

# **Saint John's United Methodist Church**

## **We Are Called: Strategic Plan 2020-2024**

### **Introduction**

In 2013 and again in 2019, Saint John's members explored the Biblical basis of our mission, pondered our role as neighbors, and reflected on who God is calling us to be. This strategic plan document was created by Church Council to summarize the outcomes from our exploration for Saint John's members as well as our community. It is intended to communicate our vision, mission, and values and provide a practical roadmap for our future.

### **Mission, Vision and Values**

A statement of mission defines why we are here. A vision statement articulates what it looks like to achieve our mission. Values statements undergird our work and provide guidance for our actions.

Following are the mission, vision, and values statements which will provide overall direction for our work:

#### **Mission statement:**

We are creating a community where God's love changes people and God's people change the world.

#### **Vision statement:**

We will be an inclusive Christian community that grows into ever new expressions of justice, mercy, and faith in our congregation, neighborhood, and world.

#### **Values:**

- **Connection:** We are called to set a table for people to grow in relationship with God, each other, and the world.
- **Inclusion:** We are called to be a community in which all are welcomed and valued without exception.
- **Openness:** We are called to embrace the open exploration of ideas, guided by Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason.
- **Mission:** We are called to act on our faith with intention, compassion, and relevance.
- **Justice:** We are called to work for equality and fairness in our community and the larger world.

## Goals

Eight goals will guide Saint John's work over the next five years:

1. **Connection:** To build a community of faith that is inclusive, welcoming and connected.
2. **Leadership:** To respond to God's call to ministry and to leadership.
3. **Sustainability:** To create and maintain appropriate infrastructure to support and sustain the church in fulfilling its mission.
4. **Faith Development:** To engage people where they are and provide opportunities to grow in relationship with God.
5. **Worship:** To glorify God through worship opportunities that inspire, encourage, and help people to more fully experience and share God's love.
6. **Stewardship:** To honor and respond to God's gifts through extravagant giving and use of our time, our talents and our resources.
7. **Mission & Social Justice:** To witness to our faith through service and social action initiatives in our community and beyond.
8. **Emerging Ministries:** To leverage our resources to proactively evaluate new opportunities to improve our reach and impact

The goals have been aligned to our mission statement to provide a framework for our plan:



***We Are Called: Strategic Planning Goal Areas for Saint John's***

## Implementation of the Strategic Plan

This document outlines the goals, objectives, activities, leadership, and collaborators to guide Saint John's future. The following steps are expected to implement and execute the plan:

1. Updates to the plan will be approved by Church Council by October 2019
2. Updates to the plan will be approved by Charge Council by November 2019
3. Plans to capture data points required to measure success will be established with the church office by November 2019
4. A standard committee reporting format will be adopted by Church Council by December 2019 which includes the goals, objectives and measures for each committee
5. Beginning January 2020, church committees will use this plan to guide their planning each year
6. Each year from 2020 through 2024, annual committee reports to Church Council will be aligned around each of the 8 Strategic Planning Goals; committees who own common goals will report in the same month (each committee is aligned to one and only one goal)

## Objectives & Success Measures

Measures of success have been defined for each goal along with objectives which have been identified as key areas of focus to pursue each goal. Each objective is aligned to the entity primarily responsible for implementation. This plan does not seek to document everything Saint John's will do over the next five years. Some programs not mentioned in the plan can and should continue. Rather, the plan focuses on areas that require specific emphasis to support the strategic direction.

To promote our values of connection and inclusion, two common objectives have been established for all committees:

- Invite new people to Saint John's
- Foster diversity in participation and leadership at Saint John's

Measures of success have been incorporated for all committees to include in their annual reports to Church Council.

## Goal 1: To build a community of faith that is inclusive, welcoming and connected.

### Connection

#### Measures of Success:

Entity	Measure	Goal
Hospitality	# of worship attendees # of new members	Increase annual total understand by race/ ethnicity, age band, gender
Youth Council	# of Youth attendees at Sunday School, Youth Group on Sunday evening (UMYF), and special events	Increase annual total
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

#### Objectives:

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b><u>1-1</u></b> Ensure that Saint John's is a place where all people regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, economic status, mental and physical capacities, or family configuration are welcomed, engaged, and valued in the life of the church	Hospitality Committee
<b><u>1-2</u></b> Develop strategies to engage and retain new members	Hospitality Committee
<b><u>1-3</u></b> Ensure that people in the Saint John's family have opportunities for shared celebration and building friendships as well as access to support in times of need	Congregational Life Team
<b><u>1-4</u></b> Create a community for youth that fosters connection with each other and the broader church	Youth Council
<b><u>1-5</u></b> Engage young children and their families in our ministry and Social Action opportunities	Children's Council
<b><u>1-6</u></b> Educate, support and advocate for all children of God whose lives are affected by mental illness and mental health challenges	Mental Health Ministry Team

## Goal 2: To respond to God's call to ministry and leadership.

### Leadership

#### Measures of Success:

Entity	Measure	Goal
Staff-Parish Relations	# of training opportunities per year for staff	Provide at least one annually
Nominations and Leadership Development	# of training opportunities per year for lay leaders	Provide at least one annually
You Are Called	# of participants in You are Called and Festival of New Beginnings	Annual total New sign-ups
Nominations and Leadership Development	# of participants in leadership roles	Annual total Annual new participants only
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

#### Objectives:

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b><u>2-1</u></b> Provide opportunities to know and follow Christ through living out our call to ministry	<b>Nominations and Leadership Development</b>
<b><u>2-2</u></b> Equip laypersons with the resources needed for effectiveness in their ministry roles	<b>Nominations and Leadership Development</b>
<b><u>2-3</u></b> Ensure the availability of necessary tools and supports for staff in ministry roles	<b>Staff-Parish Relations Committee</b>

### **Goal 3: To create and maintain appropriate infrastructure to support and sustain the church in fulfilling its mission.**

#### **Sustainability**

#### **Measures of Success:**

Entity	Measure	Goal
Trustees	# improvements to physical space to improve accessibility \$ spend improving physical space to improve accessibility	Report annually to Church Council
Trustees	# improvements to physical space to improve accessibility Research completing an energy audit	Report annually to Church Council
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

#### **Objectives:**

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b><u>3-1</u></b> Plan and implement improvements to Saint John's physical space	<b>Board of Trustees</b>
<b><u>3-2</u></b> Promote environmentally sustainable practices at Saint John's	<b>Green Shepherd Team</b>

## Goal 4: To engage people where they are and provide opportunities to grow in relationship with God.

### Faith Development

#### Measures of Success:

Entity	Measure	Goal
Intentional Faith Development	# of Christian Education participants (Sunday School)	Understand annual total Understand annual by age band
Intentional Faith Development	# learning opportunities offered	Understand annual total by type (Sunday school, fellowship event, other studies, etc.)
Intentional Faith Development	# of new offerings aligned to congregational needs	At least one annually
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

#### Objectives:

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b><u>4-1</u></b> Develop and implement an overall framework and array of opportunities for lifelong intentional faith development	<b>Intentional Faith Development Committee</b>
<b><u>4-2</u></b> Encourage spiritual formation through shared learning and fellowship activities	<b>Intentional Faith Development Committee</b>

**Goal 5: To glorify God through worship opportunities that inspire, encourage, and help people to more fully experience and share God's love.**

Worship

**Measures of Success:**

Entity	Measure	Goal
Passionate Worship	# of worship experiences in a style of the people from a certain region of the world	1 per year
Passionate Worship	# aligned themes of experience with Intentional Faith Development	1 per year
Passionate Worship	# Non-traditional worship experiences that don't take place at the normal time and location	4 per year
Passionate Worship	# of suggestions collected to improve worship	Report annually to Church Council
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

**Objectives:**

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b><u>5-1</u></b> Expand the number and types of worship opportunities	Passionate Worship Committee
<b><u>5-2</u></b> Increase participation in worship by children and youth	Passionate Worship Committee
<b><u>5-3</u></b> Increase the integration of common themes in worship and intentional faith development	Passionate Worship Committee



**Goal 6: To honor and respond to God's gifts through extravagant giving and use of our time, our talents and our resources.**

**Stewardship**

**Measures of Success:**

Entity	Measure	Goal
Finance	# First time givers	Increase annual total of new givers
You Are Called	# of respondents to You Are Called campaign	Increase Annual Total
Finance	\$ Gifts Received	Increase annual total Understand annual by pledged / unpledged
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

**Objectives:**

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b><u>6-1</u></b> Increase opportunities for financial congregational giving	<b>Finance Committee</b>
<b><u>6-2</u></b> Develop a planning and prioritization process for resource allocation	<b>Finance Committee</b>
<b><u>6-3</u></b> Effectively connect members with opportunities to give their time and talent	<b>You Are Called</b>

## Goal 7: To witness to our faith through service and social action initiatives in our community and beyond.

### Mission & Social Justice

#### Measures of Success:

Entity	Measure	Goal
Risk-Taking Mission and Service	\$ Funding for mission & social justice Events	Increase annual total Understand annual total by objective
Risk-Taking Mission and Service	# Participants in mission & social justice events	Understand annual total by objective
Risk-Taking Mission and Service	# of mission & social justice partners	Understand annual total by objective and # of partners
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

#### Objectives:

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<u>7-1</u> Address the lack of affordable, safe and secure housing in our community	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
<u>7-2</u> Address issues of poverty and food insecurity in our community	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
<u>7-3</u> Respond to issues of social justice in our community and beyond	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
<u>7-4</u> Address the needs of immigrants and refugees	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
<u>7-5</u> Raise awareness about and support for needed services to respond to crises and other needs in our community and beyond	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee

## Goal 8: To leverage our resources to proactively evaluate new opportunities to improve our reach and impact.

### Emerging Ministries

#### Measures of Success:

Committee	Measure	Goal
787 Team	# number of young adults (ages 18-35) participating in 787 activities	Increase total annually
787 Team	# of young adults participating in each 787 activity	Increase total annually by activity
Congregational Care Team / Accessibility Team	Status of accessibility ministry plan	Plan approved by Church Council in 2021
Reconciling Ministries Team / Research Team	Status of response to General Conference 2019 decisions	Plan approved by Church Council in 2021
All	# of first-time guests	Increase annual total
All	Examples of fostering diversity	At least one annually

#### Objectives:

Objective	Lead (Responsible)
<b>8-1</b> Increase the level of engagement of young adults	787 Team - Young Adults
<b>8-2</b> Ensure that Saint John's is a place where all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity are welcomed, engaged, and valued in the life of the church	Research Team / Reconciling Ministries Team
<b>8-3</b> Increase the level of engagement in our connectional relationship with the denomination	Research Team / Reconciling Ministries Team
<b>8-4</b> Ensure that Saint John's is a place where all people regardless of physical or mental capability are welcomed, engaged, and valued in the life of the church	Congregational Care Team / Accessibility Team
<b>8-5</b> Increase opportunities to engage and serve older adults in the mission and ministry of Saint John's	Congregational Care Team

## **Appendix 1: Planned Activities**

### **Saint John's United Methodist Church We Are Called: Strategic Plan 2020-2024**

#### **Introduction**

While providing input to our strategic goals and measures, our church committees contemplated their specific role and contribution. For each objective defined in the strategic plan, activities to achieve the objective have been identified. This Addendum to the strategic plan document communicates the activities identified by church committees which will help us achieve each objective.

This addendum is available to all church members and intended specifically for current and future members of church committees. Its purpose is to provide input into their planning and outline specific activities they should consider in their planning. While goals and measures are not intended to change significantly over the five-year planning period it is expected that activities will evolve.

#### **Activities and Collaborators**

This appendix is aligned to the above strategic planning goals and objectives. For each objective, the accountable church entity is named along with external partners and internal collaborators expected to assist in achieving the objective. Activities listed for each goal may involve multiple entities.

## **Goal 1: To build a community of faith that is inclusive, welcoming and connected**

### **Objective 1-1:**

Connection

**Ensure that Saint John's is a place where all people regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, economic status, mental and physical capacities, or family configuration are welcomed, engaged, and valued in the life of the church**

Lead	Hospitality Committee
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Trustees</li> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> <li>• Church Council</li> <li>• Passionate Worship Committee</li> <li>• Research Team/Reconciling Ministries Team</li> <li>• Congregational Care Team</li> <li>• Mental Health Team / Connect Team</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodist Federation for Social Action</li> </ul>

### **Activities:**

- Incorporate intergenerational involvement in events, worship, and ministries
- Sponsor church, neighborhood, and community activities and support groups
- Assess barriers and practices that may limit inclusion and ensure that church activities are accessible to all
- Proactively seek to engage fellowship opportunities which celebrate the diversity in our community. Plan shared fellowship events with faith communities and community organizations with different demographics from Saint John's. Including, but not limited to cultural, language, age, race and ethnic diversity.

**Objective 1-2:**  
**Develop strategies to engage and  
retain new members**

Connection

Lead	Hospitality Committee
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk-Taking Mission and Service</li><li>• Nominations and Leadership Development</li><li>• Lay Leader</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Ensure that new members and visitors feel welcome and are connected with ministries
- Systematically contact new members and visitors using Realm and other tools

**Objective 1-3:**

Connection

**Ensure that people in the Saint John's community have opportunities for shared celebration and building friendships as well as access to support in times of need**

Lead	Congregational Life Team
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> <li>• Hospitality Committee</li> <li>• Cokesbury Choir</li> <li>• Mental Health Ministries Team</li> <li>• Saint John's Threaders</li> <li>• Women's Retreat Planning Committee</li> <li>• United Methodist Women</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Continue current JOY program targeted to older adults that includes regular opportunities for spiritual development, socialization and community activities, including a monthly newsletter promoting these activities and providing education and information; expand program to include intergenerational activities and ensure all activities are accessible
- Implement an annual retreat for the women of Saint John's with focus on attracting women from all generations and ensuring accessibility
- Continue bereavement program, including ensuring the availability of grief care partners for those in need and support for families in making funeral arrangements
- Continue program to support prayers targeted to those in need and investigate new ways to connect with and provide support for those who desire prayer support
- Continue to provide support to people in the hospital or homebound, including visitation, communion and prayer blankets; continue training additional members of the Congregational Life Team
- Annually implement two church wide social activities

**Objective 1-4: Create a community that fosters connection for youth with each other and the broader church****Connection**

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Youth Council</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	• Nominations and Leadership Development

**Activities:**

- Maintain an active Youth Group, including Sunday School, Sunday evening, and special event programming
- Find opportunities to increase connection and integrate life of the youth with for youth members to engage with the broader the life of the church
- Bring in church members from various ages and interests to engage with the youth
- Increase support for the youth program in volunteers (time) and investment (resources)
- Engage youth in mission opportunities which are appropriate and accessible



**Objective 1-5: Engage young children and their families in our ministry and social action opportunities**

Connection

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Children's Council</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk-Taking Mission and Service</li><li>• Grace Garden Staff</li><li>• Pastors</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Identify and implement service and social action opportunities offering our congregation and attendance area opportunities for children to serve others
- Increase investment and ownership for parents in children's and youth ministries by offering opportunities to experience programs more directly (e.g. Godly Play for adult Sunday School)
- Continue to strengthen our partnership with Grace Garden through bridging activities such as Grace Garden Sundays and teacher contact with pastors; implement opportunities to introduce Saint John's members to Grace Garden staff and families as well as Grace Garden families to Saint John's (e.g. Grace Garden Sundays and teacher contact with members)
- Increase outreach to families with young children across Saint Johns' attendance area (e.g. Pumpkin Patch, VBS, Grace Garden)

**Objective 1-6:**

**Educate, support and advocate for all children of God whose lives are affected by mental illness and mental health challenges**

Connection

Lead	Mental Health Ministry Team
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect Team</li> <li>• Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee</li> <li>• Veterans' Group</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)</li> <li>• Connect Team</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Continue the work of the Mental Health Ministries Team to raise awareness about mental illness, eliminate the stigma of mental illness, and educate the congregation on issues related to mental health
- Continue the work of the Connect Team to welcome visitors who are homeless and/or may have a mental illness. Continue recruiting members of the Connect Team and pursue associated training.
- Continue to implement an annual event to raise money for a local mental health provider
- Continue Adult Aging support initiatives
- Continue to support the Veterans' Group
- Continue to host National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) support groups
- Participate in the annual NAMI Walk

**Goal 2: To respond to God's call to ministry and to leadership****Objective 2-1:****Provide opportunities to know and follow  
Christ through living out our call to ministry****Leadership**

Lead	You are Called
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nominations and Lay Leadership</li><li>• Intentional Faith Development</li><li>• Church Council</li><li>• Passionate Worship Committee</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Two annual events – Festival of New Beginnings and You Are Called
- Provide opportunities in worship to reaffirm our baptismal vows
- Assist people in identifying their ministry paths
- Use technology to connect members with ministry opportunities
- Develop and implement strategies to identify potential leaders among new members and to develop their interest and skills for assuming leadership positions
- Proactively engage individuals to leadership roles who represent the diversity in our community. Including, but not limited to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, education level and socioeconomic diversity.

**Objective 2-2:**

**Equip laypersons with the resources needed  
for effectiveness in their ministry roles**

**Leadership**

Lead	Nominations and Leadership Development
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Church Council</li><li>• Committee chairs</li><li>• Staff-Parish Relations Committee</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Develop job descriptions for key ministry roles and positions (paid and volunteer)
- Develop and implement recruiting and training for all ministry and leadership roles
- Develop and periodically review resource materials
- Encourage succession planning for all leadership roles
- Develop opportunities to recognize, empower and affirm persons in their ministry roles

**Objective 2-3:****Ensure the availability of necessary tools and supports for staff persons in ministry roles****Leadership**

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Staff-Parish Relations Committee</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Church Council</li><li>• Committee chairs</li><li>• Trustees</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Plan and implement leadership training for staff leadership
- Implement processes enabling and encouraging church staff to acquire the skills required to excel in their roles. Formalize processes for funding requests, feedback on education investments, and annual employee development plans.
- Define an approach to ensure continuity of church activities when staff changes. Ensure that staff implements partnering or cross-training plans providing coverage for all accountabilities when employees are out of office or transition to new roles.
- Improve sustainable office space and technology

### **Goal 3: To create and maintain appropriate infrastructure to support and sustain the church in fulfilling its mission**

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#### **Objective 3-1: Plan and implement improvements to Saint John's physical space**

Sustainability

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Board of Trustees</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance Committee</li><li>• Church Council</li></ul>

#### **Activities:**

- Complete current capital improvements projects (exterior upgrades)
- Conduct routine needs assessments of facilities for accessibility
- Continue to implement regular workdays to improve facilities
- Address needs for Sunday morning classroom space
- Continue to address the need for additional parking
- Continue to address the list of deferred maintenance items

**Objective 3-2:**  
**Promote environmentally sustainable practices at Saint John's**

Sustainability

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Green Shepherd Team</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Trustees</li> <li>• Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interfaith Environmental Network</li> <li>• Texas Interfaith Power and Light</li> <li>• Methodist Federation for Social Action</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Provide educational resources to the congregation to help promote awareness and to support embarking on environmentally sustainable practices
- Facilitate an energy and/or carbon audit for the Saint John's facilities and promote actions that will reduce our carbon footprint
- Provide resources and support to encourage the development of sustainable landscaping for Saint John's
- Conduct periodic programs to promote education and discussion about sustainability, climate change and its potential impact on the earth
- Provide signage within our facilities that will promote sustainability, such as encouraging recycling, reuse and reducing consumption

## **Goal 4: To engage people where they are and provide opportunities to grow in relationship with God**

### **Objective 4-1:**

Faith Development

**Develop and implement an overall framework and array of opportunities for lifelong intentional faith development**

Lead	Intentional Faith Development Committee
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastors</li> <li>• Passionate Worship Committee</li> <li>• Youth Council</li> <li>• 787 Team - Young Adults</li> <li>• Children's Council</li> </ul>

### **Activities:**

- Implement Seasons of Listening to enable education and discernment about key issues
- Provide educational opportunities to inform and challenge
- Design faith development opportunities which represent the diversity in our community and celebrate the diversity in our world. Including, but not limited to: age, race, gender, sexual orientation, education level and socioeconomic diversity. Engage diverse groups in planning and implementing these programs.
- Foster cross-pollination across age groups by implementing inter-generational education opportunities connecting children, youth, young adults and adults.



**Objective 4-2:**  
**Encourage spiritual formation through  
shared learning and fellowship activities**

Faith Development

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Intentional Faith Development Committee</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pastors</li><li>• Passionate Worship Committee</li><li>• 787 Team - Young Adults</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Intentionally create opportunities for fellowship through education including continuing Lenten and Summer Programs. Continue to implement innovative options for Sunday School, including July Sunday School gatherings
- Implement special events with educational speakers; seek speakers beyond our staff/clergy both inside and outside our congregation
- Continue to implement classes focused on Bible study, spiritual formation, theological reflection, Christian living, and justice issues
- Proactively inform our congregation and the public of upcoming faith development opportunities, including the use of social media and church signage.

**Goal 5: To glorify God through worship opportunities that inspire, encourage, and help people to more fully experience and share God's love**

**Objective 5-1:  
Expand the number and types of worship opportunities**

Worship

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Passionate Worship Committee</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> <li>• Music Ministry</li> <li>• Pastors</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Explore best practices
- Conduct diverse types of worship services, incorporating various forms of music and worship styles
- Design worship opportunities to appeal to diverse ages, ethnicities, and races; engage diverse groups in planning and implementing these programs
- Incorporate a variety of music, materials, and media to enhance worship services
- Conduct worship services in non-traditional venues, including places other than Saint John's, such as other churches, homes, and parks
- Conduct worship services at both traditional and non-traditional times
- Promote the role of lay leadership in planning and implementing new worship opportunities
- Proactively engage individuals to lead worship who represent the diversity in our community. Including, but not limited to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, education level and socioeconomic diversity. Engage diverse groups in planning worship opportunities.
- Develop and implement a communication plan, including use of social media and church signage, for informing the congregation and the public of upcoming worship opportunities
- Implement a feedback process to collect feedback and suggestions on components of worship

**Objective 5-2:****Increase participation in worship by  
children and youth**

Worship

Lead	Passionate Worship Committee
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li><li>• Youth Council</li><li>• 787 Team - Young Adults</li><li>• Children's Council</li><li>• Music Ministry</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Design worship opportunities to appeal to families with young children, college age adults, youth, and youth parents; engage these groups in planning and implementing these programs
- Intentionally engage children and youth in worship to build understanding and foster ownership and engagement (e.g. enhanced worship packets, education about worship, and thematically integrated Sunday school and faith development activities)
- Engage youth in worship through a variety of means
- Continue to plan worship calendar in advance to enhance intergenerational involvement

**Objective 5-3:**

**Increase the integration of common themes  
in worship and intentional faith development**

**Worship**

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Passionate Worship Committee</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pastors</li><li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li><li>• 787 Team - Young Adults</li><li>• Music Ministry</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Develop and implement a process for ongoing planning and coordination between worship planners and faith development planners
- Incorporate a variety of materials, media, and participants to enhance and integrate various thematic program elements

**Goal 6: To honor and respond to God's gifts through extravagant giving and use of our time, our talents and our resources.**

**Objective 6-1:**

**Increase opportunities for financial congregational giving**

Stewardship

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Finance Committee</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Endowment Committee</li><li>• Church Council</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Develop and implement an annual plan for financial stewardship
- Develop and implement new communication methods for sharing stories and tangible results from congregational giving
- Develop, implement and evaluate new methods for thanking donors
- Develop and implement educational strategies focused on giving, including strategies targeted to children and youth
- Continue periodic consultations with fundraising professionals
- Coordinate with the Endowment Committee

**Objective 6-2:**  
**Develop a planning and prioritization  
process for resource allocation**

Stewardship

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Finance Committee</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Church Council</li><li>• Committee Chairs</li><li>• Board of Trustees</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Review the current budgeting process to enhance prioritization methods
- Ensure that Finance Committee has adequate information regarding the financial implications of new initiatives

**Objective 6-3:**  
**Effectively connect members with  
opportunities to give their time and talent**

Stewardship

<b>Lead</b>	<b>You are Called Coordination</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	• Church Council

**Activities:**

- Create and coordinate annual You Are Called campaign
- Distribute responses to staff, committee chairs, and Nominations Committee
- Advise Church Council on best methods to capture interests and opportunities

## **Goal 7: To witness to our faith through service and social action initiatives in our community and beyond**

### **Objective 7-1:**

**Address the lack of affordable, safe and secure housing in our community**

Mission & Social Justice

Lead	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men's Covenant Group</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Austin Habitat for Humanity</li> <li>Foundation for Homeless</li> <li>Austin Interfaith</li> <li>Interfaith Action of Central Texas (iACT)</li> <li>MACares</li> <li>Saint John's Vet's Group</li> </ul>

### **Activities:**

- Address the need for low income housing in our community
- Partner in the biennial Habitat for Humanity United Methodist Build
- Participate in initiatives aimed at allowing the elderly and people with disabilities to remain in their homes
- Hands on Housing workdays in collaboration with iACT
- Support initiatives aimed at preventing and addressing homelessness, such as
  - Collaboration with Foundation for the Homeless to provide housing at 5906 for families transitioning from homelessness to more stable housing
  - Contributions to the MACares Emergency Assistance Fund
- Build awareness of challenges facing the poor and advocate with local officials on issues of affordable housing
- Collaborate with organizations such as Austin Interfaith and Texas Impact



**Objective 7-2:**  
**Address issues of poverty and food  
 insecurity in our community**

Mission & Social Justice

Lead	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Methodist Women</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meals on Wheels of Central Texas</li> <li>• Hope Food Pantry</li> <li>• Austin Interfaith</li> <li>• Church World Service</li> <li>• MACares</li> <li>• Montopolis Friendship Center</li> <li>• Saint John's Vets Group</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Support efforts to provide food to people in need
  - Continue to host and support Meals on Wheels
  - Continue our partnership with the Hope Food Pantry to provide backpacks of food to food insecure students in the Austin area
- Participate in fundraising efforts to address food insecurity and students in need
  - Continue to participate in the CROP Walk
  - Continue to support the Montopolis Friendship Community Center
- Advocate with local officials on issues related to poverty and food insecurity

**Objective 7-3:**  
**Respond to issues of social justice in our  
 community and beyond**

**Mission & Social Justice**

Lead	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Team/Reconciling Ministries Team</li> </ul>
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty</li> <li>Austin Interfaith</li> <li>Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA)</li> <li>Texas Impact</li> <li>Austin Region Justice for Our Neighbors (ARJFON)</li> <li>RMN Network/Rio Texas Reconciling Team</li> <li>Saint John's Vet's Group</li> <li>Men's Covenant Group</li> <li>United Methodist Women</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Take a stand on social justice issues - monitor and respond to practices or policy proposals that promote hate or injustice and support initiatives aimed at building awareness of social justice issues
  - Advocate with local, state, federal and denomination officials on issues such as racism, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, human trafficking, health care, gun safety, and economic justice
  - Sponsor a social justice seminar at Saint John's
  - Encourage the use of Saint John's facilities to groups supporting social justice causes, such as Methodist Federation for Social Action or Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty
- Work within the denomination and the community for full inclusion for LGBTQIA+ persons
  - Support the annual Pride Week
- Participate in local church initiatives, Annual Conference and General Conference
- Support efforts to abolish the death penalty
- Promote voting in local, state, and federal elections by offering voter registration Sundays

**Objective 7-4:**  
**Address the needs of immigrants  
 and refugees**

Mission & Social Justice

Lead	Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austin Interfaith</li> <li>• Refugee Services of Texas</li> <li>• Austin Region Justice for Our Neighbors (ARJFON)</li> <li>• Interfaith Action of Central Texas (iACT)</li> <li>• Border churches and nonprofits</li> <li>• Methodist Federation for Social Action</li> <li>• Other local refugee services organizations</li> <li>• Texas Impact</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Influence public policy related to immigration
  - Participate in iACT Square One lunches
  - Support Refugee Services of Texas, Texas Impact, and other organizations active in public policy discussions
- Respond to humanitarian crises faced by immigrants
  - Send teams to Brownsville to participate in Courts & Ports with Texas Impact
  - Support border ministries such as La Posada Providencia
  - Provide volunteer and funding support for Justice for Our Neighbors
- Provide support to newly arriving refugees
  - Provide housing and transportation assistance by the Saint John's Refugee Assistance Team, in cooperation with Refugee Services of Texas

**Objective 7-5:**

Mission &amp; Social Justice

**Raise awareness about and support for needed services to respond to crises and other needs in our community and beyond**

Lead	Risk-Taking Mission and Service
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifts of Hope Alternative Gift Market Committee Steering Committee</li> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lydia Patterson Institute</li> <li>• Austin Drive a Senior</li> <li>• Meals on Wheels of Central Texas</li> <li>• Austin Mamma Jamma Ride</li> <li>• Hill Country Ride for AIDS</li> <li>• United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Provide monetary support through fundraising efforts
  - Conduct the Gifts of Hope Alternative Gift Market to assist organizations that provide services in our community and beyond
  - Participate in the Mamma Jamma and Hill Country Ride for AIDS
  - Support Lydia Patterson Institute in El Paso
- Provide funds and volunteers to respond to disasters as needs emerge

## **Goal 8: To leverage our resources to proactively evaluate new opportunities to improve our reach and impact.**

### **Objective 8-1:**

**Increase the level of engagement of young adults**

Emerging Ministries

<b>Lead</b>	<b>787 Team - Young Adults</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> <li>• Staff-Parish Relations Committee</li> <li>• Nominations and Leadership Development</li> <li>• Children and Family Ministry Council</li> <li>• Passionate Worship Committee</li> <li>• 787 Collective</li> <li>• Rio Texas Conference</li> </ul>
<b>Partners</b>	

### **Activities:**

- Develop strategies to connect young adults with faith development opportunities through research and implementation of a “new thing”
- Intentionally place young adults on committees
- Develop a method for collecting, maintaining, reporting, and assessing data concerning the numbers of youth and young adults involved in intentional faith development activities

**Objective 8-2:**

**Ensure that Saint John's is a place where all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity are welcomed, engaged, and valued in the life of the church**

Emerging Ministries

Lead	Research Team/Reconciling Ministries Team
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitality Committee</li> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> <li>• Church Council</li> <li>• Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee</li> <li>• Board of Trustees</li> <li>• United Methodist Women</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodist Federation for Social Action</li> <li>• Out Youth</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Sponsor church, neighborhood, and community activities and support groups (i.e. Out Youth)
- Cultivate awareness and respect regarding the diversity of theological perspectives
- Develop opportunities for prayer for understanding, unity and discernment
- Establish visible evidence of our policy of inclusion
- Host meetings with other reconciling churches in our area
- Assess and consider revising wedding policies

**Objective 8-3:**

Emerging Ministries

**Increase the level of engagement in our connectional relationship with the denomination**

Lead	Church Council
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intentional Faith Development Committee</li> <li>• Research Team/Reconciling Ministries Team</li> <li>• Radical Hospitality Committee</li> <li>• Annual Conference Delegates</li> <li>• District and Conference committee appointees</li> <li>• Risk-Taking Mission and Service Committee</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodist Federation for Social Action</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Advocate for denominational policies that ensure our denomination is a place where all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, can fully participate in the life of the church
- Build relationships with other congregations and entities of the denomination to encourage shared worship, faith development, service and other opportunities
- Monitor and respond to practices or policy proposals that promote hate or injustice
- Support Methodist Federation for Social Action at Annual and General conference

**Objective 8-4:**

Emerging Ministries

**Ensure that Saint John's is a place where all people regardless of physical or mental capability are welcomed, engaged, and valued in the life of the church**

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Congregational Care Team</b>
<b>Collaborators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility Team</li> <li>• Mental Health Ministry Team</li> <li>• Trustees</li> <li>• Radical Hospitality</li> </ul>

**Activities:**

- Continue an accessibility ministry that focuses on both physical and mental capabilities of congregants.
- Evaluate best practices
- Assess current physical space and church practices/procedures
- Create recommendations and implementation plans



**Objective 8-5:**

Emerging Ministries

**Increase opportunities to engage and serve older adults in the mission and ministry of Saint John's**

Lead	Congregational Care Team
Collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• JOY Team</li><li>• Church Council</li><li>• Nominations and Leadership Development</li></ul>

**Activities:**

- Evaluate creation of an “older adults” ministry task force that focuses on engagement, participation and connection for our growing number of older members.
- Evaluate best practices and emerging methods for connection, engagement, leadership, fellowship and faith development
- Create recommendations and implementation plans for expanding our ministry opportunities for older adults

## **Appendix 2: Plan Context**

### **Background**

In 2013, Saint John's completed a visioning process that featured cottage and town hall meetings and much prayerful discussion. Over the course of nine months Saint John's members explored the Biblical basis of our mission, pondered our role as neighbors, and reflected on who God is calling us to be.

Building on this visioning effort, in the fall of 2013 Church Council embarked on a strategic planning process to develop a practical roadmap for the future. The process included these steps:

- Identifying mission, vision, and values
- Performing internal and external assessments of our organization and its environment, including an analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Setting overall strategic direction
- Articulating goals, objectives and action plans
- Assigning responsibility for implementation

The timeline for the strategic planning process appears as Appendix 1, and summary of the internal and external assessments as Appendix 2.

### **Plan Update 2020**

From August through October 2019, an effort was undertaken to refresh and re-align the plan. While the update did not change our vision, it was reviewed to ensure that goals and objectives provide the best path to achieve our mission and values. Inputs were collected including neighborhood demographic analysis and feedback from church committees, Church Council and our congregation at large. In addition, a "Research Team" was created in early 2019 to evaluate Saint John's response to decisions made regarding the inclusion of LGBTQ+ members at General Conference 2018. Direction from the Research Team was considered alongside all other inputs collected to update the plan.

In addition to goal and objective updates, measures of success were added to the plan. Key performance measures were recommended in 2014 but were not defined. Adding these measures will provide the ability to measure progress toward our goals and provide committees with a method to evaluate impact from achieving their objectives.