

# Strategic Plan

2024 – 2030

*Full Review and Update in 2027 and 2030*

## COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CHAPEL HILL, UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

### Background

The Community Church of Chapel Hill last adopted a mission statement in 2010, a vision statement in 2012, and a 10-year strategic plan in 2013. The 2013 strategic plan was subdivided by the Board's Strategic Management Team into three-year focus areas. The first of these was in place from 2014-2015. The second was in place from 2016-2019. The most notable outcome of the 2013 Strategic Plan was the completion of a successful capital campaign and building project. At the June 2022 congregational meeting, Board Past President Heather O'Connor offered a report on all we had accomplished through the strategic plan.

### Process

In the spring of 2023, the Board of Trustees held a retreat to formalize a new strategic planning process. The Board then recruited a Strategic Planning Committee whose members included Co-chairs Barb Chapman and Glenn Davis plus Dawn Carter, Mary Beth Powell, Steve Marshall, Jenny Nelson, Bianca Rodriguez, Chris Speh, Ellie Speh, Becky Wilkes, and Rev. Thom Belote.

The Strategic Planning Committee convened 31 focus groups between September 2023 and January 2024. A total of 155 congregants participated in focus groups.

The focus groups asked congregants to reflect on 6 questions.

- 1) What brought you to Community Church?
- 2) What do you think is important for us to consider for the future of Community Church?
- 3) What are the Church's strengths?
- 4) What are the Church's long-term needs?
- 5) What are our special opportunities and what improvements should we pursue?
- 6) What challenges do we face in the next 5 years?

Following the completion of the focus group process, the Strategic Planning Committee summarized their findings and met on April 7, 2024, to analyze and begin to synthesize the input they had received. On April 13, 2024, the Board of Trustees held a retreat to receive the work of the Strategic Planning Committee and to further distill what they had learned into a Strategic

Plan. The Strategic Plan will be presented to the congregation at the June 9, 2024, congregational meeting.

## Overview

Congregants who participated in the Strategic Planning Committee's focus groups provided input that was consistent, positive, and encouraging. This input included:

- A deep love of our congregation and appreciation for its role in congregants' lives.
- Gratitude for the ministry of Rev. Thom Belote, especially his sermons.
- Gratitude for the religious education program and the leadership of Marion Hirsch and her assistant, Kat Good.
- Appreciation for the musical offerings in our church and the leadership of Glenn Mehrbach.
- Appreciation for Rachel Rose's role in warmly welcoming newcomers and her inclusive way of helping newcomers to connect.

Input received from Focus Group participants was offered in the spirit of helping our congregation to increase its vitality and impact-

## Strategic Plan

1. **Area: Spiritual Growth** *Mission Statement: "We strive to nurture spiritual growth"; Program Areas: Worship, Religious Education, Music; Goals:*
  - 1.1. Continue Increase representation of racial, ethnic, gender, and religious diversity in program offerings.
  - 1.2. Continue the practice of choosing an annual theme for worship that is touched on frequently throughout the year.
  - 1.3. Expand our capacity to teach excellence in worship and preaching through working with Intern Ministers, the Insch Associates, the Preaching Practicum, and the development of additional opportunities.
  - 1.4. OWL Ministry will expand offerings and training both inside and outside the Community Church.
  - 1.5. Expand and deepen opportunities for children, youth, and families to do justice and service work in the community.
  - 1.6. Enhance opportunities for spiritual growth for adults through Spiritual Exploration for Adults.
  - 1.7. Grow our music outreach through "Coffeehouse" or "Open Mic Night" format and take our music groups into the community.

2. **Area: Building Community** *Mission Statement: “Support and care for each other”*; *Program Areas: Welcoming Ministry, Caring Ministry, Groups*; **Goals:**
  - 2.1. Support activities that bring people together within and across all age groups.
  - 2.2. Continue to provide and expand opportunities for multigenerational connection.
  - 2.3. Broaden our welcome and inclusiveness, especially concerning race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, different abilities, gender identity (LGBTQIA+), and neurodiversity
  - 2.4. Increase opportunities for connection for seniors and those who have a hard time coming to church, including transportation and technology.
  
3. **Area: Outreach** *Mission Statement: “... and effect change through our love of the world.”*; *Program Areas: Side With Love, Immigrant Justice Initiative, ECO, Share the Plate, Communications*; **Goals:**
  - 3.1. Further develop and increase partnerships with other religious communities.
  - 3.2. Intentional outreach to the LGBTQIA+ community.
  - 3.3. Prioritize initiatives that bring us into relationship with people of diverse racial backgrounds.
  - 3.4. Deepen our connection with the UNC community.
  - 3.5. Use social media and technology to increase our visibility in the local community.
  - 3.6. Support and grow our outside social justice, immigrant justice, eco, Habitat for Humanity, and economic justice partnerships in the community.
    - 3.6.1. Proactively address the challenges to our principles both in our nation and in the world. We will do this through dynamic discussion and action both within our congregation and the wider community. We will work to protect democracy (5th Principle) by actively encouraging and facilitating access to voting for every member of our church and every citizen of the community.
  - 3.7. Note\* implications of 1.4, 1.5 and 1.7 for Outreach goals as well
  
4. **Area: Stability and Organizational Growth** *Program Areas: Board of Trustees Committees for Finance, Governance, HR, Endowment and Stewardship (including Operation, Outreach, and Legacy Funds) Committees*; **Goals:**
  - 4.1. Grow our funds available for capital expenditures, maintenance of our facilities, and endowment.

- 4.1. Establish a planned giving program and hold individual meetings with every member of our church over the age of 65 to encourage them to include the church in their estate and legacy planning.
- 4.2. Assess and establish needed support for staff.
- 4.3. Develop and implement procedures for formative and summative evaluation of all staff.
- 4.4. Fund professional development for staff.
- 4.5. Establish plan for succession planning for staff and lay-leader-led committees, including procedures for delegation/collaboration and leadership development opportunities.
- 4.6. Create a plan to prioritize additional staffing.
- 4.7. Offer leadership development opportunities to lay members of congregation.

5. **Area: Community Infrastructure** *Program Areas: Buildings & Grounds, Board of Trustees; Goals:*

- 5.1. Create a task force to study and recommend needed improvements for technology across all areas of church operation.
- 5.2. Create a task force to establish a long-term plan for the Manse, including upkeep or other expenditures.
- 5.3. Create a task force to study how and where to best memorialize those in our congregation who have died. This task force will consider improvements and access to Memorial Rock as well as utilizing other locations on the church grounds that may be used as memorial grounds.
- 5.4. Conduct a space assessment for the purposes of understanding our current and near-future building usage.
- 5.5. Conduct an assessment of our parking lot usage and a feasibility study of parking options.
- 5.6. Consolidate our current safety policies and communicate the existence of said policies without providing details publicly that may endanger our safety.