



Third Presbyterian Church

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Serving Christ with open minds, generous hearts, and willing spirits, we welcome all!

To the Session and the Congregation,

The Mission Study Team was named by the Session at its meeting of March 15, 2016 and commissioned during worship on April 3, 2016. The team met during the months of April – November 2016. The tasks undertaken by the team were to 1.) review the 2005 Mission Study Report, 2.) read together the book *Can Our Church Live?* by Alice Mann, 3.) develop questions to be used in conversations with various groups in the church, 4.) conduct conversations with various groups in the church, 5.) develop a Mission Statement and report based on the conversations.

The team felt it was important to have conversations with as many people in the congregation as possible regarding the future and direction of the church. We began with the questions “Who are we? Who is God calling us to be? and Where is God calling us to go?” but realized that what was really required was a focus on and conversations about change. This is reflected in the questions asked in the initial conversation and those in subsequent conversations.

The team studied demographic information for the Enos Park Neighborhood and the North Side of Springfield as well as material on congregational redevelopment. This report brings together the study and conversations to recommend not only a mission statement, but also short-term and long-term ministry goals, and characteristics and spiritual gifts beneficial for new pastoral leadership.

The Mission Study Team is grateful for the opportunity to serve Third Presbyterian and looks forward to our future together.

In Christ,

Kathy Harrison *Debra Reed* *Brenda Kochmann*
Craig Clark *Jim Clanton* *Randy Ramirez*
Joseph H. Eby

2016-17 Mission Study Team

MISSION STATEMENT

Serving Christ with open minds, generous hearts, and willing spirits, we welcome all.

During the Mission Study process, the Mission Study Team (MST) asked the congregation to be praying for three specific things – open minds, generous hearts, and willing spirits. As the process came to its conclusion, it became clear that these formed the real sense of our mission for the congregation’s future. This mission statement expresses themes that are important to the congregation of Third Presbyterian Church in its present context and for the future.

Serving Christ... Jesus Christ has always been, and continues to be, central to the identity of Third Presbyterian Church. The congregation believes in who Jesus Christ is as the Son of God and head of the church. We believe what the scriptures say about Jesus Christ, and that his life, death, and resurrection, are essential to who we are as individuals and as the Body of Christ here today. We are to know him, love him, and serve him. This is a core value of Third Presbyterian Church.

with open minds... This expresses the need to change that was raised during the MST conversations throughout Third Presbyterian. When asked about the readiness and ability to change, congregation members understood that change needs to happen and many offered specific suggestions. Many also acknowledged that change is never easy and requires openness to new people, methods, and technologies. This also expresses a strong tradition of Sunday School at Third Presbyterian and the desire to see this ministry revitalized. People with open minds are open to others, to diversity, to new ways, and to creative thinking.

generous hearts... This expresses what many congregants agree is a strong point of Third Presbyterian Church. People believe themselves to be a congregation that is good at showing Christian love toward one another. It also reinforces important aspects of financial stewardship on the part of people. These being, that it starts with one’s heart and that members need to be generous in their financial support. It also speaks to future needs of the congregation, specifically showing that same love to people outside the congregation and needed growth in financial support. People with generous hearts invite people, welcome people, support people, and support the church.

and willing spirits... This expresses the call to serve in the church and in the world. Many people in Third Presbyterian are very willing to serve, if asked. It also recognizes the need for leadership development in the congregation. Often there is a reluctance on people’s parts to take the lead in ministries. It also expresses the willingness to embrace and work at change for the future. People with willing spirits are willing to do the work necessary to change and are willing to lead, not just follow.

...we welcome all! Historically this congregation has been a place where people of all stations in life could find a place to belong. The congregation recognizes that we do not reflect the neighborhood immediately surrounding the church, but want to be a place that welcomes whoever comes through our doors. The church also desires to reach out as a welcoming place, not only in the neighborhood, but throughout Springfield.

HISTORY & CONTEXT

Third Presbyterian Church was founded in downtown Springfield in 1849 and moved to the growing north side of the city in 1873. The church has been at its present location, in the heart of the Enos Park Neighborhood, since 1890. The church drew most of its membership from families who lived and worked in the north end. The largest period of growth and ministry occurred in the first half of the 20th Century with thousands attending services and Sunday School. This is still in the memory of many congregants.

The Enos Park Neighborhood is immediately north of Springfield’s downtown and was well established by the late 1800’s. Due to many factors, during the late 1970’s and into the early 2000’s the demographics of the neighborhood changed significantly. Families moved out of the neighborhood, housing conditions deteriorated, and crime in the area rose. At the same time, the congregation aged and declined in number. Today only a few members live in the Enos Park Neighborhood. Most drive in from other parts of the city or surrounding communities. The congregation’s demographics do not reflect the area around the church. The following demographic information is from Quick Insite Reports available at www.missioninsite.com. (Appendix 1)

Racial Demographics

	Third Presbyterian Church	Enos Park Neighborhood	Springfield North End
White	98.9%	58%	80%
Black/African Am.	1.1%	34%	14%
Asian			1%
Hispanic/Latino		3%	2%
Pac. Is./Native Am.		5%	3%

Age Demographics

Age	Third Presbyterian Church	Enos Park Neighborhood	Springfield North Side
0-4	2	122	1,635
5-17	12	309	4,129
18-24	6	177	2,105
25-34	9	267	3,254
35-54	24	493	6,355
55-64	30	250	3,342
65 and older	105	232	3,942
Total	188	1,850	24,762

There are many positive aspects to the congregation’s current context. The Enos Park Neighborhood is bounded on the north by the North Grand Avenue business district, the Mid Illinois Medical District including two major teaching hospitals, many medical clinics, and the Southern Illinois University (SIU) School of Medicine on the south and west, with mixed residential and business use on the east. The SIU School of Medicine has recently designated the Enos Park Neighborhood for a concentrated effort to improve the access to healthcare. This program includes guidance from medical, community, and neighborhood leaders to build a holistic approach to improving life in the neighborhood.

The Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association has been active for the last several years in the redevelopment of the neighborhood. With the creation of a long range plan, the incorporation of a land bank, and the use of Tax Increment Financing funds, the land bank is able to purchase abandoned and run down properties and sell them at little or no cost. More families are purchasing these properties in the neighborhood and rehabbing them for single family, owner-occupied housing. Additionally, the neighborhood is being considered as a candidate for the Purpose Built Communities organization’s neighborhood based assistance

program – www.purposebuiltcommunities.org. In this program, the Atlanta, GA based Purpose Built Communities not-for-profit coaches neighborhoods in taking a holistic approach to issues related to housing, employment and training, access to health care, neighborhood schools, and neighborhood business development.

Currently Third Presbyterian Church provides program space throughout the week to organizations with ties to the Enos Park Neighborhood. The North Side Children’s Community Library (NCCL) was started in 2011 in response to the closing of the Springfield Lincoln Public Library – North Branch and is housed in the basement of the church. The library is open on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday afternoons each week and serves 10 – 30 K-8th grade children per day. Other weekly after-school programs for children include the COMPASS enrichment program which meets on Tuesdays and the Gotta Dance program which meets on Wednesdays. On Thursday evenings, the church hosts a Meet & Eat dinner which is open to all. The neighborhood has hosted a Trunk-or-Treat event in the church parking lot for the last two years. In 2017, a Winter Farmer’s Market will take place in the church’s Fellowship Hall on the fourth Saturday of January – April. The church also serves as the regular meeting place for the Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, the SIU School of Medicine Access to Healthcare Committee, the Mini O’Beirne Crisis Nursery, and the Community Living Options organization.

For purposes of this study, the North Side of Springfield is defined as the area bordered by Carpenter St. on the south, I-55 on the east, Sandhill Rd. on the north, Veteran’s Pkwy. on the northwest, and J. David Jones Pkwy./Walnut St. on the west. This area includes the Enos Park Neighborhood as well as other neighborhoods and subdivisions established throughout the 1900’s. For much of the 20th Century, the North Side of Springfield was the industrial and mining area of the city. Demographically, the North Side is much the same as the Enos Park

Neighborhood in terms of age. Racially, the North Side, is predominantly white. Three elementary schools and one high school are located on the North Side. There are parks and recreation opportunities, historic sites, businesses, and medical facilities. In recent years, retail business development has increased along N. Dirksen Pkwy. Many in the congregation still consider Third Presbyterian a “North Side” church.

MISSION STUDY PROCESS & THEMES

The Mission Study Team (MST) included six members and the Interim Pastor as follows:

Jim Clanton – Elder on Session
Kathy Garrison – Elder
Brenda Kochmann
Craig Lynch
Diana Nevitt – Deacon currently serving
Randy Ramirez – Elder
Rev. Joseph Eby – Interim Pastor

The team began meeting in April 2016. The first meeting was a time of orientation with Rev. Beth Wagner, Dean of Mid-America/Lincoln Trails Transitional Ministry Training and Interim Pastor at Springfield-First Presbyterian and Rev. Adam Quine, the liaison from the Presbytery of Great Rivers Committee on Ministry. The tasks undertaken by the team were to 1.) review the 2005 Mission Study Report, 2.) read together the book *Can Our Church Live?* by Alice Mann, 3.) develop questions to be used in conversations with various groups in the church, 4.) conduct conversations with various groups in the church, 5.) develop a Mission Statement and report based on the conversations. Notes from responses during all these conversations are included with this report. (Appendix 2)

In reviewing the 2005 Mission Study Report, the team found that many of the thoughts, issues, and concerns raised at that time were raised again. The report detailed six “Ministry Goals for a Three Year Ministry Plan.” Under each of these goals were 6-10 strategies. The team

noted that several of these strategies were accomplished, but agreed that the number of goals and strategies was a considerable expectation for a pastor in the given time frame.

The team found the book, *Can Our Church Live*, reflected the situation of Third Presbyterian in many ways. It clearly brought out the emphasis on change needing to happen if the church is to thrive in its current context.

The team developed a set of five questions to cover during the conversations. Conversations were held from April through September with the Session, Trustees, Deacons, Choir, the LLL Sunday School class, the ACTS Sunday School class, the Small Group Sunday School class, and the Y.A.C.K. youth group. Two open invitation opportunities were held – a potluck dinner in April and a luncheon in September – attended by a total of 76 people. In addition, the questions were included in the church newsletter so people could respond if they were not a part of any of the conversations. Two written responses were returned.

Summary of Responses from Adult Groups

While there was significant overlap in responses across the questions, several themes came through in each. The following is a summary of those themes.

How do you envision Third Presbyterian in 5 – 10 years? Members see a growing congregation that reaches out to the whole of Springfield, but emphasizes the Enos Park Neighborhood and North Side. They also see a vital youth ministry including a youth minister and a revitalized Sunday School program for all ages.

Can we change as a congregation? There is broad recognition that the church needs to change. For some the response was, “If we don’t change, we’ll die.” For others it was an acceptance that change will come whether it’s wanted or not. Still others approached change from a positive perspective in terms of opportunities. There is also broad recognition that change

is hard and requires a great amount of communication. People indicated that it would be important to communicate why the change is necessary, how it helps the church, and what would be expected.

What can we accept in a changed Third Presbyterian? Member responses indicated a general acceptance of change as long as certain values continue. These include that the church continue to be “Bible-based” and “Christ-centered” in its preaching, teaching, and ministries. Many noted that the congregation needed to be open to greater diversity in terms of its membership. This would mean welcoming and accepting all who come through the doors, especially people from the neighborhood. At this point in the conversations, the team asked if people could accept a female pastor or a pastor of a different race. With near unanimity, people responded that they could as long as the new pastor reflects the values of Bible-based, Christ-centered preaching, teaching, and ministry.

Are you personally willing to change? Responses to this question were positive across all the groups as well. Again recognizing that change is difficult, it was recommended that there be plenty of communication and that change come in small doses, if possible. Many also responded that people needed to be willing to change for the church to continue.

Are you willing to do the work necessary to sustain Third Presbyterian? Again, responses were positive. Two areas in particular arose around this question. First was the need for involvement by a broader number of people in the congregation. It was noted that people need to be directly asked to volunteer for specific tasks and then there should be follow through in terms of assistance, training, or mentoring as needed. Along with this is the need for leadership development. Many people are willing to help, but leaders are needed to “lay out the plan.” One respondent noted, “We need leaders as well as followers.” The second area noted was

that of financial stewardship. An emphasis needs to be placed on growing members' financial support of the church. This includes both regular and planned giving. Suggestions included conducting a yearly pledge campaign, offering the option of automatic withdrawal, and speaking directly with members about bequests to the church.

Summary of Responses from Y.A.C.K. Group

The team met with the Young Adults for Christ's Kingdom (Y.A.C.K.) Youth Group in October and asked the following questions.

How do you envision Third Presbyterian in 5 – 10 years? The youth see a multi-generational church with many volunteers and ministry opportunities.

If you could change one thing at Third Presbyterian, what would it be? They feel a need for more respect from the adults of the church. They also would like to have a mix of musical styles in worship.

If you could add one thing at Third Presbyterian, what would it be? Responses included the addition of a youth oriented worship service, greater use of technologies in worship and teaching, and podcasts.

How could Third Presbyterian be a better neighbor in Enos Park? It was noted that members of the congregation need to be more understanding of young people who don't always know about being in church, e.g. what happens and how to behave. They suggested ways of reaching out to invite neighborhood youth at school and door to door as well as doing service work in the neighborhood.

How can youth help lead change at Third Presbyterian? The youth said they could become more involved in the church, e.g. in leading worship, leading Children's Chapel, hosting events at the church, and inviting the congregation to Y.A.C.K. events.

How might we increase diversity at Third Presbyterian? They suggested the congregation could develop a relationship with another church in another area of Springfield and invite other churches to come to worship and other events.

How would you feel about a female pastor or pastor of another race? Their responses were much the same as the rest of the congregation's. They had no problem as long as the pastor "believes," relates to the congregation, is active, and has a good attitude. They suggested the possibility of having a pastor and a youth pastor.

Summary of Responses from the EPNIA Board

The team also met and had a conversation with the board of the Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association (EPNIA). Specific questions were developed for this conversation. The following questions were asked.

What is your knowledge and impression of Third Presbyterian Church? Neighbors see the church as an historic place that shaped the neighborhood. They know the congregation is older and having a harder time connecting with the neighborhood since only a few members live in Enos Park. They appreciate that the church has the NCCL and the COMPASS program and see the church as a community and activity center for the neighborhood. They acknowledged that we welcome whoever comes to the Thursday night Meet & Eat dinner.

How can Third Presbyterian be more involved in the neighborhood? Board member suggestions included communicating more with neighborhood residents about what's happening at the church, e.g. special worship services and events, working in the neighborhood community gardens, partnering with another church or group to rehabilitate one or more houses in Enos Park, having services in the park, and having a member serve on the EPNIA board.

How can Third Presbyterian be a better neighbor? The church needs to invest the time and effort in getting to know people in the neighborhood and building relationships with them. Going out into the neighborhood, sharing hospitality, and asking how the church can pray for them would help. The key is to give something, not seek to get something. Food insecurity is big in the neighborhood. It was suggested that serving breakfast before church would be a good thing. Participating in a community-led VBS in partnership with other churches and organizations was also suggested.

What would help draw Enos Park families to Third Presbyterian? Again, the suggestion of breakfast before worship was made. The church needs to take a moral stance in the neighborhood, especially when things happen. It also needs to find ways to bridge the gap between the culture of the church and that of the neighborhood. This requires grace, compassion, patience, and long-term commitment. There's a need to develop openness and welcome people as well as racial awareness.

MINISTRY GOALS

From the responses shared with the MST five themes were seen to run through all of them. The team sees these as ministry goals for the future of Third Presbyterian Church. They include an emphasis on Congregational Redevelopment, Leadership Development, Youth & Young Families, Evangelism, and Community Engagement. Within each of these areas, the team recommends a number of short-term (1-3 years) and long-term (3-5 years) ministry goals. It is understood that goals may need to change as the congregation changes. Flexibility will be key to the vitality of the church's ministry and in attaining these goals.

1. Congregational Redevelopment

The MST sees congregational redevelopment as the overarching priority for Third Presbyterian Church. The MST read sections of the *Spiritual Strategic Journey: Tutorial for Congregational Redevelopment*. (© 2004 Alban Institute) and found significant parallels to Third Presbyterian. The complete document can be read or downloaded by going to <http://www.covchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2010/07/SSJ.pdf>.

The tutorial defines congregational redevelopment as “a process by which congregations facing significant challenges engage in a new or renewed spiritual strategic journey leading to congregational transformation.” The MST sees the following sections describe Third’s position: Congregational Life Cycle (Empty Nest), focus of Third Presbyterian Church (Neighborhood or Community Focused Congregation), and recommended Redevelopment Process to follow (Incremental Route). (Appendix 3)

Congregational Redevelopment Strategies – Short Term

- Recruit a Redevelopment Leadership Team
- Study together the *Spiritual Strategic Journey: Tutorial for Congregational Redevelopment* or similar process.
- Conduct neighborhood/community needs assessment to discover ministry/mission options.

Congregational Redevelopment Strategies – Long Term

- Implement process of incremental change as recommended by chosen tutorial.
- Intentionally work to increase the racial/ethnic diversity of Third Presbyterian.

2. Leadership Development

Leadership development was cited as a need during all the conversations the MST held with adult groups in the congregation. Congregational redevelopment will not only require a leadership team, but leaders for new and renewed ministries of Third Presbyterian as well.

Leadership Development Strategies – Short Term

- Evaluate current committee structure and make changes needed to provide new and renewed ministries.
- Conduct Spiritual Gifts classes to help people discover how God has gifted them to serve.
- When recruiting volunteers, ask for specific time-bound tasks and do sufficient follow up.
- Provide ways to recognize volunteers for their service.
- Develop a “guidebook” for church operations for easy reference and information and make changes as needed.

Leadership Development Strategies – Long Term

- Develop a system of mentoring for emerging leaders.

3. Youth and Young Families

The *Spiritual Strategic Journey* tutorial notes, “The congregation in Empty Nest may telegraph its time focus by the age group it wants to target with the most efforts. Congregations who want to target teenagers want to focus on yesterday. Those who want to target senior adults want to focus on today. Finally, congregations who want to target adults ages 25 to 45 and their children want to focus on tomorrow.” (p. 105) During a process of congregational redevelopment, it is essential that Third Presbyterian focus on tomorrow through ministries that promote the church to and address the needs of young adults and their families.

Youth & Young Families Strategies – Short Term

- Recruit and equip a ministry team specifically charged with developing and coordinating a ministry to youth and young families.
- Conduct a neighborhood needs assessment related to young families and develop ministries to address those needs.
- Develop a small group based ministry targeting young families.
- Provide ways for volunteers to take advantage of youth and young family conferences and training.

Youth & Young Families Strategies – Long Term

- Through local and denominational partnerships, hire a neighborhood minister/advocate for youth and young families.
- Through local and denominational partnerships, acquire and rehab a house in the Enos Park Neighborhood in which the minister/advocate will live.
- Develop local and long distance mission/ministry opportunities for youth and young families.

4. Evangelism

The *Spiritual Strategic Journey* tutorial defines Evangelism and New Member recruitment as “the spiritual and relational process by which persons are brought to faith in God through Jesus Christ.” Also, a distinction is made between evangelism and new member recruitment. Evangelism is the outreach efforts and process of nurturing lost persons or pre-Christians to a relationship with Jesus Christ. New Member Recruitment includes efforts to get believers who are unchurched or under-churched people into a regular and ongoing relationship with a congregation. (p. 134) All groups in the congregation mentioned increasing church membership as critical to the future of Third Presbyterian.

Evangelism Strategies – Short Term

- Develop a spirit and focus on evangelism and new member recruitment among the church leadership, specifically the Pastor, Session, and Deacons.
- Recruit and equip a ministry team specifically charged with leading the congregation’s efforts at evangelism and new member recruitment.
- Provide ways for volunteers to take advantage of evangelism conferences and training.
- Facilitate classes on evangelism, building relationships, and sharing one’s faith, e.g. *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, *Building a Contagious Church*, or similar program.
- Increase and continually update Third Presbyterian’s social media presence through various online platforms.

Evangelism Strategies – Long Term

- Develop a congregation-wide spirit and focus on evangelism and new member recruitment that reaches out to people of all races in the Enos Park Neighborhood and North Side of Springfield.
- Church members and regular attenders readily and comfortably build relationships, share their faith with others, and invite them to attend Third Presbyterian Church.

5. Community Engagement

Community engagement is essential to the growth and vitality of Third Presbyterian Church. As previously noted, Third Presbyterian has historically focused its ministry and mission toward the North Side of Springfield and continues to be viewed by many as a “North Side” church. The MST believes that the future of Third Presbyterian is closely tied to continued redevelopment of the Enos Park Neighborhood in particular and Springfield’s North Side in general. The church’s location is prime for ministry and mission in this area of the city.

Community Engagement Strategies – Short Term

- Develop a strong communications connection with the Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association in order to welcome new neighbors and provide information about ministries and events at Third Presbyterian.
- Increase the church’s presence at and participation in neighborhood and community events.
- Canvas the Enos Park Neighborhood to introduce neighbors to Third Presbyterian, assess neighbors’ needs, pray for them, and invite them to church.
- Develop worship opportunities that are more indigenous to and specifically target the Enos Park Neighborhood.
- Continue to make the church facilities available for community events, meetings, programs, etc.

Community Engagement Strategies – Long Term

- Encourage pastoral leader and members to be active in local organizations, especially those focused on the Enos Park Neighborhood and Springfield’s North Side, e.g. Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, Northside Children’s Community Library, Kumler Neighborhood Ministries, Habitat for Humanity, Community Missions Network, etc.
- Develop mission/ministry opportunities in the Enos Park Neighborhood and Springfield’s North Side.

AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

The MST believes it is important to acknowledge the fact that a congregation in which 56% of the membership is 65 years old or older will have significant pastoral care needs during the upcoming years. If the congregation truly embraces a redevelopment process, it will be critical that the next installed pastor be able to focus on the ministry goals enumerated above.

Certain mechanisms are already in place to facilitate pastoral care. Elders and Deacons deliver home communion monthly, individuals make regular visits to those in the hospital, and the church has a Faith Community Nurse. However, volunteers in these ministries are aging as well. Planning for the future of these ministries should be done as soon as possible, if they are to be maintained.

The Session and the next installed pastor must work cooperatively to find creative ways to address pastoral care needs so the pastor can keep focused on the areas the congregation has said are important – Congregational Redevelopment, Leadership Development, Youth & Young Families, Evangelism, and Community Engagement.

MINISTRY CHARACTERISTICS & SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The scriptures are clear that Christians are given different spiritual gifts for the ministry and work of the church (Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, Ephesians 4:11-12). In the search for the next installed pastor, it will be important that candidates possess certain characteristics and spiritual gifts. The MST recommends that these include an extroverted, open, and welcoming personality; a desire to build relationships in the church and the community; experience in or the ability to lead congregational redevelopment; the ability to embrace, lead, and communicate through change; experience in and/or a heart for neighborhood ministry; and

an assertiveness to set boundaries. Important spiritual gifts will include Apostleship, Evangelism, Faith, Leadership, and Teaching. Descriptions of these spiritual gifts are included with this report. (Appendix 4.)

CONCLUSION

The MST believes that God still has a vital mission for Third Presbyterian Church. Having a growing and diverse congregation with thriving ministries is possible. The congregation can redevelop and find renewed life. Acknowledging the church's history is important and must be used as an inspiration for the future as opposed to a lament for the present or a longing for the past. Change will bring challenges. Communication will be key to how change is accepted and managed. Both the next installed pastor and the congregation must be "in it for the long haul," remembering that...

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