



Strategic Direction #1 of 4

Building Connections/Sense of Belonging in the Congregation

“Build and sustain an all-encompassing culture of welcome and personal invitation—from the pulpit, in the pews, online, and throughout the church—that creates opportunities for deeper engagement and meaningful connections.”

Goal 1.1

Programs/Groups: Create impactful opportunities to engage in fellowship based on life experience, interests, needs, demographics, and geography to build connections and community.

1.1 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Number of people engaged in small groups increases
- Number of small groups increase
- Number of congregation members who report finding new friends/connections through church activities
- Aggregate giving by members/attenders increases (new/recurring pledging)

Goal 1.2

One-to-One Outreach: Embed and empower a culture of active outreach and welcome that is grounded in personal invitation and a commitment to follow up and accompany people through all the seasons of life.

1.2 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Percentage of congregation increases that describes Fourth Church as joyful, friendly
- New Member Buddy/Mentor program established

Goal 1.3

Communications: Create and share inspirational stories about our people and the ministry that lift up the vitality of our life together and further our goals of invitation, connection, and engagement/participation.

1.3 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Share stories about how Fourth Church has changed lives of congregation members
- Percentage of congregation members who rate finding information about the church/activities as “easy” increases
- Website metrics (hits, page views)
- Social media metrics (followers, likes)

Goal 1.4

Advance Racial Equity and Inclusion: Embody racial equity, representation, and inclusion throughout our life together as a church community, acknowledging and seeking to overcome historical biases, such that differences are seen as assets and celebrated and experienced as strengths.

1.4 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Efforts/approaches supported by leadership
- Increased representation in congregation/councils
- Efforts/approaches supported by the congregation
- Metrics TBD related to educational opportunities for congregation
- Participation in events with racial equity themes increases

Goal 1.5

Embrace Inclusion: Eliminate barriers and embrace inclusion of all regardless of skin tone, race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, gender identity, sexual orientation, citizenship status, age, neurodiversity, or ability so that all people feel deep belonging and experience a shared sense of humanity, seeing the image of God in each other.

1.5 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Increased access for people with limited physical abilities
- Sense of belonging increases among identified demographic groups (Specific metric(s) to be defined)

Goal 1.6

Online Church Family: Deepen and expand our relationship with the Fourth Church family who find and connect with us online

1.6 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Number of people who attend worship online increases (2023 Baseline=x)
 - Number of people who participate in online events/education increases (Baseline set in 2023 and goals for growth defined)
 - Metrics TBD re: online experience
 - Satisfaction with online experience (Specific metric(s) to be defined)
 - Sense of belonging reported by online members/attendees (Specific metric to be defined)
 - Aggregate giving by online members/attenders increases (new/recurring pledging)
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Strategic Direction #2 of 4

Support/Strengthen Faith/Christian Formation

“Be a faith community that supports individuals and groups in exploring and growing their relationship with God in Jesus Christ.”

Goal 2.1

Honor/Enrich the Worship Experience: Inspire people of all ages through impactful personal and communal worship experiences grounded in our faith tradition that invites spiritual exploration and proclaims the good news of God in Jesus Christ.

2.1 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Worship attendance grows
- Youth attendance grows
- Number of people involved in Bible study grows
- Congregation reports: Church helps me think more deeply about my spirituality
- Number/percentage of congregation reporting their faith is part of their core identity increases
- Digital Ministry in place

Goal 2.2

Spiritual Formation and Education: Nurture a community of faithful learners through an integrated approach to experiential education and spiritual engagement that inspires transformation in each generation to help them live their faith in word and action.

2.2 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Full children's Sunday School classes
- Full Adult Education activities
- Number of baptisms increase
- Number of confirmands increase
- Number/percentage of congregation involved in spiritual formation programs/activities increases
- Qualitative measurement of congregation/ attendees having personal experience with spiritual formation (Specific metric to be defined)

Strategic Direction #3 of 4

Community Engagement and Partnerships

“Live out our faith by serving as a catalyst for a healthy, flourishing community through targeted, impactful programs grounded in community need, by working in solidarity with community partners, and by raising our voice through advocacy and social leadership.”

Goal 3.1

Church Partner Programs: Collaborate with program partners (Chicago Lights, Day School, Center for Life and Learning, Replogle Center) to deliver transformational programs that advance our shared mission and enrich our church community.

3.1 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Clear outcome measures for individual church partner programs, e.g., number of participants, qualitative assessment of experience, impact/outcomes achieved (Specific metrics to be defined)

Goal 3.2

Strategic Collaborations and Partnerships: Engage in targeted strategic partnerships and collaborations that align with our mission and goals, provide greater depth in our outreach, achieve deeper impact, and inspire our congregation to share their resources and expertise.

3.2 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- X percentage of mission budget is used to support external, community-based initiatives
- Clear outcome measures established for all community outreach programs/partnerships
- Community partners rate Fourth Church partnership as positive/impactful to delivery of their mission (Specific metric to be defined)

Goal 3.3

Communication and Advocacy: Bring awareness and make a positive impact through advocacy, conversation, and direct action in collaboration with local, regional, and national organizations that share our commitment to addressing issues impacting the people and communities we serve.

3.3 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Fourth Church recognized as respected voice on community issues
- Fourth Church is a respected voice on issues of faith for civic leaders locally and nationally

Goal 3.4

Volunteer Experience: Recruit, equip, deepen the engagement of, and celebrate a passionate group of volunteers, who offer their talents, interests, and gifts, nurturing their discipleship as they grow in faith.

3.4 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Number of volunteers increases
 - Number of volunteer hours increases
 - Percentage of volunteers increases who rate their experience as Good/Excellent
 - Greater diversity in demographics of volunteers
 - Volunteer perception of the positive impact of their work (2023 baseline=X)
 - Training Metric TBD
 - Recognition Metric TBD
 - Metric TBD re: impact of volunteers thru lens of organizations/people/community served
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Strategic Direction #4 of 4

Church Sustainability

“Create and sustain a shared purpose and common set of values among Fourth Church staff and leadership, develop our internal skills and talents, and ensure the systems, structures, and financial resources needed to preserve the long-term impact of our ministry are in place.”

Goal 4.1

Staff: Cultivate a respectful, collaborative environment, built around a unified vision, that builds the capacity and gifts of staff members, is committed to clear communication and accountability, and embraces innovation and thoughtful risk-taking that advances our goals.

4.1 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Staff understanding of/alignment with church goals increases
- Rating of decision-making transparency, internal accountability increases
- Number of cross-program/ministries collaborations increases
- Number of staff who participate in professional development opportunities increases
- Number/percentage of staff participating in at least one professional development/training opportunity annually increases (2023 Baseline=X)

Goal 4.2

Church Governance: Nurture a governance structure that is grounded by faith in Jesus Christ, is appropriately aligned with the needs and operations of the church and is guided by the Fourth Church mission and Strategic Directions and the Presbyterian Book of Order.

4.2 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Councils/committees “right-sized” to align with congregation size/needs
- Number of new leaders added to church boards increases
- Governance structure review completed by (date)
- Revisions to board/committee/council structure completed/presented by (date)

Goal 4.3

Financial Sustainability: Inspire the congregation in a practice of generosity and prudently manage the funds received to achieve long-term financial sustainability in support of the church's identified priorities and the goals of our mission, ministries, and programs.

4.3 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Capital financial goals established
- Endowment use/spending policies clarified/shared/followed
- Number of congregation members making annual pledge increases
- Legacy Society membership grows 10% annually
- Endowment Fund grows by X
- Balanced budget achieved by (date), i.e., 100% of operating expenses are met by annual revenue

Goal 4.4

Facilities and Operations: Plan, establish, and steward flexible, safe, and ADA accessible spaces, technology, and operational systems that align with the evolving delivery of the church's mission and defined programmatic goals/needs.

4.4 Preliminary Ideas for Progress Measures

- Improved facility/worship accessibility
(Specific metrics to be defined)

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