

As the Ministerial Search Committee works to put together a profile of the church and its membership for use in the process of calling a permanent minister, we thought it might be helpful to let everyone know some of what we have been thinking about and why. This article articulates some of the rationale behind a vision for the church—part of the profile we are creating...

## Why Your Church Needs a Written Vision (Part 2 of 3)

by J. David Schmidt

### **WHY MUST YOUR CHURCH HAVE AN ARTICULATED VISION?**

Here are four reasons why your church will be strengthened by contemplating its future.

#### **1. Vision gets you on God's program and off your own.**

God already has a plan for every Assemblies of God church. He is not confused about where your church should go in the next 5 years. The problem comes when you don't take time to seek Him and discover His plan. Most pastors and church members are too busy maintaining their lives and church work. Prayer is often the first "extra" to go. Yet it is a vital component in discovering vision. In Jeremiah 33:3, the Lord said, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."<sup>1</sup>

Prayer alone is not enough, though. It also takes work on our part. James 2:26 states that "faith without deeds is dead." As Christian leaders, we are in constant tension on these two points. It is our responsibility to let God reveal His future to us and to see the future as God sees it. A church that fails to listen for God's vision will not experience all that God has planned for it. We have a tendency to

let the budget process, a crisis, or a pastoral change drive our plans when, in fact, God wants to reveal a future that will excite and challenge us. But this takes prayerful listening and work.

#### **2. Vision helps our dreams become bigger than our memories.**

Churches fail to reach their full potential because their memories are bigger than their dreams. They spend more energy recalling and celebrating the past than on contemplating the future. The church may also be holding on to old ways of doing church that are no longer effective. Or the church keeps having revivals, hoping to instill new life into the church. But after each revival, people go back to the same old patterns.

John R.W. Stott, an English theologian, states, "Vision begins with a holy discontent with the way things are." It is possible to become so content with our church that we become complacent. We are busy building homes, families, and careers, while trying to live in a chaotic, change-filled world. Sometimes the last thing church members want to see changed is their church. They like the stability of church being the same week after week. Unfortunately, that sameness can breed complacency and weak ministry.

Discouragement may set in, even bitterness. And the lighthouse God called into existence only emits a weak light. But with a vision, the future begins to grow and become clear and larger than the past and present. Discouragement and complacency are replaced with hope.

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### **3. Vision gives your church a target.**

Aubrey Malphurs, in his book, *Planting Growing Churches for the Twenty-first Century* writes, "People can't focus on fog! As someone once said, 'If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time!' " He further states, "[Vision] is the ministry compass that helps a congregation and the leaders navigate through the ocean of decision."<sup>2</sup>

All organizations fit into two categories: Those with vision have a sense of direction and destiny; those without vision seem lost and befuddled. A church that develops a vision puts a compass in the hands of its people. Instead of the pastor pulling and pushing, the people have a common sense of destiny.

### **4. Vision gets people in the game.**

What church does not need more laypeople actively involved, using their gifts and energies to advance God's kingdom in their community? There are many reasons why laypeople do not become involved in church work. One of those reasons is lack of vision.

With a clear and compelling vision that laymembers help shape, a church is better positioned to invite laypeople into the challenges and excitement of Kingdom work. Without it, it's just one more class to teach, room to clean, or meeting to attend.

(Part 3 of the article will be in the next issue of The Messenger.)

## **Benefit Concert October 13th**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**  
"Broadway for Hope" Concert  
October 13!

Join us for a very special benefit concert on Sunday, October 13 at 3:00 PM right here at Dearborn Congregational Church. Brian Townsend, a prominent talent in the Dearborn theater community, will sing a medley of famous Broadway show tunes touching on themes of joy, hope, peace, and the power of God.

Tickets are on sale now for \$5, and can also be purchased at the door. So be sure to invite family members, friends, and work associates to this inspirational event! Proceeds go to support Central Detroit Community of Hope (hence the concert title!), an adult foster care home for women transitioning out of the juvenile foster care system.

It is our hope too that those visiting DCC for the first time on this occasion might consider making us their new church home!

## OUR CHURCH AT WORK In October

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### Helpers for Sunday Services

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#### Greeters:

- October 6 – Available
- October 13 – Available
- October 20 – Available
- October 27 – Available

#### Ushers:

- October 6 – Joanne Owen & Tom Brown
- October 13 – Available
- October 20 – Available
- October 27 – Available

#### Liturgists:

- October 6 – John Peters
- October 13 – Available
- October 20 – Available
- October 27 – Available

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### PRAYER LIST

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Bernice Hartling	Medical Concerns
Shirley Fedraw	Medical Concerns
Bunny Hoganson	Medical Concerns
Geri Sampson	Medical Concerns
Suzanne Van Ranst	Medical Concerns
Brenda Walker	Medical Concerns
Gayle Bart	Medical Concerns
Ellis Mangrum	Medical Concerns



## october Birthdays

- 1 Isabelle Hutton
- 6 Kim Meharg
- 7 Jane Haling
- 8 Pat Stacho
- 23 Arnie Schilbe
- 25 Suzanne Van Ranst
- 26 Ethan McAdam

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### Dedication of Flowers - October

- October 6 – Dave & Elaine Stacho
- October 13 – Available
- October 20 – Available
- October 27 – Available

### Fellowship Hour - October

- October 6 – Available
- October 13 – Available
- October 20 – Available
- October 27 – Available

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### DATES TO REMEMBER...

October	4 & 5	Rummage/Bake Sale 9am – 5pm
October	9	Trustees Meeting 7pm
October	10	Diaconate Meeting 7pm
October	13	Benefit Concert 3pm

## I'm Just Asking...

### With Pat Stacho

IT'S OVER!! By the time many of you read this, we will have made it through another rummage/bake sale. Weeks of hard work all leading up to a weekend of fun...yes, I said FUN. If you were fortunate enough to join us, you had fun!

Once again, I had to resist the many treasures. I almost bought a waffle iron, until I came to my senses. I don't iron my husband's shirts. Why would I iron waffles?? Where would the syrup go? There was no reason to go shopping in the French room. Last year I bought a sweater thinking it would match one I had at home. Well guess what...that was the sweater I thought was still at home. (Somebody bought it this year, so that problem is solved.)

Housewares always is a challenge for me. So many mugs, gadgets, silly little knick knacks, and tables upon tables of goodies to resist. Wish I knew what that shiny thing-a-ma-jig with the wooden handle is. Never mind, it's so darn cute. I can fake a nifty story about my new found family heirloom.

At least Elaine didn't talk me into that sock darter. Like I'd ever need that. I just buy Pete all white socks. Get a hole???? I recycle it as a dust rag. I do worry that one day Pete will wonder where all his socks have gone. You can only blame the dryer so many times.

Shoes...purses...sweaters...slacks...books...that's another thing! Did you see how organized Roberta had that room? She makes it impossible to resist looking. And I always find something I want to read. Between my kindle and my recent book purchase, I wouldn't have had time to darn socks anyway. Not to mention the cookbooks I bought. Now I have new recipes to try. It never ends!

Thanks to everyone who came through. It is amazing what we can do when we work together. The friends who volunteered once again, pricing, sorting, working the weekend, we appreciate each and every one of you. Thank you.

Our church family may be smaller, but it is stronger...and it definitely is family. Although, 'family' should've never let me buy a farting elf, even if it does light up!

Rest up people. Our tree sale is next. We ladies have a reputation to keep up. (shame on you...not that kind of reputation!) Our sales skills will once again beat the men! In the meantime, Happy Halloween. Remember, the more candy you give out, the less you can eat!



## **Book Club**

The Book Club is currently reading *Saving CeeCee Honeycutt* by Beth Hoffman. Copies are available for check-out in the blue bag on the shelf in the office. The date for the next meeting will be announced in an upcoming bulletin.

## Special Mission



### **Special Offering - "Neighbors In Need":**

On Sunday, Oct. 6 our congregation is taking up a special offering. Take a stand against hunger on behalf of children by contributing to *Neighbors In Need*, a UCC mission focusing on hunger that affects so many impoverished youth.

By giving to this cause, you support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Please consider a donation and "Imagine a World Without Hunger"!

## Diaconate Update

### FROM THE DIACONATE:

John Peters, Chair; Cheryl Brown, Nancy Wolter, Teresa Curless, Colleen Grozdanoff

Guest Minister in October: Please join us to hear the gospel according to Rev. Walter Kargus, retired UCC minister from Plymouth, who will be preaching from the pulpit all month long as our special guest. Rev. Kargus has a unique style and a willingness to engage the congregation in the Sunday sermon. So please take the time to acquaint yourself with Rev. Kargus after service during fellowship hour, if you haven't already.

Volunteers on Sunday: We need people to help during worship service on Sundays. If you are able and available to lend a hand as an usher, liturgist, or fellowship host, please see Cheryl Brown or sign the sheet located in the Mayflower Room. Thank you!

### Minister Search Update:

We're happy to report that 'phase one' of our search for a new minister is now complete with the submission of our 20-page Local Church Profile, an exhaustive document about DCC, its members, and history that took months to prepare. Very recently, the job posting (or 'help wanted' ad) for a new minister was posted on the UCC website for the state of Michigan. The next phase of the search will involve the Search Committee screening ministerial profiles of candidates who apply for our opening.

## Treasurer's Report for August 2013

Income- \$2,923.00  
Expenses- \$9,532.38

Capital Improvement Fund - \$9,784.55  
Investments with UBS valued at \$208,421.21

Matthew Haling, Treasurer



## Words of Appreciation

We wish to extend a heartfelt 'thank you!' to several church members who donated money to help buy 30 subscriptions of *Scholastic News* for a class in Bennett Elementary, located in a poor area of southwest Detroit. *Scholastic News* is a valuable resource in educating students which allows both student and parent to read and learn together. The articles are written at grade level, and interesting enough that kids are excited to share and read with their parents. We are grateful for the generosity of those members who made this possible!

Thanks!



October 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>  
9am – 5pm

Please come to rummage through the donated clothing, books, electronic, kitchen wares, fine collectibles, toys, games, furniture, shoes, linens, and various odds and ends. There are treasures awaiting you!

Also, don't forget to stop by the Bake Sale and get some goodies!

