

Dreaming a New Day

Study Guide for the 2011 Visioning Report (January 2012)

Full Report available online at <http://www.chevychasepc.org/who-we-are/our-beliefs/>

God's call for all Christians is to love God with all our hearts, minds and souls and to love our neighbor as ourselves. The church is God's agent of transformation for each of us. We are called as individuals to be in community, to worship, learn, and belong so that we can be transformed by God's love for us in Jesus Christ. As loved and equipped people, we go forth to transform the world.

Beyond this call, God calls a community at a particular moment in time to use its particular gifts to demonstrate God's astonishing love for the world. Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church's gifts and strengths and the context in which we live led us to our vision:

God is calling CCPC to make Christ the center of our lives, to celebrate and equip the youngest generation of our church to do the work to which Christ has called us all; and to work in the world for justice.

Christ our Center

As busy people pulled by the competing demands of contemporary life, we are called to make Jesus Christ the center of our lives.

Pulled by the often conflicting stresses of daily living, we seek to center our lives in the Spirit of God and the ways of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, prayer, community life, and pastoral care we seek to deepen our relationship with Jesus. Centered in the love of God we welcome a broad spectrum of political perspectives, ministry interests, and strengthen our bonds of faith and friendship. We support each other as we grapple with the everyday choices we must make to keep Christ at the center of our lives.

Strongest themes:

- Greater sense of connection in the church community to one another and to Jesus Christ.
- Need for personal spiritual/faith formation.

Objectives:

- People will grow spiritually as individuals – have a deeper faith – and the tools to nurture faith both intellectually and spiritually.
- People will have a stronger connection to the church, both in terms of the shared expectations (including spiritual practices of prayer, study, worship, giving, serving) of a life of faith, and through deeper relationships with one another and with Jesus Christ.

Strategies:

Evaluate/change the order of Sunday morning:

- to allow for more fellowship for the congregation as a whole,
- to provide more time for adult spiritual formation/education opportunities on Sunday morning
- to eliminate some of the overlap of the timing of programming

Children our Blessing

As a church blessed with the vitality of children, youth, and young families, and we are called to receive the riches of this blessing and to nurture and equip the next generation of the faith.

We have a special calling to nurture the faith of children and youth. We are called to include children and youth in every aspect of our church life. We envision opportunities for people of every age to participate in acts of service and mission, and to focus on opportunities to work across the generations. We are called to reach out and invite the young families in our neighborhood who

have no faith affiliation to come to CCPC. We envision equipping and supporting parents, grandparents and mentors in raising spiritually healthy children and youth.

Themes:

- Passing the Christian faith to our children.
- Equipping children for a life of faith.

Objectives:

- Children and youth will experience church as a safe and joyous place in which they experience the love of God in the community.
- Children and youth will have solid foundation of Christian Education and Spiritual Formation. That is they know the stories of the faith, the songs of the faith, how to worship in community, and other spiritual practices such as prayer, giving, and service.
- Parents will have the tools to help their children and youth grow in faith.
- Our youth will be equipped to apply their faith to their daily living.

Strategies:

- Encourage each committee to explore specific ways to involve children and youth in all the aspects of church life.

Justice our Passion

As people blessed with education, access to power, and financial resources we are called to work for justice.

We hear and respond to Jesus' call to serve "the least of these" in our neighborhoods and in the wider world. Through many and various outreach projects in the church, all people, young and old, busy and not, have the opportunity to engage in advocacy and hands-on mission work in addition to practicing the discipline of charity. In our neighborhood, city, nation and world, we work with partners in mission and service to multiply our efforts to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give voice to those who are oppressed, practice peace, and restore the health of creation.

Themes:

- Hands-on mission and financial giving
- Need to see the impact of our work
- Need to clarify what we mean by justice –
 - advocacy?
 - service?
 - financial support?
 - Do we want to focus?
 - What are we being called to do at this time?

Objectives:

- CCPC has an impact in building up the Kingdom of God.
- Many people are involved.
- People in the congregation hear the stories and know the impact of our justice ministries.

A vision for the church describes our current situation and our aspirations. It is grounded in who we are but also reflects our hopes and dreams for humanity. A vision answers "What is CCPC's piece of God's imagination?" A vision is not static. It is a journey through which we strive for constant betterment of ourselves our community and the world. For churches in the reformed tradition, the vision for a community captures the "reformed and always being reformed according to the will of God" theology we embrace.