



What's next

...for Christian Temple
We're listening!

What's Next for Christian Temple A Plan for Ministry 2010 – 2015

VISION STATEMENT

Christian Temple is a beacon of light on a Catonsville hill seeking to share God's grace from our doorstep to the ends of the earth

Out of our gratitude to God:

- ◇ We welcome all people to worship around the communion table where we experience the joyful, living presence of Jesus Christ
- ◇ We offer ourselves and our facilities as sources of life, healing and fellowship in our community
- ◇ We accept our call to grow spiritually, becoming servant-leaders in our fragmented world in the name of Jesus Christ

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'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.'

Matthew 5:14-16



VISION PLANNING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

In 2001, Christian Temple adopted its Plan for Ministry for 2001-2004. The plan presented a “Statement of Calling” and goals that were interwoven in the work of the church. Since that beginning, we have taken remarkable strides to improve our facilities, deepen our worship, and expand our ministries. Major accomplishments included establishing ministry teams around members’ talents and passions to complete important tasks, renovating and enlarging our facilities to meet more needs, and to provide access to all, and expanding our ministry in the community and with children and youth.

“Seeking and listening to ideas, concerns, and suggestions from members of the congregation was considered especially **important.**”

With construction and renovations completed, we settled in. We have had time to experience the outcomes of the many changes put in place – most very good, some requiring modification. The time had come to develop a new plan to guide our journey through the next phase of congregational life, to develop a roadmap to new and exciting destinations, to find our way in this complex, fragmented world. A Vision Team was assembled to present a plan that reflects the congregation’s views and responds to the needs of our current world.

FINDING OUR WAY

The Vision Team began by setting milestones that recognized the need to complete its work prior to Pastor Rick Powell’s Sabbatical. A plan was adopted to meet a team goal of maintaining regular communications with the Board, congregation, and our neighboring community. Seeking and listening to ideas, concerns, and suggestions from members of the congregation was considered especially important.

A review of the Plan for Ministry for 2001-2004 provided a valuable starting point for our discussions, revealing both goals and objectives

achieved and some to be carried forward. The book *Christianity for the Rest of Us* highlighted the success stories of a variety of thriving congregations from across the country, and provided impetus for adopting “signposts” as a fitting metaphor for our core values and the major thrust of the new plan. Also, opinions and suggestions gleaned from the survey completed by members at the January 2009 congregation meeting were analyzed and proved to be particularly important to this effort.

SIGNPOSTS

The Team's deliberations produced the Vision Statement, seen at the opening of this report, the plan, and the following Signposts to guide our ministries through the next five years.

Worship – The Sunday morning center of our life together, this shared experience brings the spirit of Jesus Christ to all of our activities.

Hospitality & Celebration – Making all feel welcome at Christian Temple and recognizing those who help us achieve success

Servanthood – Offering regular opportunities to be servants to each other, to our community, and to the world

Nurture & Care – Providing regular opportunities to surround others with love, especially during times of crisis

Transformation – providing regular, hands-on learning opportunities for children, youth, and adults to grow by encountering the Gospel story

The Arts – Placing a special value on the presence of music, art, and drama in our community of faith



This framework, presented in detail below, results from initial concepts put forth by the Vision Team, and the invaluable questions, comments, and suggestions from the Board and church members through responses to surveys, draft plans, open meetings, and numerous conversations. Chats with former church members also proved beneficial, as did college student and community survey responses. For that participation the Team is most grateful.

FOUNDATIONS

This plan also incorporates several over-arching principles to be recognized and considered:

- ◇ There is an *organic nature* to the signposts, goals, and actions. We and our congregation will be most effective and gain the greatest benefit by taking on the spirit that they reflect. We will become what it is that we do.
- ◇ Most of these efforts involve an *intergenerational* character. Our more successful programs, services, and activities typically involve participants of various ages working together. Especially in our times of rapid change, all groups can learn and benefit from the knowledge and experience of others.
- ◇ *Collaboration* will be the key to achieve these goals and objectives. Many reflect the interests and concerns of several current ministries. Others will reach beyond the realms of any of the ministries. Combining talents and interests from all parts of the congregation will be necessary to achieve greater success.

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Worship



Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Psalm 95:2

GOAL:

Provide a spiritual foundation for followers of Jesus Christ through exceptional and meaningful worship services grounded in our Disciples of Christ traditions.

OBJECTIVES:

- ◇ Offer worship services that celebrate the Lord's Supper, are based on scripture, are relevant to today's world, and that foster reflection and contemplation.
- ◇ Continue to incorporate a variety of music that draws on the talents of both the congregation and our broader community.
- ◇ Encourage a quiet period prior to the start of worship and incorporate opportunities for meditation.
- ◇ Ensure worship services are accessible to all.

ACTIONS

1. Replace or upgrade the existing sound system to enhance sound quality in the sanctuary and to allow people who are in other areas of the building to participate in the service. (Short Term)
2. Evaluate methods for audio-visual recording of services and other activities in the sanctuary to make them available for people who are unable to attend. (Short Term)
3. Investigate alternative methods to make sermons, services, and celebrations available through the internet and other media, e.g. podcasts, wiki, video, CD, DVD, and print. (Mid Term)
4. Explore opportunities for worship other than the traditional Sunday morning service to accommodate different schedules and/or worship preferences. (Mid Term)
5. Create opportunities for quiet meditation before and/or during worship. (Short Term)
6. Revise the communion distribution process to reduce confusion and enhance the depth of our communion experience. (Sabbatical)
7. Entertain appropriate options for disposing of the bread and wine that remain after communion to ensure the sacredness of the elements. (Short Term)
8. Continue to expand the diversity of music incorporated into the service. This includes, but is not limited, to the Nitty Gritty Church Band and the Youth Band. (Ongoing)
9. Intentionally involve college students in worship services. (Sabbatical)

Hospitality / Celebration

GOAL:

- ◇ Offer the warmth and hospitality of Christ to all who enter Christian Temple
- ◇ Communicate effectively with visitors, members and groups.
- ◇ Recognize and celebrate the contributions, successes and life milestone accomplishments of our members and participants



OBJECTIVES:

- ◇ Host more fellowship events for targeted groups: adults, singles, and seniors.
- ◇ Use lay leadership to personally connect people to church life.
- ◇ Remain vigilant in welcoming, including and encouraging the participation of all members and regular visitors to Christian Temple in church activities.
- ◇ Extend our hospitality to the community.

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2

ACTIONS

1. Explore ways to make our grounds and parking lots as accessible as possible to members and visitors, such as marking parking spaces for visitors, ensuring proper lighting, and improving signage. (Short Term)
2. Install a message board in the playground area that conveys information about Christian Temple and its activities. (Short Term)
3. Recognize and publicly thank annually those who **contribute to the success of Christian Temple's ministries.** (Short Term)
4. Expand the number of greeters on Sunday morning to accompany visitors and orient them to the service of worship and the various venues within the building. (Short Term)
5. Create an information kiosk in the Gathering. (Short Term)
6. Create a marketing and public relations team to promote Christian Temple and its programs to the community in more deliberate ways. (Short Term)
7. Explore expanding our ministry for hosting groups for overnight mission trips, including public relations. (Mid Term)
8. Develop additional opportunities for fellowship, **including men's groups, sports activities, and social events** for adults. (Mid Term)
9. Create a computer database of congregational talents, interests and participation. Recruit college or high school students to help with data entry. Use this information to match members to church activities. (Short Term)
10. Strengthen the Fall Ministry Fair to promote participation in the variety of activities open to all members of the congregation. (Short Term)
11. **Begin a "Do You Know" item in the Sower to inform the congregation of Christian Temple programs and services.** Continue articles in the Sower describing Board Meetings. (Short Term)
12. Plan some activities to appeal to college students when they are back from school. (Short Term)
13. Continue celebrations that recognize long standing members. (Short Term)
14. Clarify the organization of the programmatic life of the congregation. (Short Term)

Servanthood



Then Jesus poured water into a basin and began to wash the **disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.**

John 13:5

GOALS:

- ◇ Serve the needs of those suffering from poverty, crisis, and social injustice
- ◇ Build a community in which servanthood is second nature

OBJECTIVES:

- ◇ Expand and enhance opportunities for the congregation to be servants of God whether locally or beyond our threshold.
- ◇ Provide all age groups the opportunity to grow spiritually by serving others.
- ◇ Continue and expand ecumenical and interfaith opportunities for hands-on-mission.

ACTIONS

1. Provide adults, youth, and children regular opportunities to be in mission together. (Short Term)
2. Provide regular opportunities for college students and other young adults to participate in mission activities. (Sabbatical)
3. Provide mission trip opportunities for adults. (Mid Term)
4. Organize a group to serve, as well as prepare, meals for shelters. (Short Term)
5. Investigate ways to increase support for interfaith Habitat for Humanity builds. (Short Term)
6. Actively encourage other compatible nonprofit groups to use our facilities. (On-going)
7. Explore participation in Angel Food Ministries in Catonsville. (Short Term)
8. Implement a system that allows people to contribute to the church electronically. (Short Term)

Nurture & Care

GOAL:

Enhance the well-being of our members and the larger community through initiatives that enfold them in the grace and love of God.



OBJECTIVES:

- ◇ Establish Christian Temple as a source of meaningful, life-enhancing programs and activities that are compatible with and supportive of our Christian foundations.
- ◇ Continue to offer ministry to people in times of special need.
- ◇ Create a natural setting that enables individuals to incorporate the beauty and **peacefulness of God's earth in prayerful reflection and meditation.**
- ◇ Support local efforts to meet personal and community food-shelter needs.

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

1 Corinthians 12:26

ACTIONS

1. Identify ways the Shepherds and Welcoming programs might best be strengthened. (Sabbatical)
2. Develop materials that list and describe Christian Temple's **organizational structure, volunteer opportunities, services, programs, and activities.** Include that information on our website and in brochure-format, and be prepared to present the information in alternative media for those with disabilities. (Short Term)
3. Mobilize resources and services to provide assistance to Church and community members with special temporary or long-term needs, coordinating with existing ministries where possible: identify the range of potential services, determine resources required, and recruit volunteers to provide services. Implement feasible elements of the program in the short term, and continue to expand the program as resources allow. (Short Term and On-going)
4. Establish a series of stimulating social, intellectual, artistic, and personal development programs of interest to members of the congregation and community that would help establish Christian Temple as a destination of choice for social interaction. (Mid Term)
5. Locate, design, and install a labyrinth/memorial garden for prayerful reflection and meditation. (Mid Term)
6. Explore the feasibility of creating a community vegetable and/or fruit garden with local organizations. (i.e. Collect experiences from coordinators of existing programs. May require meeting with Baltimore County officials.) (Mid Term)

Transformation



Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2

GOAL:

- ◇ Provide learning opportunities for children, youth and adults to grow individually and collectively by encountering the Gospel Story
- ◇ Learn about our own faith through the faith traditions of others

OBJECTIVES:

- ◇ Balance traditional and innovative learning opportunities for everyone .
- ◇ Improve and maintain learning spaces.
- ◇ Participate in ecumenical and interfaith activities.
- ◇ Provide opportunities to train potential leaders and encourage active participation in church life.

ACTIONS

1. Review the Sunday morning schedule and educational activities for the purpose of strengthening faith in Jesus Christ by involving more children and adults in deeper and better ways. (Sabbatical)
2. Bring ecumenical activities to life by encouraging participation in existing programs offered in our area and by creating new programs that promote Christian unity. (On-going)
3. Foster inter-faith appreciation, involvement and service. For example, inter-faith Habitat programs, symbolic (financial) gifts to appropriate agencies, Seder dinners, and worship opportunities. (Short Term and On-going)
4. Explore alternative offerings, scheduling, and locations for Sunday school and other educational programs for all ages that support increased participation and spiritual growth. Consider online instruction programs, use of electronic media for activities and programs, and tie-ins with other existing events. (On-going)
5. Facilitate the development of our CYF youth and their programs and activities by completing their second-floor lounge. (Sabbatical)
6. Encourage mission and educational activities jointly planned, presented, and attended by our youth and adult members. (On-going)
7. Continue to instill in our members an awareness and appreciation of the history and traditions of our Christian faith through experiential programs such as Market Place, Journey to Bethlehem, Stations of the Cross and others yet to be developed. (On-going)
8. Provide and designate more inviting, effective, and better-equipped spaces for elementary Sunday school, Children at Worship, and other similar programs. (Mid Term)
9. Provide regular training opportunities for teachers. (On-going)
10. Encourage involvement of high school and college students as teachers and students in Christian Education Ministry. (On-going)
11. Encourage involvement of external community members as teachers in Christian Education Ministry. (On-going)

The Arts

GOAL:

Inspire and share artistic gifts to better serve and glorify God.



OBJECTIVES:

- ◇ Incorporate a rich diversity of arts in congregational life.
- ◇ Create multiple opportunities to develop and share artistic gifts and talents.

Praise God with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!

Psalm 150:3-4

ACTIONS

1. Create a Ministry Council to coordinate Arts efforts of the church. This council will join the other existing councils. (Sabbatical)
2. Arts Ministry Council will both evaluate existing programs and look for new opportunities based on interest and need. (Short term)
3. Provide instructional opportunities for those who are interested in participating in Arts related activities, including poetry, music (both contemporary and traditional), drama, instrumental, visual, folk art, and dance. (Mid Term)
4. Encourage talents and gifts such as quilt making, art exhibits, cooking, etc. in on-going activities. (On-going)
5. Offer periodic, open rehearsals hosted by the **congregation's performing ensembles. (Short Term)**
6. Establish dedicated arts spaces/galleries. (Mid Term)
7. Use Kaleidoscope as a vehicle to introduce other arts activities to the congregation. (On-going)
8. Integrate Kaleidoscope activities and artwork into the life of the church. (Short Term)
9. Incorporate art and poetry in church publications. (On-going)
10. Sponsor and facilitate arts-oriented trips. (On-going)
11. Create contemporary art opportunities such as Living Theater experiences. (Mid Term)

**C H R I S T I A N
T E M P L E**

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Building a vision with your
help

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- ◇ The Church, our church, is one body. *Organizational stewardship* is intrinsic to each of us. The needs of Christian Temple, its members, and its programs are the responsibility of all, not just those who “sign up”. There are numerous ways to exercise this duty – formally and informally – but all should participate as able.
- ◇ Re-clarifying Christian Temple’s *organizational structure* might be necessary as we address our goals. In fact, at least one new ministry is included already in the Plan. To be most effective, other changes such as additional staff with experience in program development and Christian education might be appropriate. Flexibility will be essential.

This is a challenging, exciting plan that will require innovative efforts to implement and monitor. These next steps will call for the establishment of another group to implement and oversee this plan. The Vision Team’s desire is to maintain regular communication between those who plan our program and the Board and congregation.

March 17, 2010



N.B. The time periods suggested for completion of Actions are as follows:

Sabbatical:	April – August 2010
Short Term:	September 2010 – June 2011
Mid Term:	July 2011 – June 2013
Long Term:	July 2013 – June 2015 or longer if necessary

P L A N F O R W A R D

ACTION	COORDINATOR	TARGET DATE	NOTES
SABBATICAL			
1.6 Revise communion distribution process			
1.9 Involve college students in worship			
2.2 Provide opportunities for college & young adults mission			
3.2 Provide missions for college students & young adults			
4.1 Strengthen Shepherds & Welcome programs			
5.1 Review Sunday services & activities to improve quality			
5.5 Complete CYF lounge			
6.1 Create an Arts Ministry Council			

PLAN FORWARD

ACTION	COORDINATOR	TARGET DATE	NOTES
SHORT TERM			
1.1 Replace or upgrade sanctuary sound system			
1.2 Evaluate audio-visual recording of services & activities			
1.5 Create opportunities for meditation at services			
1.7 Consider disposing of unused bread & wine			
2.1 Parking & grounds accessibility			
2.2 Playground message board			
2.3 Recognition of volunteers			
2.4 Increase greeters and expand roles			
2.5 Install an information kiosk in the Gathering			
2.6 Create a Marketing & Public Relations team			
2.9 Create database of talents & interests			
2.10 Strengthen the Ministry Fall Fair			
2.11 Implement a “Did You Know” article in Sower			
2.12 Plan activities for college students during breaks			
2.13 Continue to recognize long-standing members			
2.14 Clarify organization of programming life			

PLAN FORWARD

ACTION	COORDINATOR	TARGET DATE	NOTES
SHORT TERM			
3.1 Provide joint children, youth, & adult missions			
3.4 Organize group to prepare & serve shelter meals			
3.5 Increase support for inter-faith Habitat			
3.7 Explore participating in Angel Food Ministry			
3.8 Implement electronic system for contributions			
4.2 List & describe programs & services in accessible ways			
4.3 Mobilize resources for those in need (also On-going)			
5.3 Foster inter-faith support & involvement (also On-going)			
6.2 Evaluate current arts programs & research others			
6.5 Offer open rehearsals by various ensembles			
6.8 Integrate Kaleidoscope into church life			

PLAN FORWARD

ACTION	COORDINATOR	TARGET DATE	NOTES
MID TERM			
1.3 Investigate alternative methods for sharing service, etc.			
1.4 Explore alternative worship services			
2.7 Expand ministry for hosting of groups on trips			
2.8 Develop additional opportunities for fellowship			
3.3 Provide adult mission trip opportunities			
4.4 Present stimulating programs for thoughtful interaction			
4.5 Install labyrinth / memorial garden(s)			
4.6 Initiate a community vegetable garden			
5.8 Provide improved spaces for Sunday school			
6.3 Provide instruction in the various arts for those interested			
6.6 Establish dedicated arts spaces & galleries			
6.11 Create contemporary arts opportunities (Living-Theater)			

PLAN FORWARD

ACTION	COORDINATOR	TARGET DATE	NOTES
ON-GOING			
1.8 Continue to expand the diversity of music for services			
3.6 Encourage compatible-group use of facilities			
4.3 Mobilize resources for those in need (also Short Term)			
5.2 Create & foster participation in Christian unity offering			
5.3 Foster inter-faith support, involvement (also Short Term)			
5.4 Explore alternate education offerings for all ages			
5.6 Encourage joint youth/adult mission & educ. programs			
5.7 Continue & expand experiential programs			
5.9 Provide regular teacher training			
5.10 Encourage HS/college students to teach			
5.11 Encourage external community to teach			
6.4 Encourage programs for artistic talents & gifts			
6.7 Shepherd new activities like Kaleidoscope			
6.9 Incorporate art & poetry into church publications			
6.10 Facilitate arts-oriented trips			