



**2012 - 2013 Vision Process  
Summary Report**



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## Introduction and Methodology

*By Pastor Gary Knerr*

As followers of Christ, it is our responsibility to expand the church and to spread the word of God! With this in mind, a small group was formed one year ago here at Christ United Methodist Church to help create a renewed focus, a fresh vision, a vision from which our future goals will be derived.

What follows in our report is twelve months of study and prayer with the hope of refining the needs of our parish and our surrounding community. From our studies we have compiled our ideas and thoughts with the intent of pointing us in a more focused direction, a new vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will no doubt require some degree of transformation here at CUMC.

Although we have proven ourselves to be capable of “saving” those people within our own church we know that to flourish and expand this simply isn’t enough. To grow as a church we need to seek out others, to meet them where they are both physically and spiritually, and to serve them.

### **Vision and Its Role in Our Congregation's History**

“Where there is no vision, the people perish,” King Solomon tells us in Proverbs 29:18 (KJV).

Imagine the little girl dreaming of walking down the aisle in her bridal gown....  
Imagine the soon-to-be parent visualizing the life of the child in its mother's womb....  
Imagine the *newly* minted college graduate with career goals to change the world....  
Imagine the entrepreneur's business plan to create a niche in the marketplace....

Each individual has a vision of what life will be like with his or her fingerprint intentionally left on the world.

Those personal goals and objectives are not unlike the plans that God has for us:

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11-13 [NRSV])*

Jesus, too, called his followers to a vision of God's reign by commanding us to love God and one another.

*The first is, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”*

*The second is this, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these. (Mark 12:30-31 [NRSV])*

He also commissioned us to make disciples of the world's people:



*Go therefore and make disciples of all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:19 [NRSV])*

At Pentecost, the faith encounters of individuals were profoundly transformed by the Holy Spirit into a communal/corporate/shared experience that became the gathered community of believers in Jesus Christ, the Church.

*So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about 3,000 persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together.... And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2:40-47 [NRSV]).*

Centuries after these words were written, in 1738, that holy vision warmed John Wesley's heart as he sought to, and did successfully, engage a vital piety among God's people to spread a scriptural holiness of heart and life through the land. Early in the next century, a Lebanon County, PA, farmer, Jacob Albright, attended a Methodist revival and received the vision to found and lead the Evangelische Gemeinschaft (Evangelical Association). In 1874, one of Albright's ministers, riding a circuit that began in Quakertown, founded a congregation on Orvilla Road in Hatfield Township that eventually became Christ United Methodist Church (CUMC). WORDSMITH THIS: ***[That group of Christian servants over the next 140 years in order to serve the growing gospel vision in Lansdale and its surrounding communities.]***

Over the years, CUMC's members have possessed the vision to:

- minister to the community through a thriving preschool that currently serves 125 families,
- share our facilities with a host of community groups on a daily basis,
- give 25% of the congregational budget to mission and ministry causes beyond our 10-acre property in Towamencin Township,
- and engage in the thriving ministries of worship, music, and Christian education to positively affect the lives of hundreds of souls weekly.

Now, it is time to cast a new, 21<sup>st</sup> Century vision for the body of Christ at CUMC.

### **About the Visioning Process**

The CUMC Vision Team includes 12 members (11 congregants and our pastor):

Don Albacker  
David Burns  
Meg Burns  
Elysa Dickinson  
Ken Gingrich

Sarah Guenther  
Aimee Heavener  
Jason Heavener  
Gary Knerr (Pastor)  
Joe Miller

Andrew Guenther  
Gary Schmouder

The Vision Team members were chosen from a pool of about 35 persons nominated in 2012 by CUMC's annually elected leadership council. Criteria for nominations were outstanding Christian character, reliability, and ability to represent the various age groups and constituencies in the church. In order to keep the Vision Team to a manageable number (10 to 15 members) a subgroup of the leadership council, along with the pastor, winnowed the pool to about half its original size. Pastor Knerr then approached the remaining nominees and invited them to join the new Vision Team. The above nominees accepted the invitation.

The Vision Team has been meeting monthly since September 2012. In early 2013, the team members openly entered into a covenant with each other and the rest of CUMC's congregation during a worship service. The Vision Team's meeting attendance and participation have been exceptional.

The work of the Vision Team consists of the following elements:

- Pray
- Study and discuss the entire book of The Acts of the Apostles
- Study current teachings about vibrant, healthy churches
- Review the church audit, recommendations, and strategic planning that were conducted in 2000 by the church consulting firm of Easum, Bandy, and Associates
- Review the congregation's Statement of Values, with the intention of updating the list to embrace common values for Christians while still including values that are unique to CUMC based on self-study at leadership retreats in recent years. (see page 16)
- Compile and review results of a six-week survey, conducted during Sunday worship services, in which respondents listed on Post-It notes their answers to the following questions, "Who are we in Christ?" and "Who do we want to be in Christ?" (see page 8)
- Engage the services of MissionInsite, a research tool specifically tailored to Christian congregations for a full study of the current and projected demographics of the area within five miles of CUMC's church property. (see page 11).
- Visit other United Methodist churches during a Sunday service and meet with their leaders to learn what those churches of similar membership demographics and larger worship attendance are doing that works best. To that end, Vision Team members visited four sister United Methodist churches. (see page 12).
- Interview hands-on community leaders to ascertain needs and common themes arising from their work. (see page 14)
- Communicate the Vision Team's progress through items in *The Evangel* newsletter and regular announcements at Sunday worship services.

## **Why the interviews with community leaders?**

Many churches confine their strategic planning to their existing congregation. However, John Wesley famously declared that “the world is my parish.” He did not confine his ministry to the area inside the four walls of his Church of England sanctuary. Luke 19:10 tells us that the purpose of ministry is to “seek and save the lost.” **Although we can “save” people within our church walls through teaching and preaching, we also need to seek out others, meet them where they are (both physically and spiritually), and serve them.** For this reason, we went to the community to reach people who might not normally join us here at CUMC. We feel this is the way to be the congregation God wants us to be. Neither John Wesley, nor our own congregants (according to our survey), want a myopic vision but, rather, a broader one that includes the larger parish community.

## **So, what is our vision statement?**

It is important to note that the Vision Team has not sought to alter CUMC's current mission statement, “Transforming Lives in the Love of Jesus Christ.” The team fully expects that a new, short-term vision statement will develop that captures the essence of this work of visioning; it will serve as a clear rallying point for CUMC's ministry in the near future. The Vision Team anticipates that our vision statement will change every few years, as we renew our goals or create new ones.

After gathering all of the information, Vision Team members compiled the results and reported them back to the group. The group analyzed and discussed the information and compiled a report containing references to details and raw data. The Vision Team will present the report to the church leadership at a leadership council and Vision Team retreat on March 1, 2014, where the results will be analyzed, vetted, and prioritized. Outcomes from that retreat will be offered to the full congregation via a printed report, publication on the CUMC website, and presentation at Sunday worship services.

## **What can we, the congregation, do to help?**

Most importantly, all of us must be praying. Our prayers are not to have God bless our good ideas as we come up with them, but for God to help us to be discerning, to be in tune with God's spirit from the start. This seeking of God's help guarantees that what develops will be blessed because God has been an integral part of the process from the beginning to end—not just invoked as an afterthought once we're finished.

The prophet Jeremiah reminds us: *Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me, if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord...* (Jeremiah 29:11-14a [NRSV]).

## **Envisioning our future**

What follows is the Vision Team report, which will provide an informative framework for a new vision to develop. In the words of St Catherine of Siena, “Be what God wants you to be and you will set the world on fire.”



May the flame that surrounds the cross of United Methodism in this community and especially fills the hearts and souls of CUMC, grow into an all-consuming blaze of warmth and light as we engage in ministry together.

## “Who We Are” and “Who We Want to Be”

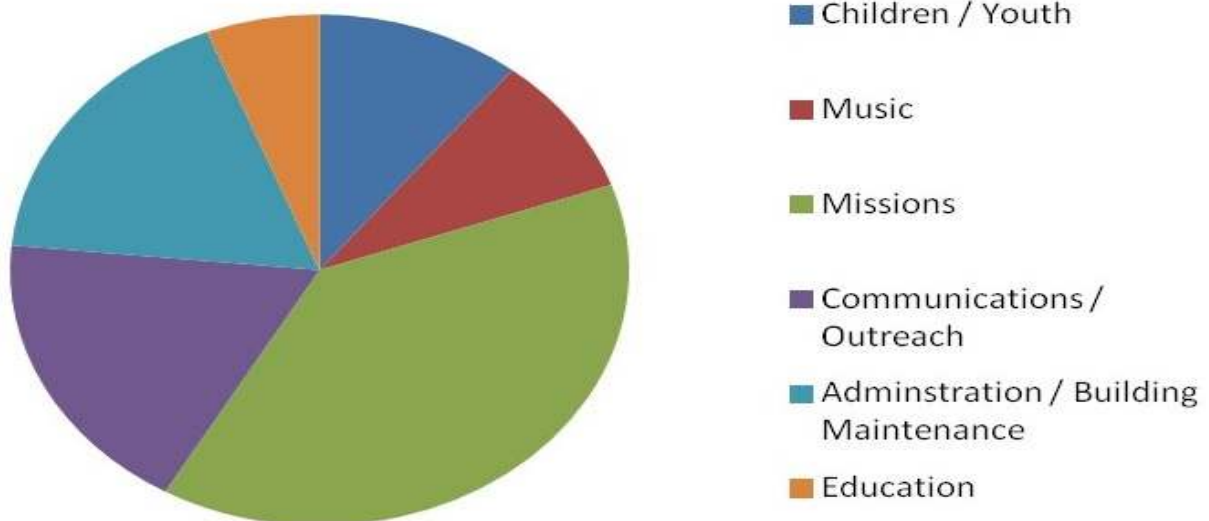
In spring of 2012, Pastor Knerr posed these questions to the congregation:

- Who are we in Christ
  - a) inside our walls for one another?
  - b) for our neighborhood?
  - c) for the world beyond our neighborhood?
- Who do we want to be in Christ
  - a) inside our walls for one another?
  - b) for our neighborhood?
  - c) for the world beyond our neighborhood?

Our Vision team looked at the answers provided to these questions in two ways. The first way was through concrete things that people are doing, or want to be doing, such as:

- Working with children and youth
- Participating in Music
- Participating in Missions
- Communications / Outreach
- Administration / Building Maintenance
- Education

### Who Are We in Christ?



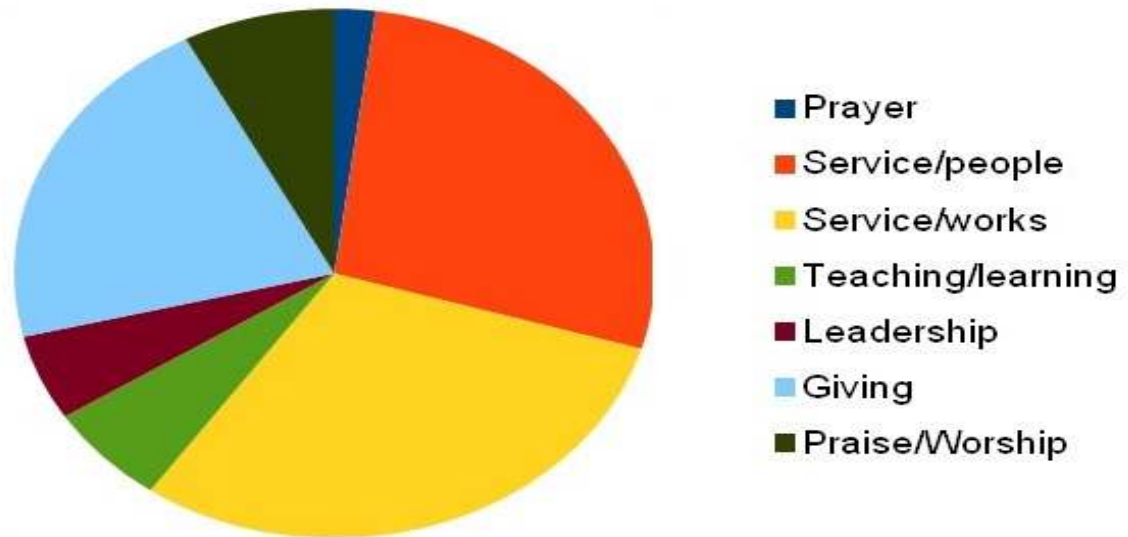
The second way we looked at the data was through more abstract outlets:

- Prayer
- Leadership



- Serving people
- Serving via works
- Teaching / Learning
- Giving
- Praise & Worship

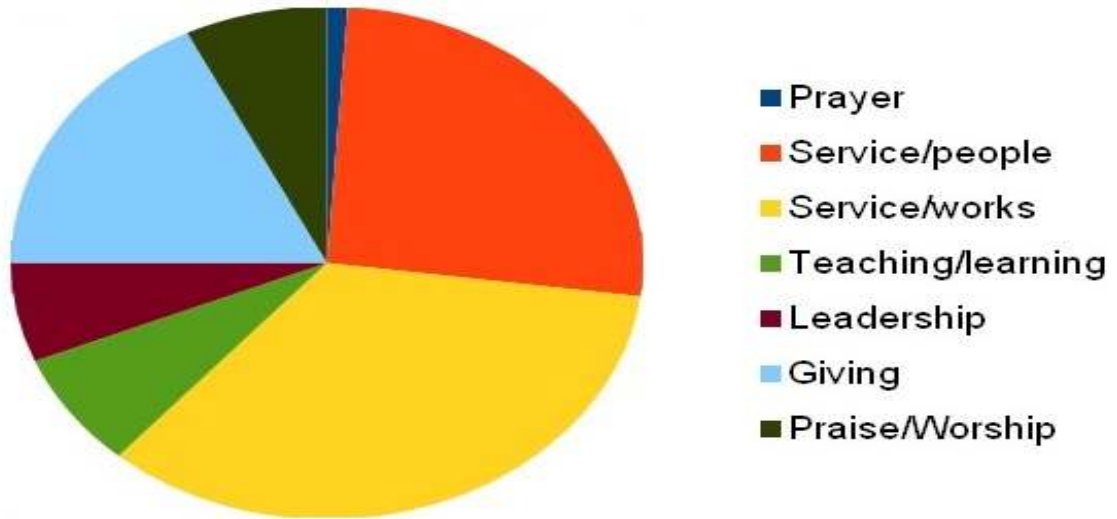
## Who Are We in Christ?



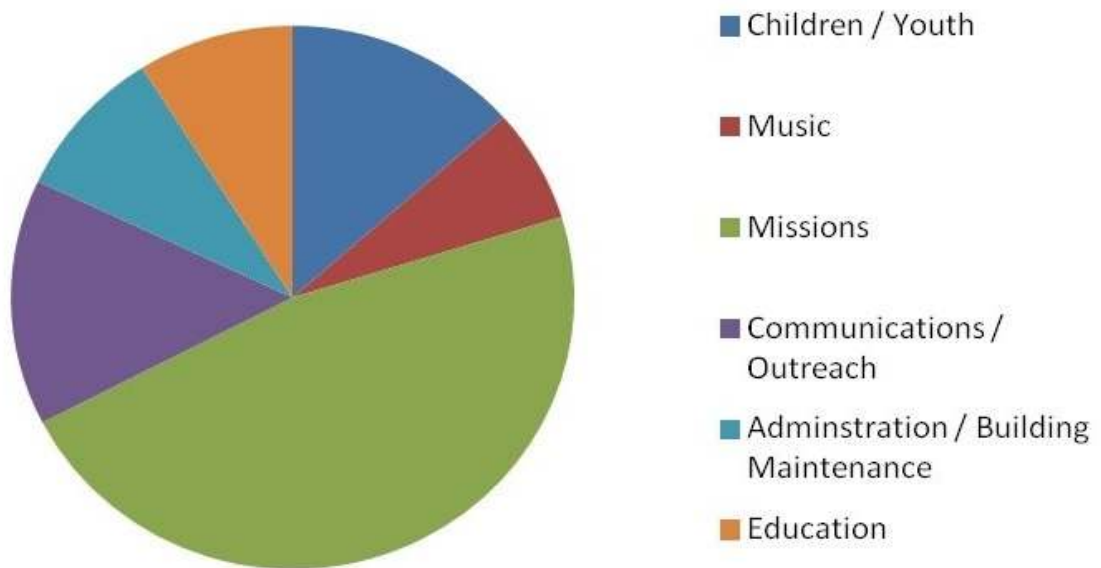
We found a high number of people who regularly engage in serving and giving to others.

We also found a high number of people *who would like to* serve and give to others.

## Who Do We Want to Be in Christ?



## Who Do We Want to Be in Christ?



In summary, we found that engaging in missions work and serving people directly continue to be of great importance to the people of Christ Church. **There is great continuity between what we have been doing and what we want to be doing. In many areas we are doing what we want to do, we simply want to do more of it.**

## Demographic Data

The Vision Team utilized MissionInsite.com to analyze households within a five-mile radius of our church. MissionInsite is a ministry tool developed by a United Methodist pastor, Reverend Tom Bandy, of the former firm of Easum, Bandy, and Associates, specifically for use by Christian congregations. MissionInsite uses statistical data such as income, household size, housing type, and occupation/ profession to determine which demographic segments (of seventy-one possible segments) comprise an area's population.

*By using MissionInsite, we determined that the five largest demographic segments for our area are:*

*"Booming with Confidence - Aging of Aquarius" (12% of our local population)*

C11 Aging of Aquarius: Upscale baby boomer couples in the suburbs

*"Autumn Years - Aging in Place" (7.2% of our local population)*

J34 Aging in Place: Middle-class seniors in the suburbs

*"Power Elite - Platinum Prosperity" (5.8% of our local population)*

A02 Platinum Prosperity: Upper class empty nesters in the suburbs

*"Power Elite - Kids and Cabernet" (5.6% of our local population)*

A03 Kids and Cabernet: Upper class married couples with children

*"Golden Year Guardians - Reaping Rewards" (5.1% of our local population)* Q62 Reaping

Rewards: Middle class retired couples and widows in the suburbs

In examining these top five segments, we found the following commonalities:

- **Wealth.** Most residents are considered to be in the upper-middle class or higher. (Four of the five segments are in this category; the fifth group is considered middle class.)
- **No children.** Four of the five segments do not have children living at home. (Half are empty-nesters; the other half retirees.)
- **Outreach.** Four of the five segments consider outreach to be important whether it is within the church or out in the community.
- **Internet-Embracing.** Four of the five segments use the Internet at least "occasionally".
- **Not Paperless.** Persons in three of the five segments still use paper for communication.
- **Audio Visual.** Three of the five segments value high quality audio and high quality presentation of worship. However, two of the five may find extra visuals during worship distracting.

## Church Visits

Four United Methodist churches (Hopewell in Downingtown, Asbury in Allentown, Doylestown in Doylestown, West Lawn in the Reading area) were visited by members of the Vision Team. These churches were selected because their demographics are similar to those of our church and because of their successful ministries.

The visits focused on multiple assessment areas to include: Facility, Worship, Hospitality, Communication, Music, Missions, and Building Disciples. Several questions were created under each of these categories and visiting teams provided answers to the questions based upon their observations and meetings with leaders from the churches. Information was compiled in a master Excel worksheet in order to filter responses and determine trends for the four churches.

Among the strengths that we found in the churches that we visited, most featured the following:

- Upgraded lobby that is visually and functionally pleasing, including a casual meeting space, newer flooring and color schemes, space to have coffee, signage to direct visitors to restrooms, classrooms, nurseries, bulletin boards that are uniform in appearance and contain relevant information, and a visitors station.
- Modern church sign that contains information about worship times and events.
- Well-maintained, inviting landscaping.
- A projection system in the Sanctuary.
- A sound system that is easy to manage, can be heard from all areas of the sanctuary, and can be heard from other areas in the church.
- Promotion and communication of missions work through local media (newspaper, radio, website).
- Hospitality programs that promote a culture of hospitality by all members at all times (worship, events, property usage openly include and integrate visitors, demonstrate friendliness to all worshipers, make strong initial impressions).
- Contemporary website with background information about the pastors and a welcome video by the pastor.
- Evening or Sunday School programs that connect with new Christians (e.g. Alpha program).
- Weekly dinners on Wednesday nights to bring members and visitors together during choir practice and other activities.

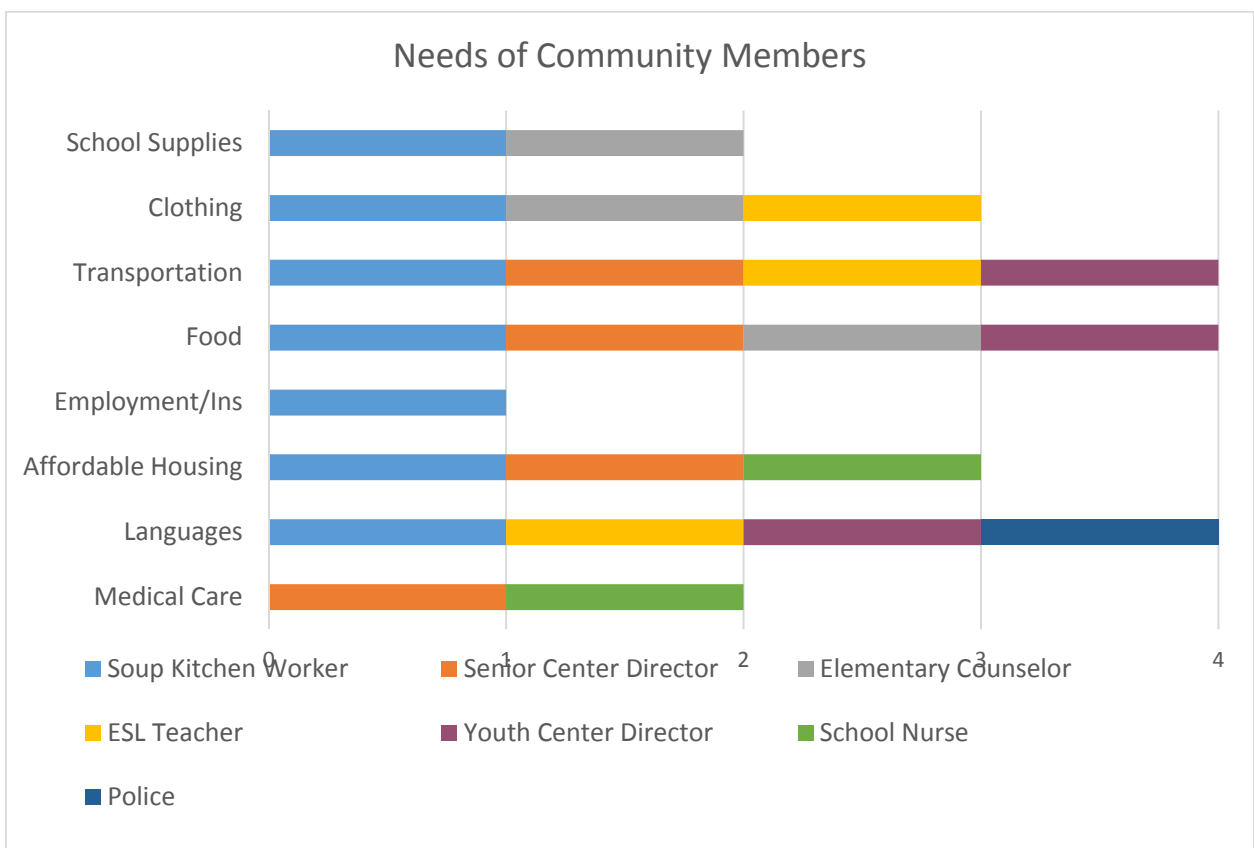


- Promote the youth program in the community and creating activities that bring youth from the community together (e.g. other churches have community basketball leagues at their facility).
- Contemporary music selections incorporated into traditional worship to connect with all members.
- Small group ministry that expands the number of small group Bible studies and provides informal fellowship opportunities.

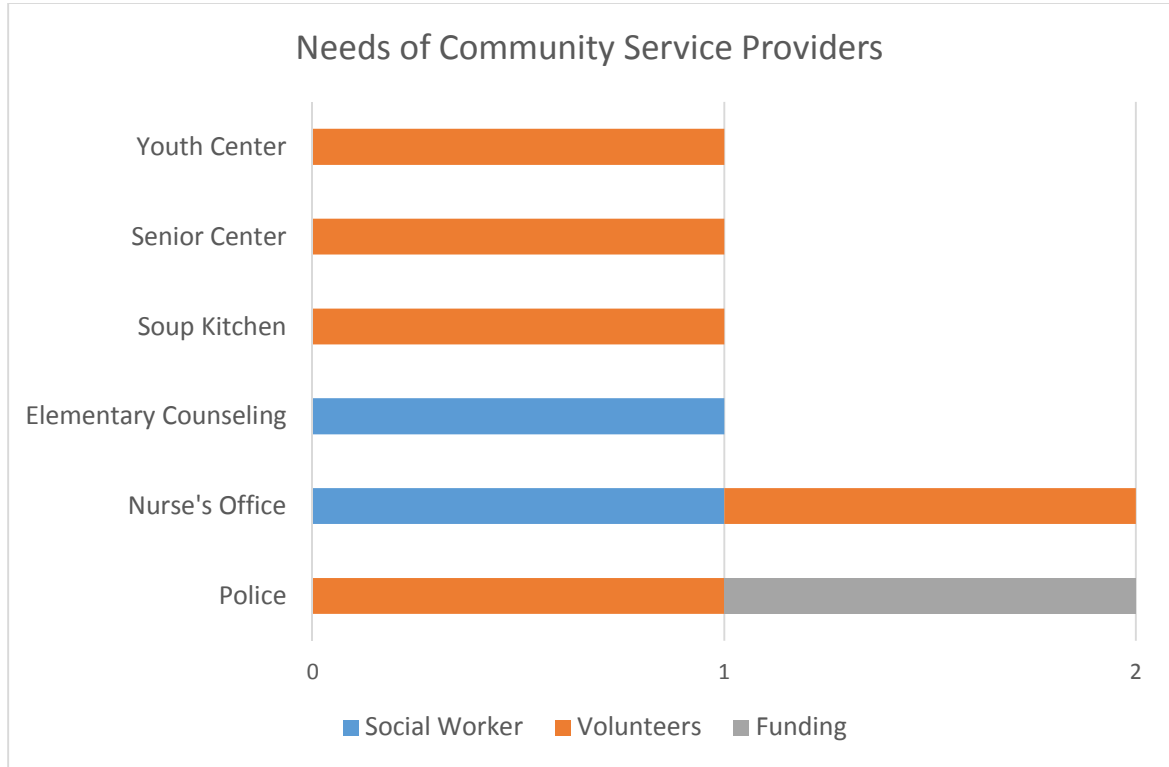
## Community Visits

Members of the Vision Team interviewed several community leaders who are directly involved in serving persons on a day-to-day basis in order to ascertain the needs of our local community. Among those the Vision Team members interviewed were a high school nurse, an elementary school guidance counselor, a police chief, an English as a Second Language teacher, an after school youth center director, a food pantry/soup kitchen social worker, and an active adult center director.

Food, Transportation and Language barriers lead the way as the most-mentioned needs of persons in our community. Language barriers, Affordable Housing and Clothing needs closely followed.



There is a strong need among local human service agencies for volunteers to assist with their efforts. Students of all ages would benefit from a school social worker to connect families with available resources.



## Value Statements

In addition to commonly held United Methodist values, our congregation has a high regard for these supplementary beliefs:

### **We value the Bible as the inspired word of God.**

2 Timothy 3:16. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

### **We value both corporate and private worship as a way to praise God and give thanks.**

Hebrews 12:28. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe.

### **We value prayer as the means to communicate with God, giving praise to God and ask for his guidance.**

We ask God to fulfill our needs and the needs of others. We ask God for healing and comfort for ourselves and for others.

James 5:13-16. Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

### **We value the role of music in worship to invite others to participate in worship, instructs us concerning the teachings of Jesus Christ, and councils us on God's will and Grace.**

Music can knit the many elements of a worship service into a cohesive and meaningful worship experience.

Ephesians 1: 18b-20. Be filled with the spirit, speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **We value service to others using the gifts that God has given to us.**

Using our gifts in the service of others honors God and gives life sustaining aid to those in need. As we serve others we should give God the glory for our gifts and our service.





1 Peter 4:10. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

**We value Christian Education for all ages.**

We follow the example of Jesus who taught the people and his disciples the Word of God. We spread the Word of God through sermon, Sunday School classes geared for all ages and through Bible studies during the week.

Deuteronomy 6: 6-7. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

**We value the role of hospitality as an integral part of our Christian faith.**

Hospitality is present in our worship services, Sunday school, youth activities and social functions of the church.

1 Timothy 5: 1-2. Do not speak harshly to an older man, but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers, to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity.



## How We Addressed the Above Information—What We Did Next:

After concluding the two-year process in which the vision team produced and published the preceding document, Pastor Knerr preached an early 2014 sermon series about the vision that was being developed, prior to the vision retreat.

Extending an invitation to youth and adults of the congregation, the members, leaders, staff, and friends of Christ Church convened at the Central Schwenkfeld Church Community Center on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. The all-day retreat was led by Bonalyn Mosteller, a capable organizational consultant who grew up a United Methodist, but became a Quaker. She came highly recommended after leading the board of directors at Manna On Main Street in their recent leadership visioning retreat.

In the morning, Bonalyn guided the group of 40-plus individuals to discern several areas where the church needed and wanted to move and grow. The Vision document findings were used as a basis for our discussion. Meeting in smaller groups that afternoon, the earlier work was distilled into three strategic areas: hospitality (including property needs); spiritual formation and growth; and serving others through hands-on ministry and mission. The three foci were governed by a new, tentative vision statement.

For the next six months, the church council and vision retreat members continued to refine the retreat's results, its strategy statements, and vision. The results, capping three years of prayer, study, and creative work follow. (See *In Conclusion*, pgs., 19-25)

In Conclusion:

**VISION AND STRATEGIES BALLOT**

Introduction – What we envision & will bring to life:

As a congregation moving forward in faith which transforms lives in the love of Jesus Christ, for the next three years our focus will: 1) have persons encounter Christ through the hospitality of our people & facilities; 2) grow disciples through ministries of spiritual formation & Christian education/learning; 3) send lives out to serve others by matching their spiritual gifts & skills with the needs in our community & world.

Mission Statement: Transforming lives in the love of Jesus Christ.

Vision Statement (for 2015-2017): Encounter Christ. Grow Disciples. Serve Others.

1) Encounter Christ (hospitality of people & facilities)

Our church is an attractive, welcoming, & safe environment, with facilities that are intentionally designed, updated, & maintained to encourage personal interactions, enhance spiritual relationships, & strengthen our ability to serve others in the love of Jesus Christ.

2) Grow Disciples (spiritual formation/Christian education)

Confident in the knowledge that God speaks & acts in & through each of us, we celebrate that the Holy Spirit is alive in Christ United Methodist Church. Through prayer, gifts, service, study, & worship, we personally encounter God in our lives. We join together to develop & deepen vibrant spiritual lives.

3) Serve Others (mission & outreach)

Create service opportunities that match skills & desires of our community.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I commit myself to this 2015-2017 vision on this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January, the Baptism of the Lord, 2015.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in 1, 2, 3 (Circle One)

If interested let us know the best way to contact you:

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ or E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Vision Team Name</b>	Facility Improvements/Hospitality
<b>Vision Team Chairperson</b>	Dave Burns
<b>Vision Team Co-Chair</b>	Doug Ellis

**Bold Statement:**

Our church is an attractive, welcoming and safe environment, with facilities that are intentionally designed, updated and maintained to encourage personal interactions, leading to enhanced spiritual relationships and strengthens our ability to serve others in the love of Jesus Christ.

**Current Status and Plans:**

Congregation input needed on the priority of enhancements followed by a capital campaign.

**Primary Recommendations from the Off-site Meeting:**

<u>Off-site Recommendations</u>	<u>Findings/Thoughts to Date</u>
<p><b>Lobby Expansion</b> Extend lobby out toward parking lot to create a room for fellowship and create a better entrance to the church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builder engaged for preliminary work</li> <li>• Meeting with builder for estimate, budget, township requirements</li> <li>• Report to ad council</li> <li>• Obtain previous land improvement plans for parking lot</li> <li>• Get congregation approval</li> <li>• Set up zoning meeting with township</li> </ul>
<p><b>Audio-Visual System</b> Improve the A/V system in sanctuary and possibly throughout the church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the direction of Steve Fallows</li> <li>• Tech Committee refining what new systems should do</li> <li>• Too early to contact contractors</li> <li>• Three years ago, audio system was \$75,000 and video system was \$95,000 (approximate, must add for inflation)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key Locks</b> Change locks throughout church with three swipe card locks on main doors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested the three swipe card doors be for office, main entrance and fellowship hall</li> <li>• All other doors have locks changed and keys kept in office – not distributed</li> <li>• Presented to trustees who will investigate cost and availability</li> </ul>

<p><b>General Improvements</b> Carpets, kitchen, restrooms, nursery, painting Maybe incorporated with lobby improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must pick chairperson</li> <li>• Organ upgrade discussion</li> <li>• Must present to trustees</li> </ul>
<p><b>Signage</b> Place signs inside to direct people to office, fellowship hall, kitchen, restrooms, nursery, etc. Look into replacing main sign outside.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must pick chairperson</li> <li>• Must present to trustees</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parsonage Basement Walls</b> Repair water leakage and cracking in wall</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustees are aware and will keep watch. No longer monitor by Vision team.</li> </ul>

**Vision team name** Spiritual Growth

**Vision team chairperson** Andrew Fallows

**Vision team co-chair** (volunteer needed)

**Bold Statement:**

Confident in the knowledge that God speaks and acts in and through each of us, we celebrate that the Holy Spirit is alive in Christ United Methodist Church. Through prayer, gifts, service, study, and worship, we personally encounter God in our lives. We join together to develop and deepen vibrant spiritual lives.

**Current Status and Plans:**

- Working to develop structure for Covenant Discipleship Groups (see description in Primary Recommendations)
  - By March 2015: Establish at least one trial group (5-10 members)
  - By December 2015: Finalize structure, rules, and format. Establish additional groups.
- Plan to meet with neighboring churches that run similar groups for inspiration and support.

**Primary Recommendations from the Off-site Meeting:**

<u>Off-site Recommendations</u>	<u>Findings/Thoughts to Date</u>
<p>Covenant Discipleship Groups</p> <p>Founded on the principle of spiritual accountability, groups of approx. 5-10 who meet regularly to share, support, and study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Weekday evening meetings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At church</li> <li>○ In homes</li> <li>○ In public places</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify leaders for groups</li> <li>● Define rules and structure</li> <li>● Designate a coordinator/leader of leaders</li> <li>● Materials/resources</li> <li>● Vision/direction/goals</li> </ul>
<p>More Sunday School classes on Spiritual Disciplines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spiritual Gifts: what they are, how to identify them, how to use them</li> <li>● Disciplines: Fasting, Prayer, Confession, Worship</li> </ul> <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Willing teachers: Pastors and laypersons</li> <li>● Resources: scripture, study guides</li> </ul>

<p>More Special events with a spiritual focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prayer Walks</li> <li>● Retreats: self-organized, coordinated with other UM churches, Emmaus/Chrysalis</li> <li>● All-worship events: participatory worship, such as extended Praise Band events, hymn sings</li> </ul>
<p>Prayer Meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Regular meetings with a primary function of joining to pray</li> <li>● Learn about prayer's purpose</li> <li>● Learn how to pray</li> <li>● Pray together - for one another, for the church, for local and world needs</li> </ul> <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Willing leaders</li> </ul>

**Vision team name:** Missions & Communications

**Vision team chairperson:** Sarah Guenther

**Vision team co-chair:** Judi Plummer

**Bold Statement:**

CUMC enables everyone in our church family to share their God-given gifts and talents as Jesus taught us. We identify service opportunities wherever they may be and match the skills and interests of the church family to those opportunities.

**Current Status and Actions Taken:**

- The Manna/CUMC community garden was begun the summer of 2014, as a direct result of the visioning process. It is already growing and thriving, bringing food to the community and providing an opportunity for congregants to be involved with a close-to-home mission project.

- Several other missions have been started or attempted:
  - Feeding Hungry Children
  - Crisfield Mission Trip
  - Summer Kids Meals – Did not have great turn out and was cancelled

**Primary Recommendations from the Off-site Meeting:**

<u>Off-site Recommendations</u>	<u>Findings/Thoughts to Date</u>
<p>Identify and enhance service opportunities inside and outside the church that allow for multiple layers of support</p>	<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Important to always have follow up &amp; updates on ongoing missions.</li> <li>-For example, have updates each season during worship on the food garden</li> <li>- Try to always involve the congregation with commissioning before, prayer during and follow up talks after any mission trip.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A person or committee to ensure communications and follow up for service opportunities</li> </ul>
<p>Identify and enhance fellowship opportunities inside and outside the church</p>	<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wednesday dinners</li> <li>- Encourage families to bring food and be social before choir rehearsals. Designate a space for this</li> <li>- Some fellowship may naturally be enhanced Sunday after services with the development of the narthex space</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop intergenerational activities, such as dinners, prayer partners, etc. Perhaps link youth and senior activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced space (part of another strategy)</li> <li>- People willing to head up fellowship opportunities</li> </ul>
<p>Develop a method for determining congregant's interests &amp; skills</p>	<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold a spiritual gifts Sunday school class regularly, bi-annually may be a good frequency</li> <li>- Getting an idea from a sampling of congregants may be enough to understand the strengths of the congregation as a whole</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sunday school teacher familiar with gifts class</li> </ul>
<p>Determine which communication methods work best for congregants &amp; adapt to help people know what opportunities we have</p>	<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This subject seems to evoke differing opinions and warrants more discussion, probably with communication committee</li> <li>- Do we suffer from or embrace the idea of being "all things to all people" in terms of communications?</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May be something for communications committee.</li> </ul>
<p>Specific congregant suggestion: Separated &amp; divorced support group</p>	<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unsure if there is enough demand to move forward with this type of group</li> <li>- Possibly partner with Bethel Hill</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We felt that this type of group needs a professionally trained facilitator. Possibly paid?</li> </ul>