

**Concordia Lutheran Church**  
Wilmington, DE

**Strategic Ministry Planning  
(SMP)**

In 2005, the congregation engaged the services of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund to facilitate the Strategic Ministry Planning (SMP) Process. The congregation decided to make this investment due to past discussions on building expansion; investment in a new organ; and to seek unity and clarity in our mission and ministry in preparation for the retirement of our current pastor. Our current pastor had served the church for 25 years and the congregation needed to define “who we are as a congregation” in anticipation of calling our next settled pastor.

This process began with large group meetings between the facilitator and the entire congregation. We prayerfully began this process with open hands, ears, minds, and hearts seeking to be led by God through the process. The following one-page SMP Summary defines the values, goals, vision and mission as revealed to us through this self-study.

Over 100 members of our congregation were then placed on “teams” to further define the ministry needs and goals for the church, currently and as we plan for the future. Each team had a “champion” to facilitate studies and discussions in the following areas of our mission and ministry: Spiritual Gifts, Discipleship, Education, Worship, Youth, Outreach / Evangelism, and Community Service. One final team was created to review the results from the other groups, and then review the necessary staff and facilities required to support such a mission and ministry.

The four-page Strategic Ministry Action Plan to follow details the activities to be initiated in order to advance our mission and strive to meet our goals and vision for Concordia. Timeframes were established to monitor our progress. Activities completed to date are also included in this Action Plan. Progress has been made in some areas, but not others. With God’s help, and the gifts He has given His people of Concordia, we continue along this strategic ministry journey.

# Concordia Lutheran Church

Wilmington, DE

## Strategic Ministry Planning

### Why did we embark on this journey?

- Past discussions on building expansion, investment in organ, etc.
- Answer question: Who is Concordia Lutheran Church?
- Seek unity through a ministry plan as we look into the future
- Preparation for calling a new pastor

### What have we learned about ourselves and God's plan for us?

His Mission for us: ***Serving Community by Sharing Christian Hope***

Our Core values:

1. Care for Community
2. Sharing Christian Love
3. Worshipping the Lord

Our Aspirational Values:

1. Sharing the Gospel through outreach
2. Youth Program and Young Families
3. Personal Commitment to Spiritual Growth
4. Growth of our Congregation

His Vision for us:

1. Our guests will be inspired and up-lifted by our magnetic love as we embrace and feed them with renewed hope.
2. The empowered disciples of Concordia Lutheran will nurture each other with spiritual energy as we worship, teach and challenge ourselves.
3. We will reach into our diverse community, broadcasting our faith, as we serve their physical, intellectual and spiritual needs with the shining light of charity and love.

His Goal for us: Create an enlivened fellowship, that boldly reaches out to remove roadblocks to spreading the Gospel and nurtures spiritual growth.

# Strategic Ministry Action Plan

*(Actions taken as of January 2008 indicated in italics)*

As ambassadors for Christ, we the members of Concordia Lutheran Church pledge to use the gifts God has given us to move forward in faith “serving community by sharing Christian hope” through:

## DEPLOYING OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND DISCIPLESHIP

- Now**
- 1. Inventory gifts of members**  
*(Database has been created of members’ gifts as revealed through the Spiritual Gifts discovery process – list has been updated as additional people complete process)*
  - 2. Offer Spiritual Gifts classes**  
*(Another class was completed in early 2006 with 16 people participating – added to Spiritual Gifts database)*
  - 3. Integrate Gifts / Discipleship into New Member process**  
*(Entire Strategic Ministry Action Plan reviewed as part of our Inquiry Process including Spiritual Gifts discussion and promotion of going through process and serving accordingly)*
- 6 months**
- 1. Encourage people to serve according to their gifts**  
*(Using Spiritual Gifts database to ask members to serve in appropriate areas of our mission and ministry – opportunities shared at Ministry Fair)*
  - 2. Assign gifts to ministry opportunities (Volunteer Handbook)**
  - 3. Offer Spiritual Gifts class in different formats**  
*(Will continue to offer Spiritual Gifts Discovery as part of our Christian Education program – youth included)*
- Long term**
- 1. Discipleship Training**  
*(Pastor Betzner teaching “What the World Needs Now” on Sunday mornings)*
  - 2. Mentoring program**

## LEARNING GOD’S WORD

- Now**
- 1. Educator’s Training**  
*(Seeking opportunities for Sunday School Teachers – some attended seminars)*
  - 2. Multiple study options on Sunday morning**  
*(Encourage new adult study leaders, in addition to pastors – added Young Adult Study to Sunday mornings)*
- 6 months**
- 1. Employ a Ministry or Volunteer Coordinator**  
*(John Hetrick on staff as of February 2006)*
  - 2. “In home” study options**  
*(Researched during regional small group meetings – Daily Devotion with youth – expanded to include college students)*
- Long term**
- 1. Expanded VBS (with other churches, outreach, etc.)**  
*(successful outreach to our Preschool, community, local churches)*
  - 2. Employ additional staff for Christian Education**

## **WORSHIP AND PRAYER**

- Now**
- 1. Increase Youth involvement – Greeters, Ushers, Readers**  
*(Periodically serve as greeters and ushers – including youth in worship planning)*
  - 2. Continue “Third Sunday” worship – one service only**  
*(Integrating worship style changes and various hymn selections – worship style and liturgical and musical changes during interim season)*
  - 3. “Prayer and Praise” time between services**  
*(Grades 7-12 between services)*
  - 4. Prayer Insert in Bulletin**  
*(Updated weekly – published every Sunday)*
  - 5. Prayer Tree**  
*(Being rejuvenated – Deacon Small Groups used as well)*
- 6 months**
- 1. “Liturgical and Worship Study” services**  
*(Offered periodically – Introduction of LSB, worship liturgy notes)*
  - 2. Youth Sunday service**  
*(Added to worship schedule once each spring and fall)*
  - 3. Annotated Liturgy**  
*(Scripture references listed in Order of Service – worship notes included in bulletins)*
  - 4. Deacon study on Communion**  
*(Study completed; Multiple changes in practice including interim season)*
- Long term**
- Add Alternative (in style not substance) Worship service**  
*(Thursday evenings in summers 2005 and 2006, Family Fellowship evenings, and Youth Sundays; Soul Purpose; integrating style changes into existing worship)*

## **ENGAGING THE YOUTH**

- Now**
- 1. Youth Director**  
*(Marty Sarkissian – part-time)*
  - 2. Youth Leadership Training**  
*(Some Sunday school teachers in past – additional opportunities – Youth attended National Gathering in July and August 2007)*
  - 3. Fellowship, Worship and Service Activities**  
*(Lock-ins, Prayer and Praise, Youth Sunday, EDR, OGT, RAKE)*
- 6 months**
- 1. Youth Board(s)**  
*(Youth support needs defined to aid staff)*
  - 2. Opportunities for ages below and above Senior High**  
*(Youth Sunday involves ages 2 – 20, VBS for whole family, Family Fellowship)*
  - 3. Parental Education (also outreach opportunity)**  
*(Offered summer 2006, Family Fellowship, Preschool - Power of a Praying Parent)*
  - 4. Youth worship service – Fall and Spring**  
*(Introduced April 2006 – planned for every fall and spring)*
  - 5. Encourage and increase youth involvement in all areas of our mission and ministry**  
*(Youth small group meetings, worship, service)*
- Long term**
- 1. Mentoring program**
  - 2. Employ additional staff for Youth**

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- Now**
- 1. Concordia Community Day**  
*(September 10, 2005 – Music, Ministry Fair, Fun, Food, Fellowship – proposed 2008)*
  - 2. Increase interaction with Preschool**  
*(Event Invitations – Broadway Bound, Youth Sunday, VBS – Service ministries – OGT, EDR, Hilltop – Chapel services – cross communication on Boards / newsletters)*
- 6 months**
- 1. “Life Skills” Workshop**  
*(Power of a Praying Parent – summer 2006, reviews to Preschool families 2006-07; Financial Planning – Fall '07)*
  - 2. Develop communication package**
- Long term**                      **Periodic events**

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

- Now**
- 1. Existing Ministries – financial and physical support**  
*(Continuous and numerous – OGT, EDR, LCS, Habitat)*
  - 2. Inventory members’ involvement in community**  
*(Surveyed fall 2005)*
- 6 months**
- 1. Increase youth participation**  
*(EDR Casseroles and serving, OGT Packing, Random Acts of Kindness Everywhere – service event planned for summer 2008)*
  - 2. Establish networking opportunities and promotion**  
*(Ministry Fair offered Fall 2006)*
  - 3. Add to new member orientation process**  
*(Reviewed our commitment to serving community in our Inquiry Class – what are EDR, OGT, LCS, BBB,...)*
- Long term**
- 1. Define gaps in our service vs. community needs**
  - 2. Develop ministries to reach above groups**

## **SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

- Now**
- 1. Existing staff**  
*(Financial, physical, prayerful - perpetual)*
  - 2. Identify “gaps” in administration / coordination**  
*(Ministry coordinator working with exiting staff and lay leaders and trying to encourage others to serve according to their gifts)*
  - 3. Identify ministry needs upon Pastor’s departure**  
*(Ministry coordinator served along side Pastor, making contacts in community, LCMS District / Circuit, etc. – continuing service in interim)*
  - 4. Develop current budget and long term forecast for appropriate staffing needs**  
*(Budgets prepared for current and projected needs)*

- 6 months**
- 1. Ministry or Volunteer Coordinator – Part time**  
*(John Hetrick)*
  - 2. “Ministry Team” to address above “gaps”**  
*(Gathering ad hoc groups to support worship and youth ministries – expanding pool of Christian Education teachers – youth and adult – Deacons participated in Congregational Care Providers Training)*
  - 3. Form Call Committee (Transition Team)**  
*(Chris Kreicker, Chair – Ida Bowers, Tom Fuesler, Angie Harting, Dona Lerew McNulty, Ed Lorenz, Jesse Shepps, Pat Tomlan, and Phil Weck – developing pastoral needs analyses through congregation input - engaged with District in search for Intentional Interim Pastor now seeking “settled” pastor)*
- Long term**
- 1. Intentional Interim Pastor called fall 2006**  
*(Vacancy pastors filled pulpit - Transition Team interviewed several candidates – Pastor David Betzner installed in March 2007; part-time service continuing)*
  - 2. Settled Pastor called summer 2007**  
*(Currently engaged in Call Process using information gathered in Interim Process and SMP – completed Congregational Profile – working with District)*
  - 3. Seek additional ministry support staff in areas of Christian Education, Youth, and / or Worship - initiated 2007**

### **PROVIDING ADEQUATE FACILITIES TO SUPPORT MISSION AND MINISTRY**

- Now**
- 1. Analyze and creatively utilize existing space effectively**  
*(Continual coordination, communication and creativity)*
  - 2. Provide maintenance for upkeep of existing facility**  
*(Safety issues a priority – lighting, entry system, carpeting, toilets)*
  - 3. Reconstitute Building and Facility Committee**  
*(Dick Hartman, Chair with much support and input from committee, staff, and congregation - worked with architect to develop concepts to meet mission and ministry needs as revealed through SMP)*
  - 4. Develop fund raising strategy**  
*(Meetings with Dr. Art Scherer, LCEF to review potential options – engaged Capital Funding for assistance with multi-year campaign including stewardship education)*
  - 5. Reengage Architect – revise plans according to SMP**  
*(Concepts created, displayed, reviewed and approved – engaged engineering firm to analyze site / prepare plan to meet regulations - phasing options considered)*
  - 6. Reengage Organ Builder – integrate into total project**  
*(Organ included in planning for entire facilities upgrades)*
- 6 months**
- 1. Congregational approval of schematic designs**  
*(Approved June 11, 2006 – moved to final site plan seeking county approval)*
  - 2. Receive commitment / pledges to determine loan requirements and define repayment schedule for budget**  
*(Stewardship and funds drives being created and executed for 2008 and beyond)*
- Long term**
- 1. Renovate existing facility – organ, classrooms, offices, etc.**
  - 2. Build multi-purpose addition**

### **CONTINUING TO SEEK GOD’S WILL FOR US AND OUR SERVICE TO HIM**

**ALWAYS!**