

**A LONG RANGE PLAN  
FOR  
COAL CITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
COAL CITY, ILLINOIS  
April 17, 2008  
(Revised)**

This long range plan is dedicated to God and the advancement of God's Kingdom and is intended to encompass the nurturing, growth and development of the Coal City United Methodist Church over the next twenty years.

We envision this as a living document – one that should be revisited regularly and kept current. We hope that in the year 2026, it will still be a valid plan.

**The Long Range Planning Committee**

Members:      Jim Hutchings, Co-Chair      Dave Gowdy  
                  Lorraine Vilt, Co-Chair      Katie Crawford  
                  Carol Crawford, Secretary  
                  Pastor Tom Logsdon – Ex-Officio and contributing member

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) is working to discern where God is leading our congregation over the next 20 years, and, in so doing, to renew and recommit ourselves to our vision and purpose as currently defined:

*“To be a sanctuary where prayer, worship, acts of mercy and study of scripture empower persons to live as disciples of Jesus Christ”.*

This long range plan fully endorses that concept. “Serve” is the way Christ told his disciples to work. Our congregation continues to encourage service, not only as a commandment, but also as a source of joy.

It is now more than 120 years since The Coal City United Methodist Church was chartered and six years since we moved into our new building. We have sought to focus, not on the building, but on making disciples for Jesus Christ. What has been and remains most important to our congregation is people personally inviting new people to come and participate in our many activities. We have sought to do more than simply place a sign in front of our building and expect people to come. For us to live up to our vision, we must continue to actively seek people like the Good Shepherd searching for His lost sheep by using culturally appropriate worship, marketing, prayer and study, as well as focusing on equipping laity for the work of the ministry.

Initially, the LRPC sought input from multiple sources within our church, including fellowship groups and individuals. Overwhelmingly, the response envisions continued growth through expanded building and equipment resources (particularly the addition of classrooms) and the addition and strengthening of programs for youth and adults. Other responses include appreciation for the things we have in place that are working well, acclaim for the community choir, desire for additional worship opportunities, and hope for increased diversity in our church family.

With this in mind, we present the following Long Range Plan for the **Coal City United Methodist Church**.

**LONG RANGE PLAN  
COAL CITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

(Not in order of importance)

1. WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS, INCREASE THE AVERAGE PARTICIPATION IN CHURCH PROGRAMS AND SERVICE BY ONE HOUR PER WEEK PER MEMBER

- a. Builds disciples through understanding and education
- b. Provides additional exposure to mission and service needs
- c. Provides a greater sense of community and belonging
- d. Uses gifts, time, talent and training to find a place for BEGINNING, BECOMING, BELONGING, AND BRANCHING OUT IN GOD'S SERVICE.
- e. Recognizes that stewardship is not only about money, but even more about how we spend our lives and what we, as followers of Jesus Christ, stand for
- f. Provides an opportunity to carry our Christian compassion beyond the walls of our church building

Ultimately, the attainment of such an increased level of participation will challenge all programs of the church. Key work teams will include education, worship and missions. The catalysts will be the Welcoming Ministries Director, Nurturing Ministries Director and the Education Committee Chair, but all committees, groups, staff persons, members and friends of the Coal City United Methodist Church are important to this goal.

2. ESTABLISH A CARE GIVING MINISTRY

- a. This ministry would be geared to those who are ill, disabled, impaired (unable to fulfill all their needs without assistance) and/or receiving medical treatment. It will have great potential for improving the health and general welfare of the entire church. Economic well being, family financial planning, debt management, insurance matters, and estate planning could be areas of general need and would help build a greater sense of community.
  - i. Specific goals to be explored:
    - (1) inclusion of **Stephens Ministry Training**
    - (2) addition of a **parish nurse** to provide guidance and counsel in health and home management matters (not medical treatment or assistance).
    - (3) committee or group to provide "on demand" help for **transportation to and from church functions**

3. CONTINUE TO EXPAND THE NUMBER, VARIETY AND PARTICIPATION IN SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

- a. Growth in this area is the only proven method for attaining the sense of belonging
- b. The Sunday School Superintendent, Education Committee Chairperson, as well as the Directors of Welcoming Ministries and Nurturing Ministries are a vital part of this process and serve as an important complement to the pastoral team. Most churches begin as a small group of Christians who have an intimate and caring relationship with one another. They worship together, study the Bible together, care for each other in time of need and serve together in the work of the church.

As churches grow, their intimate relationship is more difficult to maintain. More contemporary small groups are often the answer to the need of a larger congregation for relationship building and nurturing members. Trained leadership is necessary for the success of these programs.

4. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND ENHANCEMENT SEMINARS – for all members of the church
  - a. Provide a place where large group seminars can be performed, e.g. equipping the fellowship hall with necessary electronic equipment, plus sound reduction panels.
  - b. Priority should always be given to matching opportunities for service with specific gifts and talents, rather than simply plugging people in slots because they are needed. Formulation of a talent resource database would significantly assist with this process.
  - c. Timely involvement and purposeful ministry is critical to helping people achieve fulfillment through beginning, becoming, belonging and branching out in God’s service, rather than simply working in a particular ministry without conviction.
  - d. There is importance in doing this function wisely and in a timely manner so that new people have the opportunity to become doers of the Word. Key work teams will include welcoming ministries, nurturing ministries, education and mission, and it should be a continuous function of the entire ministry of the congregation.
  - e. Our **Discover Us** classes have been very successful; however, a plan to follow up with the new members should be implemented.
  
5. MISSION COMMITTEE – CONTINUE TO BUILD AND STRENGTHEN THE MISSION OUTREACH OF COAL CITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BY SERVING OTHERS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
  - a. Our church has been a five star church of the conference ministry team for at least 10 years. A mission priority has been the payment of all “conference claims” which include World Service and conference benevolence. We also give to advance specials and conference advance special projects, missionary personnel support and UMCOR projects.
  - b. We will continue to expand our mission program through a program of budgeting, volunteers and the collection of material supplies.

***Suggested Project Related Missions:***

- i. Establish Volunteer In Mission (VIM) Teams for both inside and outside the country. Typically, VIM teams pay their travel and logistic expenses and contribute to project funding.
- ii. Develop local mission trips for educational and on-site assistance to Golden Cross Agencies and other ministries.
- iii. Provide scholarships for mission trips.
- iv. Continue to encourage support for and volunteer service at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center
- v. Develop a mission exchange program wherein interested members travel to other countries while we share our culture with visitors from there.

***Suggested Service Related Missions:***

- vi. Alzheimer’s Day Care Unit
- vii. Senior Center and/or Senior Day Care Center
- viii. Daycare Center for Children (after & perhaps before school)
- ix. Nursery Day Care Program

Development of any of these programs should thoroughly evaluate current and projected needs, extent of similar services that are provided in the community, liability and expected cash flow.

6. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Forward motion is a waste of energy unless we are moving in the right direction. But how do we know? Only through understanding the teachings of Jesus Christ. The late Bishop W.T. Handy of St. Louis stated, "Our main purpose is not simply to add numbers to our rolls, but to fulfill the basic purpose of the church: to make disciples – followers of Jesus Christ."

Our emphasis on education for children and youth is sound. Since many of the unchurched come to us with little, if any, prior exposure or understanding of Jesus' teaching, we need to continue to explore additional classes for adults and special interest groups; for example, young adults, single parents, children of single parents, parents of teenagers, cancer survivors, etc. Christian Education should be the cornerstone of our small groups ministry.

#### Specific Recommendations:

- a. Continue to develop an effective resource and reading library.
- b. Additional chairs and tables for the Christian Education classrooms.
- c. Add classes for additional ages and circumstances. Continue to explore the need for short-term and ongoing classes for specific needs.
- d. Additional Christian Education class times should be considered. Some parents expect to have an opportunity to attend worship service and know that their children and youth are in Christian Education classes. This could be a very healthy "take" on the drop off parent and may appeal to those who have a longer distance to travel.
- e. Add a Family Education Director responsible for coordinating Christian Education Programs for families and members. This could include Vacation Bible School and similar responsibilities.

## 7. PROMOTE AND ENHANCE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

### "YOUTH – our strength and our future"

The Coal City United Methodist Church needs to clearly define and articulate its God-centered commitment to the young people in our church families and to the youth and young adults of the entire community. We are already a highly visible influence in our community and, with a strengthened Christian program for youth and young adults, we will continue to grow and prosper.

Many components must come together to make this dream a reality. Staffing and programs are important, but the key to successful programming will prove to be the extent by support of CCUMC's members and that of parental interest and involvement.

Ministry with youth and young adults is demanding, challenging and time intensive. This plan recommends early employment of a trained and experienced high-energy Youth Director or Youth Minister to be responsible for further implementing our ministry to youth and young adults.

Expand and enhance youth programs that clearly define separately Middle School (Junior High) and Senior High programs.

Programming should include more God-centered functions, youth sporting events, opportunities for fellowship, singing groups, youth outreach with other Christian groups.

Obtain church transportation vehicle.

A Young Adult Ministry (Christian Education, mission trips, events and a social contact for this age group) – something that would continue after their high school and younger groups and keep them involved as they grow. This would include music and public speaking as a vital part of this

ministry, possibly an evening event, with Bible study and specific programs.

## 8. DEVELOP WORSHIP AND MUSIC PROGRAMS

A single CCUMC worship service may be the only contact some persons ever have with God. The Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, Christianity; all those things we routinely hear discussed and take for granted. The following recommendations look to further develop worship and music programs.

- a. Our 10:30 service is often at or near capacity. Consideration should be given to other services that are less traditional, particularly Saturday evening and during our current Christian Education hour.
- b. Expand musical expression – musicals, concerts, cantatas. The goal of worship is to help people come into a sense of the presence of God. The goal of worship is not to present a particular kind of music. Because music has the power to alter our state of consciousness, it increases our receptivity to God-powered attitude and behavior changes not otherwise possible.
- c. Musical combos
- d. Expand drama capability.
- e. Encourage puppet ministry.
- f. Do a larger and more comprehensive Christmas Program or programs, including as many as possible in planning, preparation and production.
- g. Mother's Day, Father's Day programs, etc. where children have more meaning and impact.

## 9. STAFF PARISH CONCERNS

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) has the responsibility to hire, fire, supervise and discipline staff performance, but direction should come from the Administrative Council. They should work together towards realization of the congregation's goals and addressing the programmatic direction of our staff as requirements and resources materialize, identifying, delineating, and prioritizing various staff positions. Qualified volunteers with a willingness to serve should receive priority consideration. These are the people who can most readily grow in the faith.

These needs may include:

- a. Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries
- b. Volunteer Coordinator
- d. Family Education Director
- e. Full-time janitorial (custodial) position
- f. Work to establish a position for "Clergy Intern" to lend parish ministry experience for a seminary student.
- g. Work towards offering competitive salary, insurance and pension plans to full-time non-ordained staff.

## 10. EXPAND AND IMPROVE BUILDING FACILITIES

In the process of determining program areas that are still in need of enhancement or development, several facility needs become more apparent. Meeting space, and ultimately, a larger worship center (sanctuary) emerged.

As we grow into a high traffic, high demand operation, concerns for general housekeeping, daily maintenance, safety and security must be continually addressed. While responsibility lies generally with the Trustees, no staff person, member or user is exempt from the broad obligation of these concerns.

Expansion Items:

- a. Upgrade existing pre-school and Christian Education areas
- b. The growing need for meeting space
- c. Sound system for meeting rooms.
- d. A chapel (defined as a smaller, more intimate area to pray and meditate).
- e. Work areas for anticipated staff – volunteer or compensated. (This could be adequately addressed with several classrooms having phones).
- f. Larger music room
- g. A designated room for first aid needs and parish nurse conferencing.
- h. Outside electrical service panels for outdoor events
- I. Acquire/enhance state of the art audio/visual/media and office equipment. This is envisioned as multi-media system, satellite, DVD for classroom and worship and singing.
- j. Nursery Notification System – envisioned as a pager system or in conjunction with the multi-media system displaying an assigned number on the screen to notify specific parents who are needed in the nursery.
- k. Better control of stage lighting for the sanctuary.
- l. Enhanced sound system for the sanctuary:
  - Larger sound board(s)
  - More microphone channels
  - A monitoring system to allow those in the sound booth to know sound levels in the sanctuary
- m. Changes in the air flow system
- n. Upgrade the secretary's office
  - Purchase a new work center (desk and appropriate cabinets and counter space) to make the space more efficient
  - Plan for computer upgrades and new/additional software
- o. The trustees should plan and budget for existing classrooms that will be used for offices
  - Furniture budget should be one component of this plan
- p. A maintenance /replacement schedule is needed for equipment (including kitchen equipment), painting, carpet, duct cleaning, plumbing, etc.
- q. Plan for the purchase of an ice maker
- r. Update our wish list

### Ministry Options for Land Use:

The Long Range Planning Committee believes that CCUMC needs to enhance its overall environment in working towards further development of land not now occupied and/or owned by the church and its planned recreation center. Several options were suggested.

- a. Outdoor chapel with trees and wedding garden
- b. Sports complex
- c. Expanded activity center
- d. Recreational center for youth
- e. Senior Day Care
- f. Day Care Center
- g. Retirement assisted living/nursing home facility

## 11. **BECOME GOOD STEWARDS OF OUR ENVIRONMENT**

### ***1. GOING GREEN***

- a. Establish a “Going Green” Committee to put in place practices that will help to save our environment.
  - i. This committee should draw members from various areas of the church who are directly involved in the purchase and use of materials used:
    - (1) Kitchen Supplies
    - (2) Classroom Supplies
    - (3) Office Supplies
    - (4) Janitorial Supplies
    - (5) Landscaping

### **PROMOTE A FISCALLY SOUND ENVIRONMENT**

Our goal is a spiritual goal: “Seek first the Kingdom of God in your life.” The goal of a fiscally sound environment is a process that must flow on a continuous basis.

- a. Program costs should never be covered by borrowing.
- b. Discipleship learning will include promotion of faithful giving as a learned process.

We believe that programs of the church should operate on a financially sound basis without borrowing. A largely unmet responsibility of the church is to take the lead in providing education and counsel on the use and abuse of credit, as well as long-term finance and estate planning.

## 12. **GREATER CHURCH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Coal City United Methodist Church, as it continues to develop its ministries and become more of a Christ-Centered influence in the area, should assemble a task force with adequate data to become a catalyst in growing our own Christian corridor type neighborhood. This may ultimately involve the establishment of a sister church or satellite worship center.

Prepare a plan to help the churches in the surrounding communities (Braidwood, Braceville, Mazon, Verona) enhance their ministries through shared resources.

## **CLOSING REFLECTIONS**

Growing our talents is continuous. It will take assertive and careful work on the part of many. Diligence with the abounding grace of God will allow us to worship gloriously, practice fellowship deeply and reach out compassionately, all at the same time.

God is able to do more than we can dream – “God is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20). In this Long Range Plan we have a vision of possibilities in the midst of leanness. Let us embrace that vision with joy, and exercise it with confidence and great thanksgiving.

May we all be blessed.

**PLAN AHEAD — IT WASN'T RAINING WHEN NOAH BUILT THE ARK**