An aerial photograph of St. Thomas UMC church building, a large brick structure with a prominent steeple, surrounded by parking lots, green spaces, and residential buildings. The text "STRATEGIC PLAN ST. THOMAS UMC" is overlaid in large white letters, with "2020 - 2022" below it, separated by a thin orange horizontal line.

STRATEGIC PLAN

ST. THOMAS UMC

2020 - 2022

IGNITING THE HOPES & DREAMS
OF THE COMMUNITY

Respectfully Submitted by The SPARK Team

October 22, 2019

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INTRODUCTION

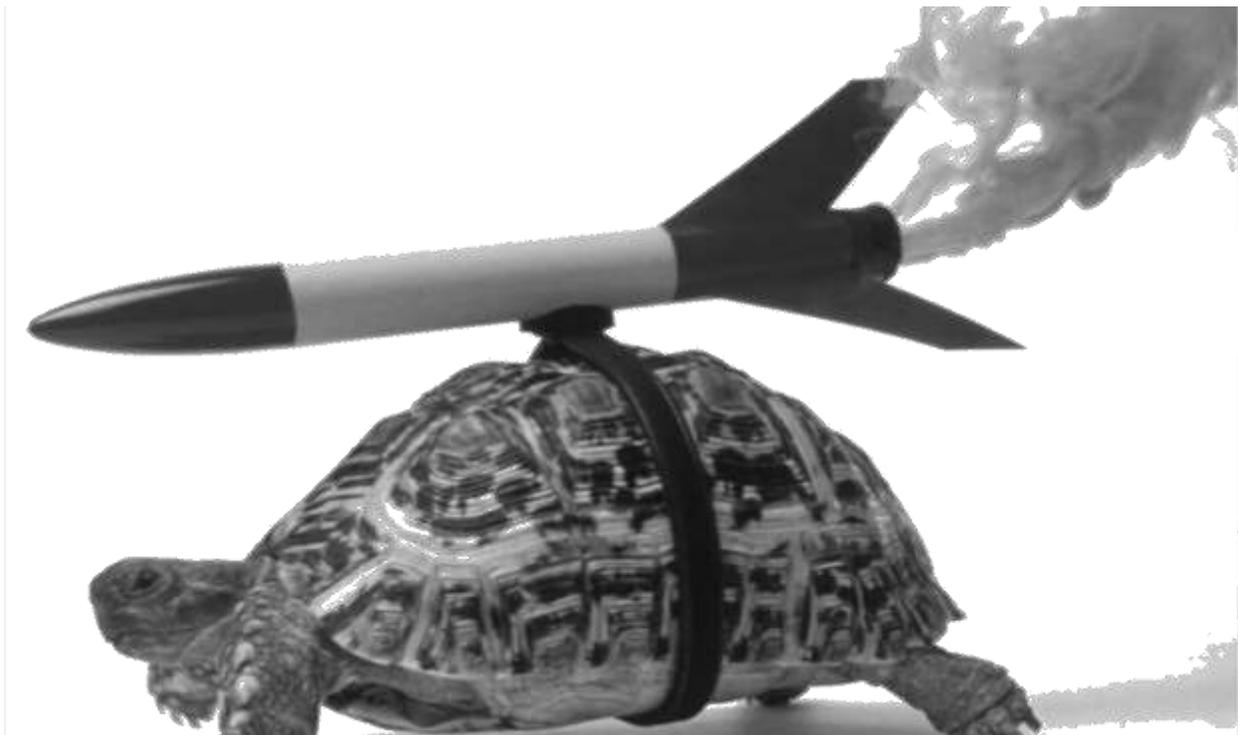
The St. Thomas UMC Strategic Planning Committee (SPARK) was commissioned in October 2018 by the Church Council to formulate a long-range plan to guide growth within the church and the church's outreach in the community over the next three years. At the commissioning, the mandate was to assess the current reality of who the church is and identify the next steps in moving St. Thomas forward.

The Church Council mandate was framed by SPARK as a holy conversation, an ongoing dialogue grounded in the spiritual practice of discernment around the following three questions:

1. Who is St. Thomas UMC?
2. Who are our neighbors?
3. What is God calling us to be and do over the next three years?

SPARK feels that by addressing these questions during our planning, the Strategic Plan being submitted lays the framework for St. Thomas to grow the faith of its members while also reaching into the surrounding community to serve and nourish those in need.

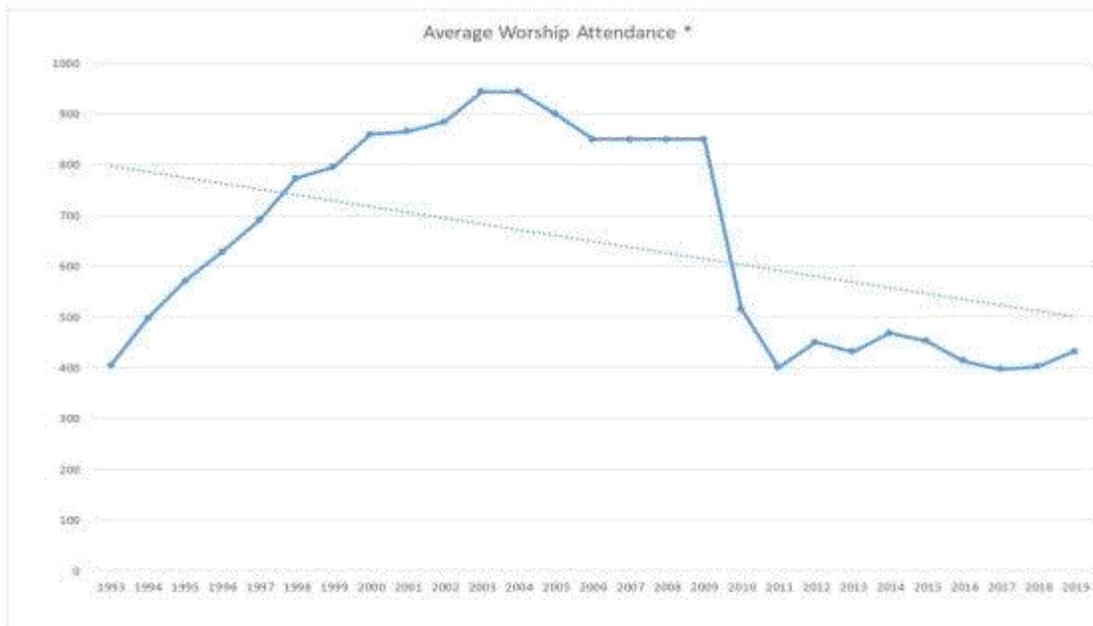
As a large church of more than 1,000 members, we recognize at times this process can feel like a turtle moving forward as we seek to energize the entire body of Christ, while at other times the changes inherent in a strategic plan can feel like a rocket taking off at the speed of light as we seek to be faithful in our call towards growth and health. Perhaps the picture below captures an appropriate snapshot of the work we must do together!



Who Is St. Thomas UMC?

The answer to “Who is St. Thomas UMC?” began to be formulated in September 2018. At a Leadership Summit held for ministers, Lay leaders, committee chairs and other leaders of the church, one presentation gave a hard, by-the-numbers look at who St. Thomas is and has been in recent years.

When considering the current reality of St. Thomas, average worship attendance (AWA) is one measure that comes to mind. As seen in the graph below, attendance dropped precipitously in 2009, demonstrated a second dip in 2015 but is on the rise over the last two years. SPARK recognizes that an increase in membership and attendance must be part of a plan to move the church forward.



Another measure of St. Thomas was made by identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). This was accomplished through a survey exercise conducted at the leadership summit. Examples of each would be: mission-mindedness (S), lack of volunteers (W), expand ministry reach into local community (O), changing demographics (T). As SPARK conducted listening sessions and gathered input from the congregation, it was notable that similar thoughts were expressed by the members of the congregation. The results of the SWOT survey are listed in the SPARK Reference Guide.¹

Who Are Our Neighbors?

Since SPARK was convened in November 2018, many steps have been taken and considerable data gathered to identify who St. Thomas is and who its neighbors are. One of the first assignments for the SPARK team members was to pick a Bible verse that they felt identified who St. Thomas UMC is. There were nine verses and passages offered – all were relevant. However, one spoke to all of the members –

* Note that AWA figures from 2008-2018 include combined numbers from the Manassas and Haymarket campuses.

¹ The SPARK Reference Guide will be available as a tool for church leaders in the Main Office to check out as needed. It will include Demographic information, background material, raw data collection from SPARK, etc.

the story of Noah in Genesis Chapter 8. The key takeaways were threefold: 1) Noah had faith and obeyed God's instructions; 2) When dry land was found, Noah needed to take the first step toward a new beginning; and 3) St. Thomas is at a point where we are encouraged to “get out of the boat” and take the first step toward our new path forward.

In a biblical sense, St. Thomas had been identified in the story of Noah. It was now necessary to identify, in a broad sense, who we were demographically and spiritually. To begin doing this, the Program Coordinator for the Bi-District Office of the United Methodist Church facilitated one of our meetings and provided insight into the makeup of the congregation and our surrounding community. Using a combination of data from Experian and MissionInsite, four demographic lifestyle segments (from 32 segments identified in the surrounding community) were identified as being statistically and strategically significant in, and around, St. Thomas. The Experian data identified typical demographic information such as age, income, family composition, ethnicity, education and employment. MissionInsite data provided information on trends in religious beliefs, preferences and practices within the four identified lifestyle segments. Further general information on Progressive Potpourri, Generational Soup, Fast Track Couples and Silver Sophisticates lifestyle segments is available in the SPARK Reference Guide. The information gleaned from the demographic study was presented to the congregation in April 2019. This was the first of two update meetings provided to the congregation; transparency was the keyword as the planning process moved forward.

SPARK had a sense of who St. Thomas and the surrounding community were, by the numbers. We also wanted to know what the church members thought. Church members were invited to be part of the planning process by participating in a series of nine listening sessions. The listening sessions were designed to elicit responses to three questions:

1. What brought you to St. Thomas UMC?
2. What keeps you at St. Thomas UMC?
3. Where is God calling us as a congregation?

The listening sessions were attended by 105 people – including children, teens, and adults. The individual responses to each question, from each session, were collected and compiled in a spreadsheet to be reviewed for similarities and trends in responses. The listening session spreadsheet is available in the SPARK Reference Guide.

The St. Thomas staff will be key participants in the implementation of any long-range plan. As such, their input was important as one element of the data collected by SPARK. A detailed survey was developed requesting input on what improvements and aspirations they have for their ministry programs. This information was also compiled in a spreadsheet to review for similarities and trends. While there were specific responses to each specific ministry program, there were similarities noted across the staff responses and some of the responses from the congregational listening sessions. The staff survey responses are available in the SPARK Reference Guide.

What is God Calling Us to Be and Do?

While the demographic study told us who our neighbors were, in a numbers sense, and we gleaned common themes from staff and church members, we also engaged the congregation to pray for God’s leading through the church-wide “Breakthrough Prayer” offered during the “Greater Gifts” sermon

series in May. Another element of data collection by SPARK was a community Prayer Tour. During an evening meeting, we drove through the four identified demographic areas that were statistically and strategically significant within a three-mile radius of the church campus. We were able to see people, residences and businesses that made up those lifestyle segments. This was just to lay eyes on the surrounding community and perhaps generate ideas for outreach and partnership opportunities. It also helped the team continue to keep God at the center of the process.

SPARK also conducted church surveys of seven neighboring churches to get first impressions when walking in and talking to staff, when available, about programs, demographic information, ministries, etc. The purpose was to see what other churches might be doing well and to determine what we might emulate – or where we might steer clear of certain programs because they are doing them well and a new program might fall short because another is so dynamic.

A large amount of information was collected over a six month period to answer our original questions:

1. Who is St. Thomas UMC?
2. Who are our neighbors?
3. What is God calling us to be and do over the next three years?

In July 2019, SPARK enlisted the services of Ministry Architects at a crucial point in the planning process – what to do with the data we had collected. Ministry Architects is a consulting, coaching and mentoring firm focused on church vision planning and execution of those plans. At the end of the two day session with Mission Architects, a draft of a new Mission Statement and Values Statement had been created and a clear set of goal focus areas had been identified. Ministry Architects will continue to mentor and coach key people at St. Thomas through June 2020 to ensure accountability and a smooth lift off as we move into the next phase. At a minimum this coaching includes conference calls, video conferencing and review of documents.

The SPARK Reference Guide, a supplement to 2020-2022 Strategic Plan, will be provided for use by Church Leaders as background information to the discussions and recommendations made by SPARK. In this supplement can be found snapshot views of the key demographic segments identified from the demographics studies, the raw data collected during listening sessions, staff survey responses and other information that was used to inform and guide SPARK during the planning process.

On July 23, 2019, a progress update was given to Church Council. On July 28, 2019, a second update was given to the congregation. At both gatherings, a draft Mission Statement and a draft Core Values Statement were introduced and the five Strategic Priority Areas were presented.

After a presentation to the leadership of the church on September 28, 2019 for final comments, SPARK respectfully submits this 2020-2022 Strategic Plan to the Church Council for approval in 2019 and implementation beginning in January 2020. We trust the leading of God's spirit to be evident in our work and ask that each person from our congregation reading this report continue to keep God's vision at the center of our collective focus as we prepare to carry out the plan and our vision together.

2020 – 2022 | STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission Statement

As SPARK reviewed who St. Thomas was historically, and listened closely to what congregation members said during listening sessions, it became apparent that a new mission statement was necessary to encompass who we are and what we do. SPARK team members presented initial ideas for a new statement. During the coaching session with Ministry Architects, a meaningful mission statement was developed that informed members and visitors who St. Thomas is, what we do and what the result is intended to be. Once adopted, the mission statement will guide everything that we do in our ministries and outreach.

We exist to reach, nourish, and serve the community so all may experience healing and new life through Jesus Christ.

Core Values Statement

In conjunction with a mission statement, SPARK also developed a statement of our core values. While the mission statement identifies who we are and what we do, our core values statement, in effect, says how we do what we do. Core values are the fundamental beliefs of an organization that dictate behavior. They are the guard rails that keep a church focused on its mission, pursuing excellence and commitment by the congregation, instead of going off track.

At St. Thomas we hold these values and believe they are fundamental to how we live out our mission together. We are...

Biblically Grounded

We are rooted in scripture.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NIV)²

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Relational

Our connection with God and one another guides everything. We pursue loving relationships with one another. We believe life change happens in community. We need each other to grow and become more like Christ.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

² All biblical references in the Core Values Statement are from the New International Version of the Bible.

Mission-Minded

We care deeply about one another and our community.

Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Faithful

We are committed to living Christ's example.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Joyful

We live above our circumstances as we trust in the strength of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Be joyful always; pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Strategic Priorities Overview

The Strategic Priorities listed below were arrived at through the processes listed in the introduction of this document. The input from the congregation, staff and other resources allowed SPARK to identify five key goal-focused areas. They are not meant to stand alone. Rather, each is intended to integrate with the others to help St. Thomas UMC achieve its mission to reach, nourish and serve both its members and the surrounding community. Each Strategic Priority Area is broken down by goals, measurable benchmarks for each year, action steps towards the benchmark, and leaders and/or committees that are responsible for ensuring the goal is met. Regardless of the goal noted below, it is recommended that those responsible for carrying out each task incorporate these three ideas when developing a ministry work plan:

- 1) Map out a timeline;*
- 2) Invite others to help; and*
- 3) Execute the timeline.*

We believe this will help ensure realistic deliverables so that no one feels overwhelmed as a leader and we are able to work together intentionally toward carrying out God's vision.

It should be noted that a recurring topic during the congregational listening sessions was the question of how many services to hold on Sundays. While this topic is not addressed as a strategic priority, it has specifically been included as part of the Essential Systems Timeline in Appendix A. It is recommended that in February 2020, definitive first steps should be taken to begin the evaluation and recommendation process.

Strategic Priority: Worship

We will enhance our Worship Experience to more effectively reach our community for Christ. Hebrews 12:28 ...let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.

First and foremost, God invites us to a life of worship. In the midst of our hectic and scattered lives, God invites us to remember that God created us for worship -- not so we feel worse about our lives, or more guilty about not getting everything done on our already long "to do" list. Feed the kids, clean the house, finish paying my bills, and oh yeah, **Go to Church!** Worship is not some obligation we have to do. Worship is a gift from God that is intended to bring life, the kind of life we were meant to live. Because worship has been the central activity of God's people throughout history and time, it is also central to who we are and what we feel called to focus on as a strategic priority going forward. With this central purpose in mind, we hope to invite more people of all ages and stages in our community into the life-changing rhythm of God's grace.

2022 Goal: Average worship attendance is 400.

2020 Benchmark: Average worship attendance grows by 15 people from 335 to 350.

- Action Step 1: Identify and purchase the best replacement for the existing projectors and screens in the Sanctuary; purchase new technology, and install it.
- Action Step 2: Identify and purchase the best worship software platform and computer to ensure seamless transitions between videos, slides, and music; and to enable a streamlined process for recording and sharing the sermon on our website.
- Action Step 3: Develop a plan and timelines for live-streaming our worship services.
- Action Step 4: Recruit additional ushers, greeters, and welcome desk hosts to reflect the diversity of our community more intentionally.
- Action Step 5: Offer usher, greeter, and welcome desk host training in 2020.
- Action Step 6: Work with existing music ministry leaders to ensure a small ensemble (perhaps choir members and/or interns) is in place to help lead the 8:15 AM service; and the full Chancel Choir helps lead the 11:00 AM service from start to finish to support the larger of the two traditional services and when first-time guests are more likely to visit.
- Action Step 7: Execute 2 or 3 invitational mailings to our community at key times during the year (Fall Kick Off, Christmas, and Easter), equip our members to use these invitational tools to invite others, and plan the sermon series accordingly.



Our worship will encourage an invitational culture and we will seek to put best practices in place to welcome guests.

2021 Benchmark: Average worship attendance grows by 20 people from 350 to 370.

2022 Benchmark: Average worship attendance grows by 30 people from 370 to 400.

2022 Goal: There is a comprehensive and growing choir program for children and youth.

2020 Benchmark: A new, part-time children's music director has been hired.

- Action Step 1: Develop a job description for this position.
- Action Step 2: Create a time-line for hiring the children's music director.



Music and Arts Camp participants help lead worship in July 2019.

2020 Benchmark: The Children’s Church Choir, KidzRock Choirs, and JNS Choirs are each singing at least once a month in worship.

Primary Leadership Responsibility Assigned To: Worship Committee, IT Committee, Senior Pastor, and Music Director

Strategic Priority: Christian Formation

We will create and implement a comprehensive plan for Christian Formation that nourishes people of all ages and stages in their faith development.

We recognize that our congregation is already reaching multiple generations and that one of our strengths, identified by key leaders at our 2018 Leadership Summit, is our commitment to Christian formation through ministries like VBS, Sunday school and home-based small groups. Christian Formation was identified by our congregation as a primary area of interest through the paper plate exercise in July 2018 (see SPARK Reference Guide). The written responses that were collected at the listening sessions tallied more than 30% in favor of programs relating to children and youth and spiritual formation. We are also reminded in Proverbs 22:6 that we are to “start children off on the right path. And even when they are old they will not turn away from it.” (NIRV) We know that our children and youth already have several opportunities to share their gifts in worship during the year; however, they could and they should learn to do so much more! We believe this can be remedied as we equip children and youth to see their place in God’s larger story of grace.

That being said, our Christian formation experiences need to be varied and meet people of *all* generations where they are. We might see someone who is 65 coming to Christ for the first time and just beginning their journey when accompanying their grand-child for worship. Or, we might find families needing practical help with parenting their teens or young children, or supporting their aging parents as they transition from one stage of life to another. It is our desire to see all generations -- from cradle to grave -- growing in their faith, being formed by the Word of God, and learning to integrate their faith into all aspects of their life.

2022 Goal: Grow children’s ministry to 50 children participating weekly in some aspect of the children’s ministry.

2020 Benchmark: Determine the current active/engaged children and integrate with the church’s database.

- Action Step 1: Identify all children who are currently participating in worship with their family, Nursery, Sunday School, Kids Care 2, Tuesday Night Dinner, Summer Camps, Choirs, etc.



Children having a blast at VBS during July 2019.

- Action Step 2: Cross-reference all information from the current children's ministry audit, including online attendance system, with the church's database.

2020 Benchmark: Establish an attendance tracking process and determine the current average attendance in children's programs.

- Action Step 1: Capture key information during the registration process at Sunday school and other key ministries and share with the front office staff to input it in the church's database.

2022 Goal: Grow youth ministry to 50 youth participating weekly in some aspect of youth ministry.



Five youth, supported by their families and mentors, were confirmed in 2019.

2020 Benchmark: Determine the current active/engaged youth and integrate with the church's database.

- Action Step 1: Identify all youth currently participating in worship with their family, Sunday School, the Pack, Tuesday Night Dinner, JNS, Food Pantry, VBS/Easter volunteers, etc.
- Action Step 2: Cross-reference all information from the current youth ministry audit, including online attendance system, with the church's database.

2020 Benchmark: Establish an attendance tracking process and determine the current average attendance in youth programs.

- Action Step 1: Capture key information during the registration process at Sunday school and other key ministries and share with the front office staff to input it in the church's database.

2022 Goal: Children and youth serve and lead in all aspects of the church.

2020 Benchmark: Create a game plan for incorporating children and youth in leadership and worship roles.

- Action Step 1: Determine the opportunities for leadership within our existing ministries on Sunday morning. (Choirs, Greeters, Ushers, Scripture Readers, etc.)
- Action Step 2: Identify and engage children and youth that feel excited and called into leadership.

- Action Step 3: Recruit older youth and adult mentors to train and equip younger children and youth.
- Action Step 4: Invite, train, and deploy children and youth for ministry.
- Action Step 5: Provide good supervision and evaluation to programs.

2022 Goal: Full Christian formation is happening for all ages and includes a plan to celebrate milestones with the body of Christ over the course of a lifetime.

2020 Benchmark: Create an overall formation plan for children and youth that is age appropriate and includes milestones at key stages in each child’s life.

- Action Step 1: Host a leadership summit focused on Christian formation specifically with children and youth. The end result of the summit will be a shared vision of key Christian formation building blocks and milestones (such as baptism, first day of school, confirmation, learning to drive, etc.).



Baptism is a key milestone in our Christian formation.

- Action Step 2: Utilize children and youth ministry teams to flesh out appropriate milestone celebrations for the respective age levels and begin to implement.
- Action Step 3: Create learning standards for Christian formation for children and youth to promote a “sticky” faith that helps a child launch successfully into adulthood.

2021 Benchmark: Create an overall formation plan for adults that will support continued growth at various ages and stages of life and faith, including milestones.

- Action Step 1: Host a leadership summit focused on Christian formation specifically with adults. The end result of the summit will be a shared vision of key Christian formation building blocks and milestones (such as graduation from college, first job, purchasing first home, marriage, retirement, etc.).
- Action Step 2: Utilize adult ministry team to flesh out appropriate milestone celebrations and begin to implement.
- Action Step 3: Create learning standards for Christian formation for adults.
- Action Step 4: Include practical, relatable topics in all levels of study.

2021 Benchmark: Incorporate family ministry in the overall formation plan that supports families, encourages families to serve together, and have healthy relationships.

- Action Step 1: Form an ad hoc family ministry team to identify existing needs, the ways these needs are currently being met, and any opportunities within the formation plan being developed to address potential gaps.
- Action Step 2: Personally invite families to participate; provide job description and equip members to serve on the team.

2022 Benchmark: Incorporate stewardship education into the overall formation plan that is age appropriate beginning with young children.

- Action Step 1: Invite a stewardship committee representative to participate in the overall Christian formation planning process for children, youth and adults. (see benchmarks above)
- Action Step 2: Seek ongoing stewardship support and education from the Stewardship Committee.

2022 Goal: 30 small groups are meeting weekly. (By small group, we mean a group of friends (new and existing) who consistently get together with a purpose and are intentional about having spiritual conversations and following Christ.)

2020 Benchmark: Create a game plan for developing new small groups that live into the mission and vision of the church.

- Action Step 1: Identify current small group offerings. Map them according to “Reach, Nourish, or Serve” groups to capture the current landscape for Christian formation.
- Action Step 2: Analyze current offerings and determine strengths and gaps.
- Action Step 3: Identify potential small group leaders, meet with them to cast a vision, and determine interests.
- Action Step 4: Train and equip new small group leaders.

2022 Goal: There is a volunteer culture in which all members are serving in at least one (1) ministry of the church.



Several ministry fairs were held in 2019 to help folks discover their call to ministry.

2020 Benchmark: Develop an equipping game plan in which spiritual gifts are determined and church members are living into those gifts in a particular ministry.

- Action Step 1: Identify volunteer leaders to teach about spiritual gifts on a regular basis (2 classes / year).
- Action Step 2: Determine if the church’s current database (OnRealm) can track individual member’s spiritual gifts. If so, enter spiritual gift information about current members. If not, identify an online tracking tool.
- Action Step 3: Develop a matching process to allow volunteers to identify the areas in which they are called to serve.
- Action Step 4: Develop a coaching process that equips the volunteers to feel capable and effective in where they serve.

2020 Benchmark: Develop and implement an intentional recruitment process.

- Action Step 1: Cast an inspiring vision to support a culture of volunteerism through the church website, sermons, ministry fairs, new member gatherings, confirmation, etc.

- Action Step 2: Build strong relational networks through the regular service opportunities offered, ministry teams, and small groups that serve together. People want to connect in a community where they feel loved and appreciated.
- Action Step 3: Offer ongoing practical training. Good training equips volunteers to feel capable and also develops potential future leaders.
- Action Step 4: Communicate clear expectations. A clear, concise description for each ministry role is vital to volunteers understanding what is expected and how to receive support as needed.
- Action Step 5: Create practical organizational structures. Good structures promote better teamwork and avoid duplicated efforts.
- Action Step 6: Encourage existing volunteers to be a part of the ongoing recruitment and equipping process.

Primary Leadership Responsibility Assigned To: Church Council initially to host time apart (Leadership Summits). Then, this area could be handed off to Children & Youth Council/Children & Youth Director, and the Adult Discipleship Team/Senior Pastor.

Strategic Priority: Outreach & Mission

We will earnestly seek to know and love our neighbors.

Matthew 25:40 ...whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

It was encouraging to hear so many people expressing concern for the church and unchurched within our neighborhood. St. Thomas' desire is to be a beacon of light and hope in our community. The listening sessions revealed a strong attraction to outreach and mission, especially in the local community. There is a desire to prioritize mission programs and to serve the community focusing on quality rather than quantity. There is a growing passion for strengthening our local outreach and for including all demographic and social sectors of our diverse community. Emphasis needs to be placed on introducing awareness of multi-cultural and multi-generational aspects of our community within the church and outside its walls. Opportunities for these families to serve together should be established.

There is an overall concern that St. Thomas is not attracting younger families. Emphasis on reaching this demographic needs to be a priority.

2022 Goal: The church is serving in a variety of ministries balancing local, national, and international initiatives. Identify at least one flagship ministry partner through each initiative for greater Kingdom impact.

2020 Benchmark: Create a comprehensive outreach plan leveraging the current relationships and connections already in place within the church and Food Pantry.



14 volunteers are serving weekly at Loch Lomond Elementary School.

- Action Step 1: Establish priority ratios of local, national, and international mission efforts. Give additional emphasis to local mission work.
- Action Step 2: Integrate mission and outreach plans with all current and future programs within the church. (Food Pantry, Sunbeam, VBS, etc.) Reach out to these groups for participation in other church programs.

2022 Goal: Evaluate key partnerships within the Greater Prince William Region and faith community

2020 Benchmark: Create an overall plan for meeting community needs that includes research of what is already offered in the Greater Prince William Region and where the church could fill the gaps.

- Action Step 1: Create an inventory of regional social resources
- Action Step 2: Facilitate speaking schedule for local program leaders to share information with St. Thomas members. (i.e., Loch Lomond Elementary School and other local non-profits such as ACTS, SERVE, the Human Service Alliance of Greater Prince William, etc.)
- Action Step 3: Identify current and develop additional linkages between county/city programs and St. Thomas to develop a holistic approach to the needs of the community and to avoid duplication of effort.
- Action Step 4: Establish a viable information network to share details concerning all mission and outreach opportunities within the church to all members.
- Action Step 5: Create a plan that will encourage an invitational environment to involve more volunteers.

Primary Leadership Responsibility Assigned To: Mission Council, Food Pantry Staff, and Outreach and Evangelism Committee.

Strategic Priority: Administration & Infrastructure

We will have support systems in place to ensure sustainable and faithful ministry going forward.

One of the ongoing questions for a church of our size is, “How shall we organize the work of the church and its leaders?” For centuries the church has been asking itself this question and looking to Scripture for answers – conversations between Moses and his father-in-law, Jethro, come to mind as do the struggles of the early church in several places in the book of Acts. Today, the questions are expressed differently, but they are fundamentally the same. What is the real role of a staff team? Are they doers of the ministry, or do they exist to organize and equip the doers of the ministry? How many leaders and

staff do we need to carry out effective ministry, particularly in terms of programmatic leaders and administrative leaders who provide support? As we listened to the staff and key leaders across the church and often heard the need for more volunteers in a variety of ministries, and we read and studied materials related to best practices, we quickly discerned that we must seek to ensure sustainable ministry that supports growth.

2022 Goal: Staffing meets the needs of the ministries of the church.

2020 Benchmark: Develop a long-term staffing plan that takes into account administrative needs, growth in membership, and growth in ministries.

- Action Step 1: SPRC will determine staffing needs to support growth based on recommendations by ministry consultants that work with large churches across the United States (either via book or direct coaching), staff input, and congregational priorities to carry out the mission.
- Action Step 2: Evaluate existing office space and records storage to determine best use of space. Equip offices to facilitate ministry flow and growth. Purchase furniture as needed.
- Action Step 3: Evaluate and make recommendations about phones and office network to ensure technology supports greater collaboration among staff.

Primary Leadership Responsibility Assigned To: Staff Parish Relations Committee; Senior Pastor

Strategic Priority: Buildings and Grounds

We will align our buildings and grounds with the mission and values of St. Thomas UMC.

In the familiar parable of the talents, Jesus reminds us that the master said to his stewards, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master’s joy!’ (Matthew 25:21)

St. Thomas has been entrusted with beautiful buildings and grounds in a prime location that are an incredible resource for ministry. All told, there are five buildings (Main Church, Old Church, Office Building, Parsonage House, and the Food Pantry/Storage Building) plus the Columbarium. Through the SPARK team listening sessions, walking the campus itself, and praying about the needs of all ministries in light of the key demographics in our mission field, we believe that it is necessary to consider the entirety of the campus as a whole and make recommendations to reflect good stewardship that will support ministry needs for years to come. We looked at the buildings and grounds through the lens of having hospitable, inviting facilities, with a new focus on youth and being able to provide more effective outreach to reach, nourish and serve the community. We believe this strategic priority will support, enhance, and advance the other four strategic priorities outlined in this plan. This will help us move from being reactive to being proactive and intentional as we consider our future; and it will help align the overall purpose of our collective footprint.

One comment we heard over and over again from the listening sessions and staff is that **storage is a major challenge!** Another consistent comment we heard from members of the congregation is a desire

Storage is a major challenge!

for us to be even more purposeful in helping the poor and/or homeless around issues of housing. Our review of the most pressing needs of our neighbors and our own experience through our Local Relief



and Congregational Care ministries indicates that there are a variety of pastoral care needs within the community (addiction/recovery, divorce, domestic violence, grief, death and dying, parenting, etc.). This led us to consider creating space for ongoing Christian counseling and/or more faith-based support and recovery groups. And finally, one of the strongest requests from our members, including the children and youth themselves, was the need for a dedicated space for effective tween and youth ministry to reflect the value we see in the next generation of disciples. In other words, the SPARK team felt strongly that if we value ministry with the next generation, our space should be deliberate and not filled with left-over couches and hand-me-downs. With these variables in mind, we recommend the following two goals, benchmarks, and action steps towards achieving them:

2022 Goal: The buildings and campus are serving the church members and community more effectively.

2020 Benchmark: Develop a plan to achieve the following:

- **Renovate the Second Floor of the Main Campus Building to help make a strong first impression when entering from Sudley Road to help newcomers experience community more easily, and support our areas of greatest use to reach, nourish and serve the community.**

➤ Action Step 1: Renovate Narthex, Fellowship Hall, and Bathrooms to include:

- Paint
- Carpet/flooring
- Seating/furniture
- Lighting Displays
- Welcome Desk
- Hospitality/Coffee station



Example of existing Welcome Desk at a local United Methodist Church in our District.

- **The Old Church Building will become a dedicated Youth Center.**

- Action Step 1: Update and modernize all key systems (electrical, plumbing, HVAC, windows, fixtures, flooring, etc.), while maintaining the envelope of the building,
 - Action Step 2: Consider making the current back entrance the main entrance of the Youth Center. Ensure the new entrance resonates architecturally with the entrance of the Main Church Building so that buildings coordinate aesthetically and provide greater visibility from the road and parking lot. Cut down trees as necessary to open up sight lines.
 - Action Step 3: Determine feasibility and cost of connecting the Youth Center with the Main Church building through a covered walkway or awning so that folks can move between the two buildings with ease.
 - Action Step 4: Upgrade Old Church Building for primary use by our Youth Ministry.
 - Remove unnecessary walls
 - Evaluate existing office space. Determine best location for Youth Ministry office.
 - Create multi-purpose room that inspires and meets the needs of a growing tween and youth ministry.
 - Update Kitchen.
 - Action Step 5: Equip the third floor for storage.
 - Action Step 6: During the renovation, invite the Hispanic Church to worship in the Sanctuary of the Main Church Building; invite Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Groups and St. Thom Cats to meet in our Main Church Building.
- **Build a second storage building next to the current one to house the Food Pantry with running water, toilet, and office space.**
 - Action Step 1: Relocate the Food Pantry from the existing Storage Building to the New Storage Building.
 - Action Step 2: Create a functional bathroom.
 - Action Step 3: Determine the best location for office space for Food Pantry Staff, both Director and Assistant Director.
 - Action Step 4: Rebuild appropriate shelves.
 - **Return to using the current storage building entirely for storage.**
 - Action Step 1: Move most storage from Main Church Building and Parsonage to the Storage Building.
 - Action Step 2: Assign shelves with set space for each ministry area. Hire a professional organizer if necessary.
 - Action Step 3: Manage the space



Example of an aesthetically pleasing interior to meet the needs of our tweens & youth.

- Action Step 4: Remove or update two (2) deteriorating storage sheds in side yard area.
- **Refurbish the Parsonage so that it can be used as a functional house.**
 - Action Step 1: Determine the best use of this house so that it can be used for transitional housing, a rental, or home for a staff member.
 - Action Step 2: Install a new roof, new bathrooms, replacement windows, renovated kitchen. Make other improvements as necessary.
 - Action Step 3: If used for transitional housing, identify a partner organization such as Prosperity House or another non-profit that seeks to transition families from homelessness to housing to ensure appropriate case management.
- **Use the 2nd floor of the Office Building for Congregational Care Ministries to help strengthen families and support members in our community experiencing crisis.**
 - Action Step 1: Work with current tenants to give at least one year to relocate and identify appropriate partners to carry out ministry.
 - Action Step 2: Remove existing glass partition to open up floor for greatest possible use by community groups / support groups.
 - Action Step 3: Remove “ReMax” sign and rename building “St. Thomas Counseling Center” or other appropriate name to clearly connect building to overall ministry plan.
 - Action Step 4: Transition AA and other support groups that currently use space in the Main Church Building to the new space.
 - Action Step 5: Use the 2 dedicated offices for Christian counseling and/or spiritual direction.
 - Action Step 6: Create overall congregational care strategy that is integrated with existing ministries and builds bridges between the counseling/small groups being offered and the congregation.

2022 Goal: A sustainable maintenance plan is in place for the church property and buildings.

2020 Benchmark: Determine all maintenance and upkeep needs of the church.

- Action Step 1: Catalog all equipment, systems, etc. noting current age.
- Action Step 2: Determine maintenance schedule for identified equipment.
- Action Step 3: Budget accordingly to meet maintenance needs.

2020 Benchmark: Enhance and maintain the campus landscaping so that the property is inviting.



- Action Step 1: Conduct a landscaping survey to prioritize the needs of the property.
- Action Step 2: Consider contracting with a vendor to provide some of the landscaping maintenance.
- Action Step 3: Develop a plan to identify, train, and equip a growing team of new volunteers to come alongside the existing team of landscape volunteers.

Primary Leader/Responsibility Assigned To: We believe a new building committee or task force, which reports to the Trustees, should be created to accomplish this strategic priority. We recommend that those on the committee have skills and knowledge related to buildings, engineering, and the like as well as interior design. The members of the Building Committee would be discerned by the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee in tandem with the Church Council.

CONCLUSION

The members of SPARK were humbled by the opportunity to serve in the capacity of the strategic planning committee for the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. We would like to thank the congregation and Church Council for putting their trust in our team as we worked to present a vision for St. Thomas UMC for the next three years.

We would like to recognize the guidance given by the Bi-District Office and assistance, coaching and prodding provided by Ministry Architects. We would also like to thank the members of the congregation for their participation in the process. It has been our intent to make our discussions and progress transparent to the congregation. We thank the congregation for taking their part seriously when invited to participate. The information gathered at the listening sessions was critical to setting the mission statement, values and goals of the church.

We have attempted to provide a comprehensive plan with goals, benchmarks and designated responsible parties. After much prayer and discussion, it is our hope that this plan will be useful as a road map to lead St. Thomas in the direction that God has in mind for us.

Finally, it is recommended that Church Council establish an IGNITE Team (SPARK 2.0) with the appropriate skills, personality, and knowledge to ensure the church executes the plan that is being recommended. This team would serve as a rudder of sorts to help the church stay on course while it continues to carry out existing ministry obligations. Furthermore, this group would provide periodic status reports to the Church Council and other appropriate leaders, including an annual report of progress at the end of each calendar year. This plan is meant to be a living document. Some aspects of the plan will proceed slower or faster than anticipated. Goals and timelines should be adjusted accordingly.

What SPARK has presented is a comprehensive plan for the future of St. Thomas. We feel that this is a God-centered plan in the context of everything that is proposed will lead to our expansion of ministry opportunities for our community – church community and neighboring community. The Mission Statement very clearly states that we are here to reach, nourish and serve. We feel that the Strategic Plan presented today will enable us to do that in ways that we have not been able to do before.

Any Strategic Plan inherently involves CHANGE. Change is challenging. If we prayerfully keep our eye on the end goal, we feel certain St. Thomas will rise to the challenge.

Respectfully submitted,

SPARK Strategic Planning Committee

William Ameen

Ron Campbell, Convener

Abi Foerster, Sr. Pastor

Leslie Oakes

Zuzana Steen

Perry Bailey

Bill Coppa

Marian Ludlow

Cheryl Rosko

APPENDIX A

17 Essential Systems for Sustainable Churches

As Identified by Ministry Architects (ministryarchitects.com)

Though the building of every church's infrastructure is unique, some foundational steps must be taken in every church to make it sustainable. These are systems that are vital to the health of the congregation and the church's ministry. All churches should review their systems annually.

1. **The Database System** allows us to stay appropriately connected with the many different kinds of people connected to our church so that we don't communicate the same way with the long-term member as we do with the person who visited our church.
2. **The Program Calendar System** ensures that our major event programming is drafted for the upcoming 12 months and establishes a steady drumbeat for delivering consistently well-executed weekly programs that participants experience as well worth the time invested.
3. **The Preventative Maintenance System** builds the ongoing maintenance of our church through the annual updating and review of the 17 systems through the use of a Preventative Maintenance Calendar.
4. **The Staff Development System** provides a healthy ecosystem for cultivating the talent necessary to ensure the consistent health and effectiveness of our work.
5. **The Communication System** pulls together the multiple streams of communication in a way that results in a coherent, strategic, integrated message producing agreed-upon, desired results.
6. **The Volunteer System** provides an enterprise with a hernia-free process for recruiting, equipping, and dispatching volunteers into roles that are life-giving for the volunteers and make an impact aligned with the church's mission.
7. **The Visioning System** defines the mission, vision, and values of the organization in a way that aligns and inspires all those contributing to the enterprise, whether as staff, volunteers, or donors.
8. **The Hospitality System** establishes clear processes to ensure that every person touched by the church experiences a surprisingly welcoming environment, as well as consistent, comfortable follow-up contacts, appropriate to the DNA of that church.
9. **The Momentum Events System** ensures the habit of staff and volunteer implementation teams executing effective, well-attended events, free of frustration or feeling frantic.
10. **The Financial System** maximizes the revenue and expenditures of the church and faithfully stewards the generous investment of donors through faithful tracking and expenditure of funds, moving expressions of need, and meaningful expressions of gratitude.
11. **The Innovation System** points a ministry in the direction of its future, welcoming outside-the-box thinking, especially from those without a long history in the organization.
12. **The Compliance System** ensures that all legal requirements related to the church, including articles of incorporation and bylaws and that background checks, payroll filings, licenses, etc. are appropriately managed.

13. **The Integration System** links together the various departments and ministry efforts to remove silos and ensure the healthy, appropriate integration of the generations and the varied strands of ministry.
14. **The Missions System** ensures that the leaders of the church maintain a steady focus on engaging in mission and service beyond their own congregation.
15. **The Discipleship System** identifies explicitly how the varied efforts of the church work together to deliberately deepen and strengthen the faith of those involved.
16. **The Growth System** provides an intentional process for outwardly focused communication designed to connect with and engage those not yet a part of the church.
17. **The Facilities System** ensures the faithful maintenance of any space utilized by the church, including capital improvements and on-going maintenance.

Essential Systems Timeline for St. Thomas UMC

In every healthy church there are a number of key systems (see full list of 17 systems above) that support the growth and ministry of the church. They are like the roots of a great redwood tree – you don't see them, necessarily, however, without them the tree would certainly fall over! Below you will see the recommendations and timeline for implementation made by Ministry Architects for addressing these systems within St. Thomas that are not currently as healthy as they could be. This work will be addressed concurrently to the goals outlined in the 2020 - 2022 Strategic Plan and are an important part of our overall planning for the future in an impactful way.

Fall 2019

- The mission statement, core values, and three-year goals have been finalized and shared with Leaders at the Leadership Summit on September 28. Ways to put the vision out to the congregation have been chosen and then begun to be implemented ([10 Ways to Let Mission Guide Your Church](#)). **SPARK TEAM**
- Celebration “Ignite the Fire” Event on November 3 to share Mission Statement, Core Values, and three-year goals with entire congregation planned and implemented.

Focus for 2020: Database, communications, program calendar, visioning, compliance, facilities, welcome & new member/hospitality

January 2020

- A process has been established to record attendance by name for all programs (worship, Sunday school, bible studies, book studies, special events, etc.) in a consistent way that has identified MIAs. **STAFF**
- The “clean up” work on the church’s database has been completed. **STAFF**
- Establish a Task Force that comes under the Trustees that will evaluate current use of the buildings and create a campus-wide building usage plan that lives into the mission of the church. **TRUSTEES**

February 2020

- Internal communication norms have been determined and those best practices have been implemented that ensure that all congregants, regardless of age or technological proficiency, feel informed. Utilize as many forms of communication as possible including updating the church’s website, brochures, Facebook, mass texting, mail, e-mail, etc. **STAFF & COMMUNICATIONS**
- Establish a Task Force that will oversee the Sunday morning evaluation and recommendation for the number of worship services. This team reports to Ignite. **IGNITE TEAM (SPARK 2.0)**

March 2020

- An organizational chart has been developed for all the current volunteer roles in the church that labels the positions that serve as: **STAFF & COUNCIL**
 - “Coaches” – Volunteers who serve to oversee ministry areas and multiple teams
 - “Leaders” – Volunteers who lead specific teams & direct volunteers on those teams
 - “Workers” – Volunteers who fill a specific role, duty, or task

April 2020

- A yearly leadership directory has been created that lists all ministry team rosters and leaders for all ministry teams, committees, and groups. **STAFF**
- A Welcome & New Member Team has been established and the team is up-to-speed on their role/job description. **OUTREACH & EVANGELISM/ADULT DISCIPLESHIP**

May 2020

- Job descriptions for all ministry teams in the church have been written. Work with leaders to ensure the job descriptions accurately match the work being done. **COUNCIL** (oversee but assign each ministry to create a Job description for their team)

June 2020

- Revisit the idea of reducing Sunday morning services from 3 to 2 services. Conduct an impact study on how this would affect different demographics as well as everything that happens on a Sunday morning. **TASK FORCE**
- A Communication and Social Media Policy has been developed for use by the Church and Sunbeam Children’s Center to support best practices and ensure external communication reflects the highest moral and ethical character of our Christian life together.
COMMUNICATIONS

July 2020

- Control documents have been developed such as a 12-month calendar, major event notebooks to help event planners succeed, and generate a preventative maintenance calendar that schedules behind-the-scenes activities for each month. (Example: October - order candles for the advent wreaths). **STAFF & COUNCIL**
- A game plan for creating a welcoming and friendly environment in the entire church has been created and begun to be implemented. **OUTREACH & EVANGELISM**

August 2020

- Ensure that all members are tagged in the church’s database. Below are suggested categories.
STAFF
 - **Active** are the families and members of St. Thomas and have attended at least 4 to 6 times in the past year – plus visitors who have become a regular part of the ministry.

They should show up in your printed directory, if you use one. For database purposes, 4 to 6 attendances triggers mailings and other church communications.

- **Member Inactive (MIA)** are still a part of the flock. You may not need to call them every time the doors are open at the church, but you'll want to regularly pursue these families, whether they ever show up or not.
 - **Visitor Active** are those who regularly attend weekly worship and/or activities but are not an official member of the church.
 - **Visitor Inactive** are the ones who may have visited, but you are confident they will never become a regular part of the group. This group requires no follow-up. But you'll want to keep their information for the occasional big event to which you'll want to invite everyone you know.
 - **First Timers** refer to visitors who have attended worship for the first time. You'll want to have a process for capturing their information on their first visit and follow up with them within one week of their visit.
- Welcome bags have been created and are being utilized every Sunday. A welcome kiosk has been set up and is staffed weekly with volunteers. **OUTREACH & EVANGELISM**

September 2020

- A marketing game plan has been created that selects the best communication. **COMMUNICATIONS**
- Conduct 2-3 Sunday morning forums regarding the proposed options for the Sunday morning schedule. Collect feedback from church members at those forums. **TASK FORCE**
- A first-timer process has been developed for welcoming visitors who visit the church. A plan has been crafted for following up with adults and families that have become loosely connected to the church. The database has been regularly updated with information from visitors. **OUTREACH & EVANGELISM**

October 2020

- A system that ensures the faithful maintenance of any space utilized by the enterprise, including capital improvements and on-going maintenance, has been created. **TRUSTEES**
- Prepare a report that will go to Council that includes the findings of the Sunday service impact study, pros and cons for different options/solutions, and a recommendation on which option the Ignite Team supports. **TASK FORCE**

November 2020

- Communications are reaching all demographics of the church in a manner that meets their desired form of communication. **COMMUNICATIONS**
- With the feedback received, the Ignite Team and Council are in agreement on choosing an option for the Sunday morning schedule. The decision is made and communicated to the congregation. **TASK FORCE**

December 2020

- Changes to the Sunday morning schedule have been communicated to the congregation multiple times and in multiple ways. **TASK FORCE**
- An implementation plan for this Sunday morning decision has been adopted and a start date has been determined. **TASK FORCE**

Focus for 2021: Staff development, volunteer development, major events, finances, integration

January 2021

- Staff are in alignment with the Sunday morning schedule changes and have planned accordingly for their ministry/programs for the start date of the changes. **TASK FORCE**

February 2021

- An Equipping Team has been recruited and understands their role in helping church members determine their gifts and plug them into a ministry they feel called to. **IGNITE**
 - Charge the Equipping Team with the following Tasks:
 - ✓ Identify Volunteer Ministry Positions: Work with staff and the church leadership to create a complete list of ministry opportunities in every department, from weekly to monthly to annual opportunities.
 - ✓ Develop a Tracking Process for recording who is serving in which ministries. There are several off-the-shelf options including PowerChurch, ChurchTeams, and Members To Action.
 - ✓ Identify a Discovery Tool that helps individuals explore how they are wired for ministry. There are several available, including SHAPE to DESIGN.
 - ✓ Develop a matching and placement process that gracefully takes advantage of the Tracking process and Discovery tool while still making the process inviting and personal. This will likely include several points of entry, from easy-to-use brochures and volunteer catalogs to a higher-commitment, higher-impact class. There will also likely be a coaching/interview process to facilitate the right match.
 - ✓ Develop follow-up and re-direct processes that ensure that the match was successful or helps the person find a new match.

March 2021

- Members of the church have been educated on long-term financial stability as well as the value of, and the impact of planned giving on the church's mission and ministries. **FINANCE (Including Stewardship and Legacy Teams)**

April 2021

- Establish a volunteer recruitment process within ministries. **EQUIPPING TEAM**

- Determine the 12-month calendar for the ministry.
- Determine the volunteer needs for the year.
- Review volunteer job descriptions to ensure they are up-to-date.
- Create a fishing pond of 30-40 potential volunteers.
- Organize the potential volunteers by putting each person into one of the following categories: hands-on volunteer, behind-the-scenes volunteer, and both.
- Prayerfully consider the gifts of the potential volunteers and match them to the volunteer needs.
- Extend a personal invitation - face-to-face or over the phone - to volunteers to serve in a particular role.
- Do this until all volunteer slots are filled.
- Follow up with necessary paperwork for volunteers.
- Schedule the Leadership Launch in September in which volunteers are equipped and ready to serve in their role. **EQUIPPING**

May 2021

- Mechanisms for ongoing evaluation for all church staff members have been provided. The process includes space for self-reflection, supervisor feedback, and requests from the employee about how the church can help him or her succeed. The church staff feels supported, encouraged, and positively challenged. **SPRC**

June 2021

- All staff members have been affirmed and encouraged in their role. **SPRC**
- An evaluation of the Sunday morning changes has taken place and any details regarding the Sunday morning change are being checked off the list. **TASK FORCE**

July 2021

- In partnership with the Equipping Team, a new member process and assimilation process have been determined and begun to be implemented. **EQUIPPING & OUTREACH/EVANGELISM**

August 2021

- A long-term staffing game plan has been created to outline the key next steps in adding to the staff team. **SPRC**

September 2021

- Each staff member has developed a “rhythmic week” including a Sabbath and “balcony” time (that is, time to look at the big picture and make strategic plans). **STAFF**

October 2021

- Sufficient training and development opportunities have been scheduled and begun to be implemented for all volunteers in a way that left them inspired to serve again rather than exhausted. **EQUIPPING**

November 2021

- A strategic plan has been developed for all ministries in the church to work collaboratively to reach goals and break down any silos that may unintentionally exist. [IGNITE](#)

December 2021

- Catch up month!

Focus for 2022: preventative maintenance, innovation, growth, discipleship, missions, control documents, congregational care

January 2022

- A Congregation Care Ministry has been established and is meeting regularly to ensure that church members' pastoral needs are being met and no one falls through the gaps. [STAFF & COUNCIL](#)

February 2022

- A Ministry Manual has been developed and included the most recent directories, a 12-Month calendar, results-based job descriptions for staff and volunteers, compliance documents, budgets, game plans, a preventative maintenance calendar and notes for every major church event. [STAFF & COUNCIL](#)

March 2022

- The approach has been determined to follow-up with people who are MIA. A database to track who has gone missing, the reasons they have gone, and who followed up with them on staff is in place. A culture of care has been created for MIA church members. [MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT/CONGREGATIONAL CARE](#)

April 2022

- Ensure an Operations Manual is in place and updated annually. The manual should include all legal documentation needed for the ministry including background checks, financial documents, licenses, child protection policy, facility use policies etc. [STAFF & COUNCIL](#)

May 2022

- Continue to build on the desire of the church to make a difference in the world, as well as their local community. Develop a clear, focused calendar for involvement in local agencies, as well as, regional, and possibly international missions. Evaluate the current mission trips for effectiveness. Create a plan for promoting and exposing the congregation to missions throughout the year. [MISSION & OUTREACH](#)

June 2022

- A preventative maintenance calendar has been created that includes annual check-ups on the 17 essential systems. **STAFF & COUNCIL**

July - August 2022

- Catch up month!

September 2022

- An inspiring leadership-training and vision-casting event for all volunteers has been scheduled and implemented at the beginning of each program year. **EQUIPPING**

October 2022

- A group of stakeholders has met for a Christian Formation Retreat to discuss the discipleship pathway the church will use to disciple its people. At this retreat, the following objectives were met: **DISCIPLESHIP**
 - Evaluate the existing discipleship opportunities to ensure their effectiveness.
 - Develop a set of core competencies for the discipleship programming.
 - Determine the best adult formation strategy and consider the use of small groups.
 - Develop a clear communication piece that will outline the discipleship pathway to church members
 - Develop milestones for children and youth that celebrate markers as sacred in the life of families.

November 2022

- An evangelism strategy is established that provides an intentional process for outwardly focused communication designed to connect with and engage those not yet a part of the church. **EVANGELISM & COMMUNICATIONS**

December 2022

- An annual evaluation of all 17 systems is completed. Any needed changes are mapped out in the next 12-month timeline. **STAFF & COUNCIL**

Essential Systems Prioritized By Planning Year

Essential Systems prioritized by Planning Year. When the Strategic Plan is adopted, the Essential Systems Timeline becomes an integral part of moving St. Thomas forward. As the Strategic Priorities progress, the Essential Systems are being developed and enhanced in the background.

2020

Database
Communications
Program calendar
Visioning
Compliance
Facilities
Welcome & new member, hospitality

2021

Staff development
Volunteer development
Major Events
Finances
Integration

2022

Preventative maintenance
Innovation
Growth
Discipleship
Missions