



24 & MORE

St. Luke's New Vision


24 & MORE VISION: ST. LUKE'S 3-YEAR STRATEGIC VISION PLAN

Post COVID, the world is changing and culture's relationship with the church has shifted. In January of 2023 we asked what ripple effects God would create through St. Luke's to help reach and invite people into a relationship with Christ and impact Central Florida with God's vision of love, equity, and justice. This 24 & More Vision is grounded in our Wesleyan heritage, rooted in Scripture, and relentless in our mission to *Awaken Disciples to Reveal the Kingdom* and expressed through our core values of *Christ-centered Love lived out through acceptance, hospitality, community, discipleship, and service*. These are St. Luke's essential guiding principles of ministry.

A vision team, including a diverse representation of the congregation, prayed and worked through survey responses, demographic studies of St. Luke's current congregation, and community statistics and studied current environmental realities as well as challenges to help shape desired outcomes in the next 3 years. The environment and challenges a new vision must address are:

- A **chaotic geo-political climate** leading to increased division in our communities and increased **challenges to our physical environment**
- **Socio-economic instability** and pressures that heighten our previous work of restoring hope through secure housing and stable food resources, especially for children and families
- An increased crisis **of mental health and wellbeing** post-COVID, particularly in young people and older adults who are struggling with a sense of belonging
- **Positive and negative effects of social media and technology** the church could harness for positive community building and expanded reach
- **Cultural shifts, especially in organized religion** as people become less trusting in religious institutions but, more than ever, seek brave and safe spaces of acceptance, belonging, and purpose willing to make a difference in the world

In the biblical translation *The Voice*, Psalm 147 speaks of the power of God's love,
*The Eternal, Architect of earth, is building Jerusalem,
finding the lost, gathering Israel's outcasts.
[God] binds their wounds, heals the sorrows of their hearts.
... counts all the stars within His hands...*
*Our Lord is great. Nothing is impossible with His overwhelming power.
[God] is loving, compassionate, and wise beyond all measure...*
...[God's] command ripples across the earth;



An effective vision for the next three years helps us live out our mission and values by proclaiming a God who gathers outcasts and heals wounds and hearts; and whose church, by extending love, compassion, and justice, commands God ripples across our city and state.

This vision should alleviate the environmental challenges and create ripples that would result in the following desired outcomes for our congregation, neighbors, and community.

- Broaden the understanding and definition of worship and gathering, campus use, and redefine active engagement of disciples as mobilized agents in the world.
- Build upon St. Luke's strengths of Care ministries, Children and Youth offerings, Missional engagement, Music, Art and Theater ministries as extensions of evangelism, discipleship, and community transformation.
- Grow, in commitment to God's Kingdom vision of diversity and inclusion, to be a congregation that intentionally mirrors the community God has invited us to reach.
- Develop a culture of personal call and purpose, helping people grow in discipleship and witness, as St. Lukers LEAD their lives as theologians in their own public squares.
- Optimize the breadth of technology to continue to grow options to reach more people and empower them to Learn God's story and Live God's story together in community.
- Reflect a community committed to be a safe haven for all God's children and a brave space where people are encouraged to be their authentic, gifted, and unique selves to become agents for change, social justice, and equity.
- Continue to be fiscally responsible and stable as an institution, to increase trust of people who want to support a church, making lasting, tangible change in the community.
- Extend and expand our impact and reach across Central Florida, increasing awareness of St. Luke's DNA and what we believe, to reach people with the love of Christ.

The rest of this booklet is about HOW we will accomplish these desired outcomes.

Each pillar contains initiatives of ministry to strengthen the congregation as disciples of Jesus and empower St. Luke's to move beyond our campus to fulfill Jesus' commission to "*go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you.*" (Matthew 28: 19-20)

Success will be seen in deeper faith and conviction in all St. Lukers who live purposeful and innovative lives of ministry on campus and in daily life. This vision will require us to leverage spiritual gifts and cultural strengths and ensure focus, prioritization of time, talents and treasure as well as having the flexibility and fluidity for course correction through successful change management and fiscal responsibility.

In the Old Testament, God's presence moved with the people, tabernacled with them as they journeyed toward the promised land and even as they were in exile. It wasn't until the temple was built that the presence of God was considered "fixed" or "static." We live in a culture desperate to seek spiritual meaning but no longer trusting in the fixed "temples" of modern religion. St. Luke's vision reimagines our ministry on campus to create missional agents ready to "tabernacle" and reach beyond our campus with God's presence in innovative ripples of grace, love, mercy and justice. We know you want to make a ripple with YOUR life so how will you help us move toward our 50th year of ministry through this God-given 24 and More vision?

U ST LUKE'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 2023 3-YEAR VISION

Environment

Chaotic Geo-Political
Climate (including
Environment)

Socio-Economic
Instability/Pressures

Mental Health/Well-
Being/Belonging

Desired

Broaden how we define:
Worship
Campus
Attendance/engagement

Build on strengths:
Care, Children/Youth, Missions,
Music/Theater Ministries
Diversity & inclusion

Develop and grow
Culture of personal
Discipleship and e
Optimized use of t

Who We Are

Christ-Centered Love

Welcoming

Wesleyan

Our Core Values

Acceptance

Hospitality

Community

Discipleship

Service

1. Children/Youth/ Families

Education

Family Discipleship

Multi-Generational Relationships/Mentoring

Safe/Home/Belonging/Care/Connection

2. Adult Ministries

50 North

Singles & Starters

Lead To
Independence &
Sustainability

Vision

3. Disci Evan

Personal C

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Call and

Executi

Leverage/Grow
Passionate Partner
Volunteers

Leverag
Partne
Alliances
Fu

Our Purpose: Awaken disciples to reveal the Ki

and Challenges

Technology/Social Media (+ and -)

Post-Pandemic Behaviors/Expectations

Cultural Shifts re: Organized Religion

Outcomes

Evangelism technology

Ensure we are:
 A safe haven/brave space
 Agents for change/social justice/equity
 Stable/fiscally responsible

Extend and expand:
 Our impact and reach
 Clarity/awareness of who we are and what we believe

Foundation Pillars

1. Leadership/Evangelism

Call/Purpose
 Witness
 Stewardship

2. Purpose

4. Missions/Community

Impact/Advocacy
 Restoring Hope
 Social Justice/Equity

Mobilized Agents

5. Engagement/Growth

Worship + Experience
 Beyond the Campus
 Our Brand & Reach

Campus to Community

Critical Success Factors

Faith & Conviction

Purposeful & Innovative

Leverage Spiritual Gifts & Strengths

Communications & Change Management

Focus, Prioritization & Course Correction

Fiscal Responsibility

Operation Model

Large Effective Partnerships & External Funding

Experimentation and Agility

Leverage Technology & Communication Channels

Kingdom, reveal the Kingdom to awaken disciples.

A VISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Creating a safe and brave home of belonging care and Connection

"People were bringing children to Jesus so that he would bless them. But the disciples scolded them. When Jesus saw this, he grew angry and said to them, "Allow the children to come to me. Don't forbid them, because God's kingdom belongs to people like these children. I assure you that whoever doesn't welcome God's kingdom like a child will never enter it." Then he hugged the children and blessed them" - Mark 10:13-16

The fastest growing demographic in our community are singles and starter families. St. Lukers responded that their hearts burst to fill those gaps in community and education to create authentic, accepting brave and safe space where children and youth could belong, learn and grow as disciples of Jesus and become voices of advocacy. Post covid, families want to be more grounded and centered, often choosing the communities and relationship in their neighborhoods as priority. In this pillar we will grow safe spaces and communities that feel like home for all children and youth on campus and off campus through:

- Supporting education with safe and brave learning environments for all ages
- Neighborhood ministries to grow "tabernacle" ministries in our community for families
- Parenting resources and family support workshops and education
- Multi generational mentoring opportunities for the entire family

A VISION FOR ADULTS

Creating inviting caring communities of belonging and connection

"Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you really understand what you are reading?" The man replied, "Without someone to guide me, how could I?" Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him." - Acts 8:30-31

St. Luke's wanted to share salt and light in the community by helping people find purpose and belonging, and building bridges across our divided culture. The fastest growing population, singles and starter families, and St. Luke's largest population of retirees age 50+ need each other for connection, mentoring, and purpose. St. Luke's is poised to offer adults connections through:

- Multigenerational mentoring through networking opportunities related to life, job, justice work
- Reach those disenfranchised or turned off by religion and create safe spaces to do life together, make community difference through social change and reconstruct faith.
- Build communities of authentic relationships in person and through digital technology

A VISION FOR DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM

Creating a culture of personal callings and purpose to empower us to LEAD as disciples in the public square of our everyday living.

"We have different gifts that are consistent with God's grace that has been given to us... The leader should lead with passion." - Romans 12:8

St. Lukers want to help people in our congregation and community find connection, meaning, purpose, and belonging. In our theological tradition, we shape that through the concept of calling – the way God has designed our personalities and the way we work; the way God shapes us with gifts throughout our lifetime; and the contexts in which God places us that invite us to use our unique gifts, talents, and identity to participate in God's work in the world. We will ensure St. Lukers and community members feel equipped to LEAD lives as awakened disciples who reveal the kingdom in their context. We will live into this calling by:

- Creating a leadership academy for all ages to explore callings, understand spiritual gifts, passion and personal wiring, and grounded in spiritual disciplines to empower people to Lead their Lives.
- Expand personal relationships and call to be witnesses who build community, listen, and learn from others and share stories and invitations to others.
- Develop a theology of generosity and stewardship for all St. Lukers to create sustainability and longevity of ministry

A VISION FOR MISSION AND THE COMMUNITY

Empower St. Lukers to be mobilized agents of love, mercy, justice and advocacy in Central Florida

"The Lord commissioned seventy-two others and sent them on ahead in pairs to every city and place he was about to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is bigger than you can imagine, but there are few workers.' - Luke 10: 1-2

Continuing to build on the 2020+ vision to restore hope through food and housing stabilization, St. Lukers recognize the next step in making sustainable change is to leverage our voices and expertise for advocacy and impact beyond the local neighborhoods to a city, state and national level. To become a church reflective of God's Kingdom in our community and mirror the diversity of our neighborhood, this new vision will create mobilized agents who:

- *Use their voices and influence to create a broader impact of leveling housing and food insecurity through partnering with agencies for mercy, justice and advocacy work.*
- *Continue the work of community redevelopment through restoring hope in securing affordable housing, sustainable work opportunities and expanding micro-farm work.*
- *Center Creation Care for environmental protection and sustainability because the climate crisis disproportionately affects marginalized communities.*
- *Continue to become a beacon of the work of equity in our community and state.*

A VISION FOR ENGAGEMENT AND GROWTH

Create opportunities to strengthen and innovate engagement on campus and expand St Lukes DNA and presence into virtual and Central Florida spaces to meet Jesus on the road.

"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." - Acts 1: 8

Engaging new people and growing ministry and understanding of our work beyond our campus is crucial to meet a new generation of people with the good news of Jesus Christ. St. Luke's is one of the best kept secrets in Central Florida while also being the largest, most inclusive churches in our city and United Methodist church in our state. When reading the demographics of people not connected to faith or church, the core of what they are looking for matches our brand, identity, and ministry. This vision has initiatives to help us:

- *Engage in new worship experiences and opportunities to showcase storytelling and the arts to reach new generations and those harmed by the church.*
- *Create satellite locations for ministry in neighborhoods and areas across Central Florida to reach people through authentic community, missions, arts, and experiences of worship.*
- *Create clarity around St. Luke's DNA and work to leverage strategic partnership and collaborations to extend our reach through core values, Wesleyan theology, arts and outreach.*



Our Purpose

Awaken disciples to reveal the Kingdom,
reveal the Kingdom to awaken disciples.



Our Core Values

At our center is the love of Jesus Christ.

We value Christ-Centered:

Acceptance: We recognize that Christ's love has no boundaries.

Hospitality: We welcome all to share Christ's love through help, hope, and healing

Community: We claim a sacred place where Christ's love unites all to support and care for others while nurturing a personal relationship with God.

Discipleship: We believe we are called to be living representatives of Jesus Christ and bring others to know God's mercy, justice, grace, and love.

Service: We respond to Christ's love and God's call, by sharing our time, talents, tithes, spiritual gifts, and resources.