

STRATEGIC VISION AND ACTION PLAN ST. ANDREW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DENTON, TEXAS



JANUARY 1, 2025

Introduction

In January 2024, the Session of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church began a year-long period of discernment to develop a long-range vision and action plan for the church. It was the hope and desire of the Session to create an enduring plan that would inspire the members and leadership of St. Andrew to efficiently and effectively perform God’s work in Denton and beyond for many years to come.

During this time, the Session engaged in a multifaceted process that involved scripture, prayer, a review of various internal and external data sources, and thoughtful discussion to determine who our St. Andrew community is and what God is calling us to be. This process began with a one-day Session Retreat on January 20, 2024, that provided a forum for listening and understanding and which resulted in the collaborative development of a focused plan for the way forward.

The Session of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church gives thanks to God for the opportunity to prepare and share this Strategic Vision and Action Plan.

Overview

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church is a joyful community of faith committed to worshiping in ways that inspire awe and praise; Growing in God’s Word; Practicing the radical hospitality of divine grace; Sharing God’s love with people of diverse backgrounds and ages; Reaching out to human need in Denton and beyond; Growing in all forms of giving -- time, talent, and treasure; Becoming faithful disciples of Jesus as we learn to love God with all that is in us, and the neighbor as the self. St. Andrew’s location in the heart of Denton, along with our spiritual resolve and God’s steadfast love, enables us to serve our whole community and the world around us.

We are inspired by Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount that we are called to be that shining “city on a hill.” In Matthew 5:14–16 (NRSV), Jesus says, “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 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.”

This call to holiness is meant to lead and challenge us to do all things for the glorification of God. It also serves as the basis for this Strategic Vision and Action Plan through which we let our “light shine

before others,” and so we may deliberately plan for and acknowledge our good works while rightly giving God our unceasing thanks and praise.

Brief History

In 2014, the Session approved the creation of the St. Andrew Mission Study Team and tasked them with discerning the call for St. Andrew Presbyterian Church after the retirement of the church’s pastor of 25 years. In 2015, this team developed a Mission Study for St. Andrew Presbyterian Church that became the basis for the church’s priorities and budgeting decisions.

As part of the planning process, the Mission Study Team identified five Core Values and several specific Goals and Objective (Action Items) that would sustain St. Andrew for years to come. In January 2024, the Session of St. Andrew reaffirmed the relevance and importance of these same Core Values during their Session Retreat.

In their conclusion, the Mission Study Team asserted their enthusiastic belief in St. Andrew by writing, “We believe St. Andrew has many strengths and that our journey coincides with a broader sense of rejuvenation, energy, enthusiasm and excitement for what is ahead. For many, at this crucial time in our history, St. Andrew is awakening to the joys of spring, a new season of purpose and possibilities. To this end, we celebrate the grace of God and the freedom that comes from knowing we are loved. And yet too often our society creates divisions based on economic, political, social, geographic and religious lines. We believe these are some of the dark places to which we are called to shine God’s light of peace, love, and hope.”

The Mission Study team further wrote, “We believe St. Andrew will continue to be a place rooted in the Reformed tradition, where all may come to a common table, where all may find spiritual air to breathe, where all may come to wrestle with hard questions about their Christian faith, where all may come to find a welcoming community of acceptance, inclusion, and hospitality. Through the power of our risen Lord, we believe each of us can come to truly know ourselves and still celebrate the identity of our neighbor who holds different convictions, different social attitudes, different ethnic heritages, different political priorities or economic standing.”

Welcome Statement

We proclaim that ALL people are created in the image of God and affirm that each person is a beloved child of God. We welcome all, celebrating our differences while finding unity in Christ. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

Mission Statement

We worship and learn about God as an inclusive community of faith that serves the world in which we live as followers of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Vision Statement

We aspire to be a church family where everyone knows the unconditional love of God, believes in their worth, feels safe to explore their faith, and serves the needs of the community.

Core Values

During the Mission Study development process, the Mission Study Team facilitated a series of congregational-wide visioning sessions to help identify the Core Values of St. Andrew. Since that time, these Core Values have shaped the vision for how our church mission is to be executed and how are church resources are to be expended.

The five Core Values that were identified in 2015 and that were reaffirmed by the Session in January 2024 are:

1. Exceptional Music and Worship
2. Quality Education and Programming for All Ages
3. Hospitality (Acceptance and Inclusion)
4. Nurture and Compassion
5. Outreach to the Community and Beyond

These five Core Values surround the central tenet of our beliefs, our Faith in Christ.

Interestingly, the Core Values identified in 2015 and 2024 echo the four pillars of St. Andrew's 2006 Strategic Plan. In that body of work, those commissioned identified Worship, Learning, Outreach and Community as the strategic focus areas for the congregation. The Mission Study Team found it to be reassuring that many of those same dimensions remain as Core Values today, yet St. Andrew intentionally felt called to address the multifaceted nature of community, serving those beyond our doors while nurturing and showing compassion for those within our midst.

These Core Values are further depicted in graphic form at the end of this document in Appendix A.

Goals and Outcomes By Core Value

The Session of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church identified specific Goals and desired Outcomes that directly support the Core Values of the church. These Goals and Outcomes are intended to guide and inform the development of program and budget priorities for the church. These designated Goals and Outcomes are a significant part of the larger St. Andrew Presbyterian Church Strategic Vision and Action Plan.

Committee Moderators and church leaders are instructed to develop their annual budgets and activity plans in accordance with the Goals and Outcomes by Core Values document. This is

done to ensure that all church activities are directly aligned with and support the provisions of the St. Andrew Strategic Vision and Action Plan.

The specific Goals and Outcomes by Core Value, along with their supporting elements (Action Items), are further depicted at the end of this document in Appendix B.

Fiscal and Program Accountability

The Mission Study charged St. Andrew with establishing objectives that include the "development of robust processes and procedures to drive fiscal accountability." This accountability process was created and implemented in 2016 and has since been accomplished through the St. Andrew Strategic Initiative Review Process.

The Strategic Initiative Review Process was designed to help the church better align its activities and funding directly with the Saint Andrew Mission Study. The Strategic Initiative Review Process consists of two separate but similar activities that ensure fiscal and program accountability. These activities are the Budget Request Process and the Accomplishments Report Process.

The Strategic Initiative Review Process provides a structured format for Committee Moderators to accurately plan activities, develop budgets, and account for the accomplishment of those activities at the end of the year. This includes the development of an Annual Report that has historically been presented during St. Andrew's annual Congregational Meeting.

The timeline for the Strategic Initiative Review Process can be found in Appendix C.

Action Implementation Plan

Appendix D of this plan identifies specific actions that are to be implemented by each committee that directly relate to and support the Goals and Objectives by Core Value found in Appendix B. This list of actions can be the same year after year but can also be modified each year depending on changing priorities and budget concerns of the church. The Action Implementation Plan can also serve as a template or reminder of activities that should generally be considered as part of the annual Budget Request process for the church.

APPENDIX A

CORE VALUES



Working Together in Support of Our Core Values

APPENDIX B

GOALS AND OUTCOMES BY CORE VALUE

The Session of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church has identified specific Goals and desired Outcomes that directly support the Core Values of the church. These Goals and Outcomes are intended to guide and inform the development of program and budget priorities for the church. These designated Goals and Outcomes are a significant part of the larger St. Andrew Presbyterian Church Strategic Vision and Action Plan (2025).

Exceptional Worship and Music (Core Value)

1. Continue to stretch capacity for worship and creativity (Goal)
 - a. Accept and admire various ways God speaks to us (Outcome)
 - b. Expand breadth of worship elements (Outcome)
 - c. Ensure exceptional worship and music for both onsite and online congregation (Outcome)
 - d. Expand worship setting and audio-visual capabilities beyond traditional organ and piano music elements (Outcome)
 - e. Evaluate how sanctuary can support attendance growth (Outcome)
2. Affirm Our Reformed Heritage (Goal)
 - a. Renewed intentionality and understanding on why we do things in worship (Outcome)
 - b. Value our identity by celebrating the reformed and reforming nature of our church (Outcome)

Quality Education and Programming for All Ages (Core Value)

1. Facilitate Connectedness Within the Congregation (Goal)
 - a. Develop targeted Bible study and book study groups (Outcome)
 - b. Develop social justice and issue discussion groups (Outcome)
 - c. Develop ecumenical discussion groups (Outcome)
 - d. Increase connectivity with and in just-out-of-college demographic groups; i.e. young professional pre-family groups (Outcome)
 - e. Increase connectivity with elderly demographic groups with specific focus on intergenerational events (Outcome)
 - f. Continued heavy investment in children and youth education efforts with specific focus on opportunities for intergenerational mentorship and expanding the Children's Chapel pool of teachers (Outcome)
2. Enable Each to Explore Their Call (Goal)
 - a. Encourage open and honest exploration and discussion of divergent political, ideological and doctrinal issues and opinions (Outcome)
 - b. Affirm and support people wherever they are in their faith journey (Outcome)

GOALS AND OUTCOMES BY CORE VALUE (CONTINUED)

3. Equip Each to Pursue Their Call (Goal)
 - a. Leverage inspired teachers within and outside our membership (Outcome)
 - b. Affirm the continued use of the Presbyterian Sunday School curriculum (Outcome)

4. Celebrate the Joy of Our Faith (Goal)
 - a. Affirm the need to “play-while-we-learn” (Outcome)
 - b. Affirm the continued use of the Godly Play curriculum (Outcome)
 - c. Celebrate our faith through the arts and through social gatherings (Outcome)
 - d. Celebrate our faith through individual creativity (Outcome)

Hospitality (Acceptance and Inclusion) (Core Value)

1. Provide a hospitable environment for all to come Christ (Goal)
 - a. Ensure access is available to all by providing
 - i. Streaming access for remote worshipers (Outcome)
 - ii. Physical access for those with disabilities (Outcome)
 - iii. Visual access for those throughout the church (Outcome)
 - b. Equip staff and the congregation to facilitate open and honest discussion to seek understanding and acceptance of divergent viewpoints (Outcome)
 - c. Strive to find ways to that might inspire our congregation to become more Christ-like in welcoming and serving the stranger (Outcome)

Nurture and Compassion (Core Value)

1. Nurture Our Neighbor (Goal)
 - a. Affirm the importance of ministry that tends to the needs of our neighbor (Outcome)
 - b. Celebrate the joys and care for the sadness that come across all stages of life (Outcome)
 - c. Expand lay pastoral care programs; i.e. Stephen Ministry, Diaconate Ministries, prayer group ministries, etc. (Outcome)
2. Nurture of Organization (Goal)
 - a. Encourage programs to inspire generosity of time, talents and treasure (Outcome)
 - b. Communicate the benefit of planned gifts and how members can support the church (Outcome)
 - c. Plan for and implement pastoral and congregational sabbatical programming (Outcome)
 - d. Develop robust processes and procedures that ensure fiscal accountability and responsibility (Outcome)
 - e. Implement staff and program performance reviews that inspire creativity and effectiveness (Outcome)

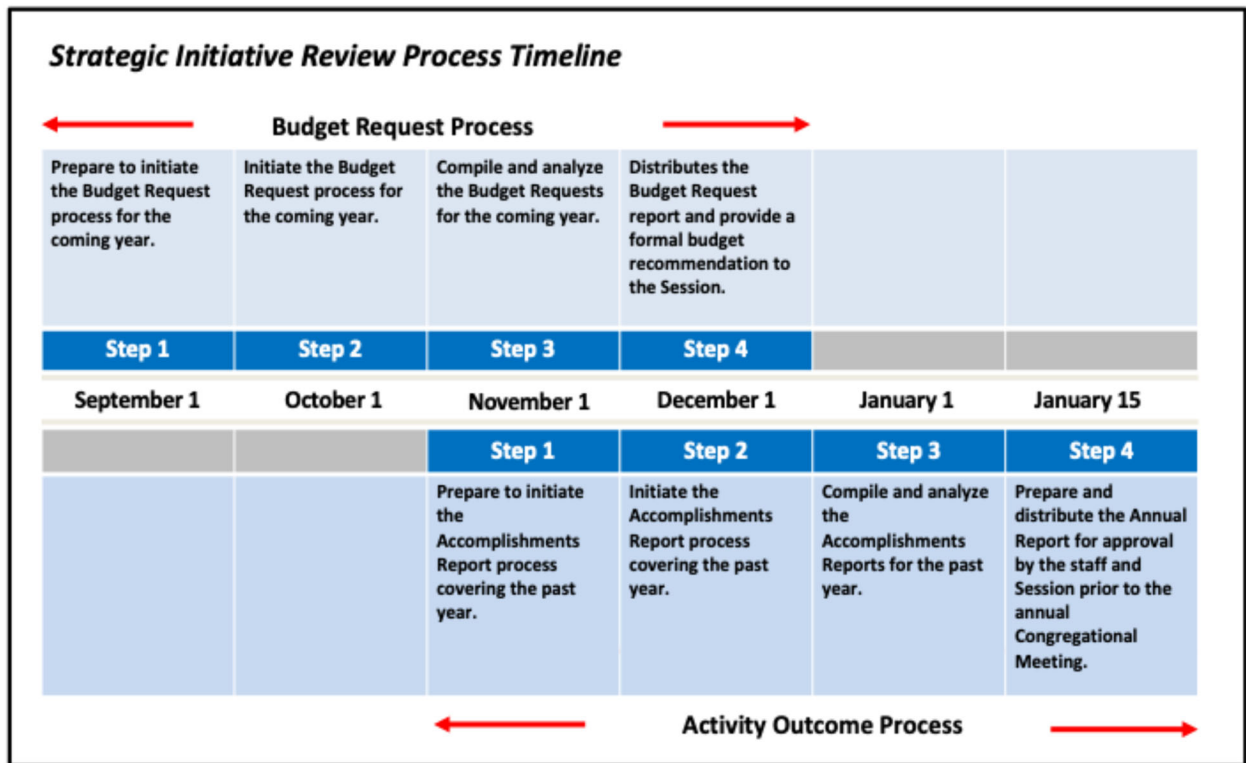
GOALS AND OUTCOMES BY CORE VALUE (CONTINUED)

Outreach to the Community and Beyond (Core Value)

1. Engage the Community More Actively (Goal)
 - a. Celebrate and continue to actively support the Treehouse after-school activity and the Children's Place pre-school (Outcome)
 - b. Seek opportunities to more directly connect with the broader Denton area community; i.e. TWU, UNT (Outcome)
 - c. Define and develop new strategic community outreach initiative now that Our Daily Bread has left our campus (Outcome)
2. Enhance the Marketing of St. Andrew's Offerings (Goal)
 - a. Develop and implement a robust marketing strategy (Outcome)
 - b. Develop and implement a robust and updated media presence (Outcome)
 - c. Provide connectivity for homebound members and others who wish to remotely participate in worship (Outcome)
 - d. Actively participate in and support Denton-area festivals, events and community gatherings (Outcome)

APPENDIX C

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE REVIEW PROCESS



Completion of the Strategic Initiative Review Process has historically been the responsibility of St. Andrew’s Stewardship and Interpretation Committee.

APPENDIX D

ACTION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Committee Moderators are requested to identify and implement specific actions each year that directly relate to and support St. Andrew's Goals and Objectives by Core Value (Appendix B). These actions can be the same each year, but they can also vary depending on changing priorities and budget concerns of the church.

The Action Implementation Plan can serve as a template or reminder of activities that should be considered as part of the annual Budget Request process for the church.

Every year, a new Action Implementation Plan should be created that includes long-standing actions, programs, or traditions. Each plan should also contain any additions or deletions that might be appropriate. Every Committee Moderator is responsible for the creation of this annual plan along with providing accountability and oversight for the listed activities.