

Fourth Presbyterian Church Long Range Plan

Strategic Plan Summary

Theme: Reflecting the light of Christ by loving God and one another

SCRIPTURE: MARK 12:28B-31

The Scribe asked Jesus, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

I. Strategic Direction: Connections and Belonging

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

Relationship Building

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

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.

Caring Ministries

Demonstrate the warm light of Christ’s love by providing a ministry of presence at pivotal moments in the lives of members, friends, and neighbors of Fourth Church through visitation, sharing of sacraments, prayer, spiritual counsel, and other forms of support; and to invite, equip, and connect members in serving in ministries of care.

Communications

Develop a new integrated communications and marketing plan to inspire, inform and connect people with our ministries and programs using multiple platforms.

Racial Equity

Advance racial equity throughout our life together as a church by acknowledging and seeking to overcome historical and present biases and striving to build Beloved Community.

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.

Online Church Family

Deepen and expand our relationship with the Fourth Church family who find and connect with us online.



II. Strategic Direction: Faith Formation

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

Worship Experience

Inspire people of all ages through impactful personal and communal worship experiences grounded in our faith tradition that invite spiritual exploration and proclaim the good news of God in Jesus Christ through liturgy, preaching, and music.

Spiritual Formation and Education

Nurture a community that meets learners where they are 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.

III. Strategic Direction: 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.”

Priorities

Determine the church’s outreach and social mission priorities and define the role Fourth Church will play in fulfilling those priorities to meet the needs of the congregation and community. (Complete by end of 2024)

Church Partner Programs

Collaborate with our church partners (Chicago Lights, Day School, Center for Life and Learning, Replogle Center) to assess current needs; evaluate our alignment and relationship to inform/determine the way forward to deliver transformational programs.

Church Service Programs

Evaluate and, as needed, update the direct support services provided (e.g., Meals Ministry and Shower Ministry) to ensure they continue to effectively meet the needs of the community and support our commitment to living out our mission.

Strategic Collaborations and Partnerships

Evaluate and 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.

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 align with our priorities and share our commitment to addressing issues impacting the people and communities we serve.

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.



IV. Strategic Direction: 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.”

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.

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.

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.

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.

Overarching Progress Measures (qualitative and quantitative)

“In an effort to grow as a spiritual community we will establish a baseline and measure the following using both qualitative and quantitative metrics...”

1. Sense of Belonging

Individual’s Church Experience / Engagement and Belonging (qualitative).

2. Participation and Engagement

Positive trends in participation and engagement (quantitative)

3. Communications

Satisfaction with church communications increases (qualitative, baseline in 2024)

4. Integration and Alignment

Mission and ministries across the church are integrated and aligned per goal 3.1 (by date)

5. Giving

Aggregate increase in generosity (quantitative lagging measure)

6. Financials

In coordination with the Joint Finance Council, use the long-range plan directions, goals, and priorities to support the work of the Financial Transformation Plan so that the annual goals are met through 2028 (quantitative)

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