

**St. John's Lutheran Church  
San Antonio, Texas**

**New Hope**

**New Life**

**New Direction**

**Congregational Council Report  
to the people of  
St. John's Church**

**Congregational Meeting**

**November 2008**

# **THIS DOCUMENT IS A DRAFT!**

## **Introduction**

At the Spring St. John's Lutheran Church Congregational Council Retreat (May 3-4, 2008) the elected congregational representatives examined many documents and surveys in developing a proposed ministry strategy for adoption by the congregation. Working together with Pastor Courter and the professional church staff, they are making available to the congregation their initial work for the purpose of congregational input, suggestions, and dialogue. Now is the time for the members of St. John's Lutheran Church to give Pastor Courter, the professional staff, and the Congregational Council your improvement suggestions and implementation ideas for inclusion into a new direction for ministry beginning January 1, 2009 in this congregation.

Please, let's begin the open dialogue among us all!

## **Implementation and Adoption Plan**

<b>May 3-4, 2008</b>	<b>Council Retreat - Strategic Plan Proposal</b>
<b>May 12-13, 2008</b>	<b>Staff Retreat - Strategic Plan Refinement</b>
<b>May 19, 2008</b>	<b>Council - Strategic Plan Presentation</b>
<b>14 June 2008</b>	<b>All-Committee Saturday - 2008 Program Plan Complete</b>
<b>30 June 2008</b>	<b>Council - Strategic Plan Final Proposal</b>
<b>7 July 2008</b>	<b>Deadline for Budget Inputs</b>
<b>28 July 2008</b>	<b>Council - Preliminary Review of Budget and Constitution</b>
<b>15 August 2008</b>	<b>Finance Committee Completes Budget</b>
<b>25 August 2008</b>	<b>Council Approves Budget, Constitution, Strategic Plan</b>
<b>31 August 2008</b>	<b>5th Sunday Open Forum Presentation of Strategic Plan</b>
<b>29 September 2008</b>	<b>Council Includes Congregational Ideas and Suggestions</b>
<b>1 October 2008`</b>	<b>St John's Strategic Plan Published as Congregational Proposal</b>
<b>27 October 2008</b>	<b>Council Includes Congregational Ideas and Suggestions</b>
<b>2 November 2008</b>	<b>Congregation Votes Approval and Adoption of Strategic Plan</b>
<b>24 November 2008</b>	<b>Council Begins Implementation Plan</b>
<b>15 December 2008</b>	<b>Council Completes Implementation Plan</b>
<b>1 January 2009</b>	<b>New Program Plan Begins</b>

## An Important Note From Our Spiritual Director

A healthy St John's lies in the heart of each of us. A spiritually growing St John's is that heart's desire. So the obvious goal for our great fellowship is simple and direct. Let's do whatever we do and let's do it with great spiritual "EXCELLENCE." That's the key to growth! Let's not worry about filling the pews but spend our valuable time, money, and gifts on improving the quality of our ministry. When we do excellent ministries, we become a stronger congregation, one people want to join.

So the question is what constitutes a strong, healthy, and spiritually growing congregation? Here's what I think:

1. An empowered leadership
2. Gift-oriented ministry
3. Passionate spiritually
4. Effective structures
5. Inspiring worship
6. Holistic small groups
7. Need oriented evangelism
8. Loving relationships

You will be hearing me speak of these characteristics often in the coming year and a lot of the 2009 program plan is meant to address some of these important ministry areas. I believe everything we need to see St John's grow has already been given to us by Jesus. We need to make full use of those gifts. We must invest in these principles and produce "quality" ministry programs from them. Not just do them, but do them WELL! Honestly, I think those characteristics listed above are the principles God himself uses to build his church. We must set our sights on working toward helping each of those eight principles develop more fully at St John's. Those principles drive our proposed vision, our proposed mission, our current attempts at congregational organization, and our budget and program planning guidance. The bottom line is Jesus, not us. We will not become the church we desire by pushing or pulling with human strength or effort. We are called not to push or pull but to release and develop the principles and potentials God the Father has already invested in us. Growth occurs, then, at the will and direction of God. All we need do is "jump on board!"

# **Proposed Vision Statement**

**“The heart of Christ...  
in the heart of the City.”**

**St. John’s Church  
San Antonio**

**What do you think? Doesn't that inspire you?  
Doesn't that paint the picture of what you want  
your fellowship to be?**

# **Proposed New Mission Statement**

**Forming Faithfulness to the love of God**

**....in traditional worship,**

**....through enlivened discipleship,**

**....with service and honor to all.**

**What does this mean?**

**.....In traditional worship**

**Objective:**

***Excellence in liturgical worship***

**Unify congregational worship with one Sunday morning liturgical service and do it better than any other ELCA congregation in America, with rich variety and meaning. Go to two services when we reach over 225 worshipers seating in the center pews between the posts every Sunday for one month. (This represents between 75-80% of capacity. This number would not include choir, ushers, or worship leaders.) Suggested schedule:**

**8:30 AM – Fellowship Coffee**

**9:00 AM – Worship**

**10:30 AM – Religious Education**

**We want to be the BEST!**

## .....Through enlivened discipleship

### Objectives:

#### *#1. Break-Through "ADULT EDUCATION"*

1. Sunday Morning 10:30 AM – Adult Education led by Pastor Courter in Memorial Hall
  - Praise music (15 min.)
  - Cradle Roll - 6<sup>th</sup> grade excused, age specific classes
  - Testimonials from a members (15 min)
  - Pastor led adult biblical study (30 min)
  - Collection of offering
  - Concluding intercessory and free verse prayer
2. Pastor Skip's Wednesday Morning Bible Study
3. Continued emphasis on Luther League ministry
4. Young Adult Group begins for young professionals (Timothy Group)
5. Men's Group organizes

#### *#2 Rename "WEDNESDAY CHURCH"*

5:30 PM – Vespers – Memorial Hall – Musical

5:45 PM – Dinner

6:30 PM – Choirs, Book Club,  
Confirmation 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades taught by Pastor

#### *#3 Develop Congregational "LEADERSHIP"*

Creating a healthy environment for congregational discipleship

- Conflict Resolution Skills
- Communication Skills
- Listening Skills
- Inclusion Skills

#### *#4 Invest in Congregational "HOSPITALITY"*

- Renovating East Parking lot entrance
- Volunteer staffing of Reception Desk including “first contact” telephone answering
- Gift Shop
- St John's Church wide retreat or bus trip

.....With service and honor to all

**Objectives:**

**#1. "Encourage Monetary Support"**

- **Lutheran Social Services**
- **World Hunger**
- **Texas Lutheran University**
- **Camping Program**
- **Lutheran Campus Ministry of San Antonio**
- **Southwestern Texas Synod**

**#2. "Facilitate Volunteer Support"**

- **Helping Hand**
- **Cemetery**
- **San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries**
- **Christian Assistance Ministries**
- **Christian Senior Services**
- **Z-Place**
- **Habitat for Humanity**

**#3. "Educate Group Support"**

- **CROP Walk**
- **Brunch for the Cure**
- **Lutheran World Relief**
- **Laredo Ministry**