



Called Together Called to Gather

THEME VERSE

"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (I Peter 2:9).

MISSION STATEMENT (in language that reflects the inspired words above)

As God's people gathered together at St. John's, we live to declare the praises of our Savior God who called us out of the darkness of sin into the light of his grace.

EVERY MEMBER VISION STATEMENT (personal goals)

As a 21st century disciple of Jesus, I reflect the light of God's love by...

Making worship of my Savior the top priority in my life

Growing in my faith through daily contact with God's Word

Fostering Christian friendships for mutual encouragement and support

Using my unique gifts to glorify God and serve God's people

Sharing the good news of God's forgiving love with others

While these goals apply to every Christian, the God who called us has also placed us in a unique ministry setting. Based on the feedback from the recent surveys and focus groups, and in conjunction with the “Called Together, Called to Gather” appeal, the personal vision statement above has been broadened and expanded to include the following congregational goals...

I. Making worship of our Savior the top priority in our lives

- 1. We understand that worship is central to our existence, and we continue to pursue excellence in this area to the glory of his name.**
- 2. We appreciate the rich variety of resources that can be used within the framework of Lutheran liturgical worship, and we take steps to incorporate them into our services.**
- 3. We increase the percentage of members who attend weekly worship, possibly by modifying or expanding the number of weekly services to achieve that goal.**
- 4. We make worship accessible to everyone regardless of their circumstances (age, disability, etc).**
- 5. We make use of the musical gifts and abilities of more members in worship, and we dedicate the necessary time and resources to make it happen.**
- 6. We update/enhance our church audio and visual system in order to proclaim the gospel with clarity and creativity in the 21st century.**
- 7. We recognize that for many people worship is the first point of contact with our congregation, and we take that into account in the way we do things before, during and after worship.**
- 8. We examine our current usher, greeter and nursery programs, and we implement changes to make worship a more welcoming and positive experience for members and visitors.**

II. Growing in our faith through daily contact with God’s Word

- 1. We stress the importance of spiritual growth for every member’s life of Christian discipleship, recognizing that a solid foundation is essential for understanding and embracing our mission.**
- 2. We recognize the vital role our school/preschool plays in carrying out our Lord's command to go and make disciples, and we build on the blessings of 130 years of Christian education to train future generations of Christian leaders.**
- 3. We increase the percentage of members involved in regular Bible study, and we expand our offerings and venues to encourage increased participation.**
- 4. We implement new strategies to communicate and promote our Bible study offerings.**
- 5. We train/mentor our members to serve as small group Bible study/ministry leaders, and we dedicate additional time and resources to make it happen.**
- 6. We recognize that a significant percentage of our congregation is under the age of 18, and we dedicate appropriate time and resources to serve their spiritual needs.**
- 7. We make use of the latest technology to improve and expand both group and personal Bible study resources.**
- 8. We explore the possibility of expanding our current church library and converting it into a Bible study resource/distribution center.**
- 9. We examine the current structure of the Board of Discipleship, and we dedicate the necessary time and resources to assist this group in its efforts to achieve the goals above (see III, 6).**

III. Fostering Christian friendships for mutual support and encouragement

- 1. We give thanks for the blessings of being a part of a Christian family, and we create additional large and small group gatherings to build relationships with fellow members.**
- 2. We support the creation of groups on the basis of shared demographic (teens, parents, twenty somethings, etc), interest (sports, cards, etc) or need (caretakers, empty nesters, etc), and we dedicate the time and resources required to facilitate them.**
- 3. We redouble our efforts to communicate fellowship opportunities to all of our members.**
- 4. We recognize the space constraints of our current narthex, and we explore the possibility of modification/expansion of our congregation's primary gathering area.**
- 5. We understand that in the computer age not all gathering places are physical places, and we make use of technology to enable our people "gather" in other ways.**
- 6. We examine the current structure of the Board of Discipleship, and we dedicate the necessary time and resources to assist this group in its efforts to achieve the goals above (see II, 9).**

IV. Using our unique gifts to glorify God and serve God's people

- 1. We encourage all of our members to use their time, talents and treasures to serve, and we emphasize that every act of love is a fulfillment of our mission/vision.**
- 2. We help our members identify, develop and use their spiritual gifts, and we provide ongoing and one-time service opportunities for them.**
- 3. We believe that communication, coordination and training are essential in recruiting and empowering volunteers to serve, and that carrying out these tasks well in a congregation of our size will require dedicated time and resources.**
- 4. We publicly thank the many members who are actively serving their Savior at St. John's.**
- 5. We promote an entrepreneurial spirit among our members, and we encourage them to identify new and creative ways to serve God and God's people.**
- 6. We explore the possibility of expanding the narthex to include a Welcome/Service Opportunity center.**

V. Sharing the good news of God's forgiving love with others

- 1. We embrace the truth that as Christians and as a Christian congregation we have been "Called to Gather," and therefore we make evangelism a high priority in our church's ministry.**
- 2. We give thanks for the numerical growth of our congregation over the past decade, and we work and plan proactively to continue to grow under God's grace and blessing.**
- 3. We also give thanks for God's blessings on our Chinese ministry, and we communicate with our members both the blessings of and opportunities to serve in this unique ministry.**
- 4. We attribute much of the recent growth of the congregation to the growth and expansion of our school/preschool/childcare programs, and we continue to use these educational ministries to reach out to young families in our community.**
- 5. We recognize the importance of integrating new members into the life of our congregation, and we dedicate appropriate time and resources to strengthen this area.**
- 6. We understand that for an increasing number of people the first point of contact with our congregation is our church website, and we evaluate/update our current website with the goal of making it more accessible to non-members.**
- 7. We look for opportunities to reach out with the gospel beyond our congregation, and we establish a mission partnership with at least one other WELS ministry in the Milwaukee area.**