of the Providence and St. John’s campus (Senior Pastor and St. John’s Campus Pastor).

### Strategies

1. Beginning in 2016, fostering relationships between Providence and St. John’s Campus shall be promoted through children, youth, music, discipleship programming,

for example Sunday school and service/outreach projects. (Director of Children and Families, Youth Pastor, Director of Discipleship, Director of Missions, and St. John's Campus Pastor)

2. Beginning in 2016, a designated group from St. John's and Providence will meet quarterly to brainstorm and recommend additional ways to build community between the two campuses. (Senior Associate Pastor and St. John's Campus Pastor)
3. Invite and encourage St. John's/Providence participation in events on both campuses – including UMM, UMW and other activities. (Senior Associate Pastor and St. John's Campus Pastor)
4. Develop core group of “go-to” champions on each campus to advocate involvement and shepherd people to events. (Senior Associate Pastor and St. John's Campus Pastor)

## Opportunity Area: Communication

Effective communication that reflects and glorifies God is essential to a healthy church. Providence desires to enhance its communication to its members, and especially to those outside our church. Areas of responsibility are noted in parentheses.

Goal 1: Create a Communications Plan for 2016 and beyond by end of May 2016 (Communications Committee).

Strategies:

1. Develop a communications calendar for the next 18 months.(Communications Coordinator)
2. Create a consistent look and feel of all print and electronic communication.(Communications Coordinator)
3. Utilize all available forms of communication to consistently deliver our messages inside the church and externally to the community (Communications Committee).
4. Utilize public relations opportunities to promote the church and its ministries (Communications Coordinator).
5. Identify and use the most effective means of communication with our existing members, the community, and for welcoming visitors and guests.[Communications Committee]
6. Promote church related events and opportunities to church members to encourage their participation and involvement.(Communications Coordinator)
7. Promote events and opportunities sponsored by the church to the community (Communications Coordinator).
8. Review appropriate communication topics and opportunities at weekly staff meetings (Executive Pastor).
9. Consciously promote the church and congregation within the community (Communications Coordinator).

Goal 2: Improve the internal communications process and methodologies (Communications Committee).

Strategies

1. The Communications Committee will assess the website on a quarterly basis and make recommendations for update and additional functionality (Communications Committee).

2. Create a weekly overview of special announcements and upcoming programs and events to be distributed to Sunday School classes – both by hard copy and in electronic format.(Communications Coordinator)
3. By Spring 2016, the Communications Committee will develop and share Communications policies and procedures to increase efficiency (Communications Committee).
4. Annually, the Communications Committee will evaluate best practices in Communications and make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of communications (Communications Committee).

## Conclusion

While other topics were raised throughout this process, these were the dominant, recurring themes extracted from our sessions. We attempted to identify what we share as a faith community and to set a direction that builds on our rich history. Ultimately, this strategic plan is a call to action. However, the plan is only as good as the energy and commitment of our congregation to implement it. We each play a part in bringing these goals and strategies to life.

While it is our hope that this document provides Providence with a general roadmap of where we want to go, it should be considered a living document which must accommodate changing circumstances as we move forward. We both recognize the existing challenges of ministry and embrace future opportunities. We invite you to do the same.

*God of our past, we thank you for Providence United Methodist Church and the vision of our founders and for the constancy of the members over the years who have made this church their home.*

*God of our present, we thank you for Providence United Methodist Church, which is now our home. We thank you for our church's open hearts, open minds, and open doors.*

*God of our future, we thank you for the Providence United Methodist Church to come. As we look to the years ahead, ignite our imagination, strengthen our resolve, and deepen our faith, not only to one another, but also to your voice, so that we might know where we are called.*

*Be with us, O God, and help us to be who you intend us to be. Amen.*