

NPCL Applied Project 2 Summaries
July 15-16, 2019

Sara McManus, Flame of Faith UMC, West Fargo, ND
Financial Policies and Procedures

Revision of outdated financial policies and procedures including trustees and safe sanctuary policies. Outcomes: Identified new finance chair, increased digital giving, documented policies and procedures into a formal manual, and created a stewardship calendar. Increased total giving by 5% and digital giving by 3%. (Regular givers increased contributions plus new givers.) Stewardship calendar developed for 12 months with special Sundays identified related to giving and generosity.

Gary Liker, Grace UMC, Pequot Lakes, MN
New Ministry Teams for a New Era

How to steward time, talent, and gifts? After re-visioning, focused on how to live into the vision by forming new ministry teams around discipleship, membership, outreach, and worship (only team that had previously existed). Invited members to participate in a spiritual gifts inventory which in turn, helped people identify their talents and interests and encouraged participation in the new ministry teams. A paid staff person is a liaison to each ministry team. Developed five guiding statements to provide missional direction for each ministry team. Has unique challenge of increased attendance in the summer with decline in the winter.

Brooke Heerwald Steiner, Excelsior UMC, Excelsior, MN
(Includes phase one and two of applied projects) Visioning Day outcomes: new purpose(why)/vision(what)/mission(how) statements, facility plan creation – both short and long-term, simplify governance structure, create marketing team to evaluate internal and external communications.

- Team developed statements that were short, concise. Staff goals grounded in these statements and will guide Stewardship series.
- Outside consultant developed a facility assessment after interviews and tours. Exploring kick off of a capital campaign.
- Governance structure team is currently engaged in discovery work at other churches to see best practices and then will make a recommendation.
- Creating a marketing plan with a budget (new) before moving forward with random ideas and implementation.

Carol Zaagsma, Portland Ave. UMC, Bloomington, MN
Visioning along with Empowering Leaders

1. Evaluate the vision and mission of The PORT. Visioning workshop and research of community. (Vision-To be a safe harbor on life's journey.) Priorities coming out of work:

- a. Strengthen small group ministry
 - b. Improve communication to all within and in the community
2. Moving from care giver to equipper. Increase laity involvement and engagement. The Navigators (pastor, lay leader, council chair) led this charge and now provide strategic oversight and alignment of vision/mission with ministry plans while also helping develop leaders to lead with autonomy and purpose. More formal description of leadership roles and expectations was developed.
3. Reconnect the congregation with the vision/mission. Started with the past by celebrating the 65th church anniversary. Shared stories of history, archives, reconnect congregation with the past. Planning committee was empowered and shared responsibility for the work.

"How I fit and why I matter" concept by Dennis Hooper was a central theme.

Randy Koppen, First UMC, Redwood Falls, MN Leadership Board Governance Structure

Praying, planning and planting a more effective leadership structure by decreasing administrative governance with a nimbler body of people who are energized by serving and accomplishing goals.

- To improve Ad Council effectiveness through recruitment, job descriptions, meeting schedule, training, communication to congregation. Ideas shared with Leadership Board which turned into goals. Shifting to a future-focused board work from an archaic structure.
- To improve volunteer committees and satisfaction through surveys, experiences. Increased awareness of challenges and developed creative approaches.

Instead of revising the mission statement, worked on a "think tank" strategy which evolved into exploring ideas and ultimately, a governance change. Focused on invitation to connect members with a place of passion to use their talents. Participated in StrengthFinders. Signs of effectiveness are starting to emerge but will be adaptive as needs change, especially given the denomination's challenges.

Tyler Sit, New City Church, Minneapolis, MN Key Goals of New City Church

1. Create and Strengthen financial reporting
 - a. Monthly reporting to staff improvements to be more helpful
 - b. Quarterly reporting to the church that is compelling and interesting to review
 - c. Building a sustainability plan to be their own "eco system" (worked with Thrivent VP)
2. Amplify communications
 - a. Developed communication team – more posts, more platforms
 - b. Worked on posting sermon series
 - c. Created SWAG to handout to define New City church
 - d. Revelation 21 a guiding scripture

3. Ran a Lenten Fundraiser
 - a. Obtained innovation grant from Augsburg to create The Incarnation Fund for healing of people of color:
 - i. Spiritual direction
 - ii. Somatic experiencing
 - iii. Nature-based therapy
 - b. Running fundraisers to raise money for the Incarnation Fund
 - c. House Party guides to fundraise for the Incarnation Fund

Max Richter, Champlin UMC, Champlin, MN
Child-Friendly Service

Cultural change. Focused on creating a child-friendly worship service. Greater input from gen x and millennial parents utilized new and existing leadership to create a child-friendly service with creativity and technology by applying a team model learned in the NPCL. These services will be held quarterly and are raising other worship design ideas for the future.

Ryan Mutzenberger, First UMC, Fargo, ND
Mission and Vision Communication

The focus was to increase the communication of the mission and vision statement to our community and our members by:

1. Strengthening web presence – created an internal team and hired an outside firm to improve the website’s functionality by making it current, dynamic and easy to navigate.
2. Equipping members to better know and understand the mission and vision – engaged people by appealing to their natural curiosity through the power of words and stories.
3. Focusing on what people “see” when they “see” us strategies – examining what it means to be a United Methodist church and improving methods of increasing visibility internally and externally.

Katie Ricke, Zion UMC, Beresford, SD
Developing a Discipleship Pathway

Developed a team to create a vision for discipleship along with an assessment to help the congregation examine their own journey to discipleship with goals to increase small group participation, worship attendance, and overall engagement in spiritual growth efforts. Utilized the book, “Stride”, to guide the culture change process around discipleship and expectations and held “Footprint Sunday” where individuals signed a footprint to symbolize the journey of all were embarking upon together.

Rebecca Trefz, Dakotas AC, Mitchell, SD
Unified Evaluation Tool and Process

Developed an evaluation process as a means of improving conference equipping events and improving implementation of learning objectives through understanding the “why”, the value of data, and the importance of a uniform and unified evaluation process. Examined the current process and explored other evaluation systems. Focused on being clear on the outcomes of a new process. Will pilot, adjust, and apply a continuous improvement process with each iteration.

Jen Tyler, Evergreen UMC, Wahpeton, ND
Wednesday Evening Programming

Focused on building disciples from a young age, reprioritizing “Priority over Preference”, and examining how to meet the spiritual needs of young children and families. Engaged leadership teams to examine “why” this is important and “how” to accomplish the goals. Preparation and focus were on both the internal members and potential visitors through creative communication tactics. Results included an increase in children’s attendance, increase in participation in small groups, a summer Bible study with intentions to continue, and growing plans for intergenerational engagement through a community meal that precedes programming.

Brenda King, First UMC, Zion UMC, Appleton, MN
“Growing Together”

Four small churches explored new possibilities on growing together with combined efforts around children’s programming including VBS and a variety of worship service options including intergenerational services, Sunday night services, and Lenten services. Creatively used imagery found in rural settings of crops and the harvest to capture the collective imagination of the churches.

Nate Melcher, Richfield UMC, Richfield, MN
“Playbook” Creation

Completion of a total ministry audit for the youth and young adult ministries of the church with a “playbook” as the end result. The playbooks give insider information on the overview of the ministries, details on traditions, components, and systems to set up the staff successor for success. The playbook sections include details on physical spaces, a calendar of upcoming scheduled events, event overviews, large program overviews, and a list of internal and external resources plus key leaders.

Jeff Ozanne, Willmar UMC, Willmar, MN
There Must Be a Better Way” church structure discovery

Through assessment and careful listening, explored ways to be effective in the use of structure in order to operate effectively and fulfill the mission and vision. Moving away from a task-based ministry model by seeking best practices at other churches and aligning structure with mission and vision was part of the discovery process.