



VISION September  
2009  
PLANNING  
TEAM REPORT

*Saint*  
**JAMES**   
Evangelical Lutheran Church

# OUR FUTURE

Where is St. James headed?

Why do we exist as a congregation of Lutheran Christians?

What is God's mission in the world?

What's our vision for the future?

How will we grow?

How will we serve?

Those important questions can only be answered with prayerful thought, vigorous discussion and the active involvement of members, all leading to creation of solid plans of action for the future.

It is essential and healthy that individuals and organizations spend time carefully and honestly examining their current state, their strengths and challenges, their opportunities to improve and their potential to achieve higher levels of service and performance.

For almost a year nine members of St. James have served on the Vision Planning Team, carefully developing a foundation for the future so that our church can survive and thrive. The team actively listened to members' ideas and concerns through focus groups and a survey.

## THE TEAM OFFERS OUR CONGREGATION:

- A statement of our Mission, Vision and Values.
- A change in the way we are structured and operate as a congregation.
- Opportunities for members to be more deeply involved.

Sometimes vision planning teams create very detailed, specific three-to-five year plans for their congregations. The St. James Vision Planning Team believes that the planning process is the right and responsibility of a broader membership in our congregation.

# MINISTRY TEAMS

The St. James Vision Planning Team proposes, and the Board of Ministry approves, creation of permanent ministry teams, each with four to eight members serving rotating terms, who will meet monthly to develop action plans in several key areas:

- **The Worship and Music Ministry Team** will create and maintain distinctive worship opportunities.
- **The Spiritual Growth Ministry Team** will stimulate spiritual growth in families and individuals.
- **The Congregational Life Ministry Team** will address the ministries of hospitality to visitors, supportive care of members, and fellowship opportunities for everyone.
- **The Serving Others Ministry Team** will develop opportunities for members to provide Christ-like acts of love and service to others outside St. James.
- **The Communications Ministry Team** will develop effective communications of our congregation's activities to members and the community.
- **The Building & Grounds Ministry Team** will ensure the safety and vitality of our facilities.
- **The Resources Ministry Team** will consist of two or three committees, focusing on how St. James can generate sufficient financial resources to meet our needs.

The creative programs developed by the ministry teams will provide opportunities for all members to live out our mission of Receiving God's Love, Growing Together in Christ and Giving in Loving Service. The teams will be more member-driven and less staff-driven.

As a result, the ministries of St. James will better reflect the concerns, priorities and needs of the congregation. This is consistent with Martin Luther's understanding of the Church as a place where all of God's people participate deeply in and take responsibility for the mission and ministry of the Church. Spirit-led, member-driven and staff-supported is the way in which St. James will boldly seek out its mission in the world.



# OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

The team started with the basics: our mission, our values and our vision. These form the fundamental basis for who we are, why we exist and what we hope to accomplish in the years ahead. Excellence in ministry is only possible when built on the foundation of clear, understandable beliefs.

## MISSION

### **Receive – Grow – Give**

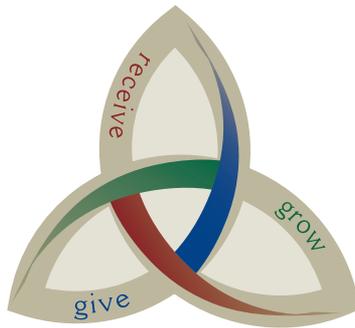
- Receive God's Love
- Grow Together in Christ's Love
- Give Loving Service

## VALUES

- Welcoming
- Faithful
- Caring
- Serving

## VISION

Led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church welcomes all to experience God through meaningful worship, fellowship, study and compassionate service to others.



# RECEIVE

**GATHERING** We celebrate God's love through inspiring, distinctive worship opportunities featuring exceptional music, engaging sermons, and the breaking of bread in a welcoming environment. We creatively incorporate Lutheran theology and liturgy in traditional, contemporary and diverse worship.

**COMMUNICATING** To help us "hear and understand," we offer compelling, consistent, and clear communication to engage members, welcome visitors, and operate more efficiently and creatively. We communicate the activities, good works and opportunities at St. James to members and the community proactively.

# GROW

**TEACHING** We "baptize and teach" as we stimulate spiritual growth of families and individuals by studying and sharing God's word in creative and engaging ways. We build strong Christians with a passion for living faithful lives.

**CARING** We "let our light shine" by creating friendly and supportive opportunities for members to share the joy and challenges of living as Christians in daily life. We create community for the entire family, as well as singles, couples, the young and old. We identify members who need help or support, and provide visits and counseling.

# GIVE

**SERVING** We "love our neighbor as ourselves," sharing our unique God-given talents and resources through Christ-like acts of support, service and generosity to others in our community and around the world. We "go and be disciples," initiating evangelical and ecumenical outreach programs to encourage others to join us, modeling God's message of grace, mercy and peace through active service to others.

**RESOURCING** We receive abundant resources in time, talent and finances to meet our needs and goals. We make existing space in our church facilities more welcoming, adaptable, efficient, and sustainable, opening the church building to community groups.



receive ≈ grow ≈ give

# AS WE GROW

As we grow, many of our ministries will continue, some will change and some may go away. Furthermore, ministry teams will almost certainly identify different needs and create new programs and activities to meet those needs. Much will depend on the level of interest and commitment among members of our congregation and their willingness to participate and serve. Our mission, vision and values will only come alive if members are committed, engaged and challenged to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

St James Evangelical Lutheran Church is a community called, gathered and sent by the Holy Spirit. Though we rely on God's strength, we are only as strong and active as its members make it to be. The Vision Planning Team strongly believes we are more likely to achieve our potential as a community in Christ if we are united in mission.

We can't do everything. We can't meet every need. But we can align our ministries and programs around our mission of receiving and growing and giving. In doing so, we become clear about our priorities as a congregation and focus our gifts, resources, and energies on key ministries and programs. A focused light has tremendous power; diffused light has no power at all.

Let our light be focused as we go forward in the name of Jesus our Christ.

## APPENDIX

Members of the Vision Planning Team: Sheri Doyle, Rick Fetherston, Kevin King, Karen Kretschmann, Jay Mattison, Dick Pederson, Bruce Roberts, Laura Smith, Karen Wolf and pastors Kurt Billings and Peter Narum. Pastor Randy Wilburn of *Gronlund Sayther Brunkow* served as a consultant/facilitator.

### MINISTRY TEAM GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

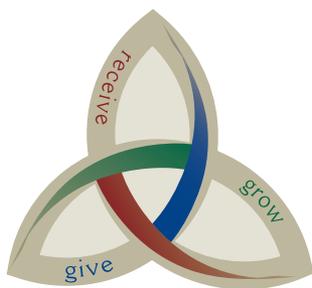
- Each Ministry Team (MT) will meet monthly on the designated Ministry Team Meeting Night.
- Members of the MT will serve two year rotating terms. Members may have their membership renewed twice. Each MT will elect a chairperson.

- The MT will complete the Ministry Team Reporting Form and submit a copy to Secretary of the Board of Ministry.
- Each team will have an annual budget account provided by the Board of Ministry and can initiate and execute programs and projects. The Board of Ministry will provide general oversight but grants broad discretion to the teams to meet the needs of our congregation and community most creatively.
- Each MT shall establish ministry goals and objectives in line with the Mission of St. James and with the approval of the Board of Ministry. Such goals and objectives shall be contained in the Bylaws of St. James.

## THANK YOU

The Vision Planning Team wishes to thank the members of St. James for your prayers, support, encouragement and honest discussion in this process. Our goal as your Vision Planning Team was to be faithful to God's leading in this time and place. Our listening to your hopes, dreams, and concerns was a vital component of the visioning journey. Through focus groups, surveys, prayer and discussion we sought to discern God's call for St. James, and to align our mission with God's mission in the world. The process has not ended, but only begun.

Our deepest thanks goes to God for the many blessings we have received at St. James over the years, for the opportunities to grow in faith and love, and for the the ministry of sharing God's love made known in Jesus Christ with others. May the Holy Spirit continue to bless our mission.



receive  $\approx$  grow  $\approx$  give



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Worship: Saturday 5:00 pm, Sunday 8:30 & 10:45 am