



1132 Morningside Drive

Elgin, IL 60123

847-560-0048

DDaubert@Day8Strategies.com

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This report is the culmination of several months of work shared by the Long Range Planning Team of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Dave Daubert of Day 8 Strategies, and the leaders and members of the congregation. It began in earnest in the fall of 2014 and was implemented with a desire to provide information and recommendations in a timely way as the congregation goes through a major pastoral transition.

The process has included several steps along the way. After initial work was done between Dave Daubert and the Long Range Planning Team, a site visit on January 10-11, 2015 allowed for Dave to meet the staff and other congregational leaders. Meetings and conversations with staff and others allowed for input and a helpful picture of the congregation emerged. In addition, a retreat for congregational members invited any and all people who desired to come and be informed of the process and those who wanted to help with initial input to do so.

At the same time, the Long Range Planning Team began to do a series of intentional interviews with leaders throughout the local community. This helped the congregational leadership to learn what people in the community know about Prince of Peace as well as to glean information from them about key things happening in the Appleton area. Information from these interviews was then used to help discern how well the congregation was presenting its work to the community. It also provided key information about what areas of work God might be calling the congregation to be involved in as the next chapter of work unfolds before them.

Finally, a series of dialog sermons were focused on gaining input from the congregation. On three Sundays during Lent sermons grounded in the lectionary texts for the day were used as a springboard to ask the congregation how they see and understand key things in the life of the congregation. These questions were focused in three areas: 1) Assets, gifts and passions; 2) Wows – the good things God is already doing; and 3) Needs – of both individuals and of the congregation as a whole.

Once all of this material was gathered, the Long Range Planning Team helped to organize it in ways that would allow leaders to join in the work of discerning what this meant and what God was calling forth for the congregation as it moves ahead. On April 10-11, 2015 Dave Daubert returned to Prince of Peace and leaders met with him to clarify the timeline for completing this work and then spent time discerning what they thought God was calling them to do. The content of the strategy on the following page is the direct result of their work during that visit.

In addition to the umbrella strategy on the next page, this report contains several additional recommendations to help maximize the leverage provided by the staff in relation to the work defined in that strategy and from other input gained during this work.

Respectfully submitted
Pastor Dave Daubert, DMin, PhD

UMBRELLA STRATEGY

Purpose:

We are a family of Christians, growing in Faith and Reaching out in Love!

Guiding Principles:

When we are at our best you will see us:

1. ***Prayerfully seeking*** to do the will of God.
2. ***Spiritually growing*** as followers of Christ.
3. ***Genuinely caring*** for one another with the love of Jesus.
4. ***Gladly welcoming*** all with an open spirit.
5. ***Generously sharing*** in the work of God.
6. ***Meaningfully engaging*** with God's world around us.
7. ***Joyfully serving*** as the hands and feet of Christ.

Strategic Priorities:

1. ***Integrate and enhance education and worship*** in ways that allow for and encourage people of all ages for having opportunities to both learn and have vibrant worship lives, being conscious of helping children and youth develop both aspects of this as they grow up.
2. ***Encourage spiritual growth***, by deepening the roots of people's faith and strengthening the awareness of God's work and call in their lives, with attention to different learning needs and styles of multiple generations.
3. ***Equip and mobilize people*** in order to enhance broader service to the surrounding community and increase engagement, enjoyment and involvement throughout the congregation's ministry, helping them to understand and articulate why they do what they do from a faith perspective.
4. ***Develop relationships*** and work in ways that help Prince of Peace be a more visible and invitational presence within the surrounding community.
5. ***Increase the congregation's digital presence*** and use of social media to engage people in worship, education and relationships within the ministry of the church.
6. ***Strengthen programming and community partnerships*** to give attention to the social and mental health needs of people of all ages, including focused efforts working with children, youth and their families in the wider community.

UNDERSTANDING THE ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY

Use of an umbrella strategy allows for several benefits. Among these are clear and simple elements that allow for the congregation to develop clear and helpful language about the things that matter most. Second, the strategy is clear and concise enough to be easily accessed by anyone. By fitting on one page, the strategy can be enlarged to poster size and hung on the walls in the building, posted as a single page on the web site, passed out for use at meetings, and in a variety of other ways. Third, while the strategy defines the framework for focusing the work, it does so without limiting how the work happens. Any good idea that fulfills the purpose, embodies the principles and furthers one or more of the priorities is already helpful by definition. Therefore, while the strategy provides focus for the resources and energy of the congregation's work, it also provides freedom for creativity and the use of people's gifts and talents.

The **Purpose** should help the congregation make decisions about what to do and why to do it. This is the "why are we here?" focus of the work. In this work, the process supported maintaining the current tag line as it was deemed to be well known and helpful in its current form.

The **Guiding Principles** are values that are central to the congregation and should find ways to permeate all the work of the congregation. These help us remember, "how are we to work?" as the congregation does whatever it is that they are doing. Any work can be improved upon by matching how the work is being done to the principles discerned by the congregation as it thought about its identity.

Finally, **Priorities** give focus to the work that will get the most attention in the congregation's next chapter. They help leaders to focus on those areas where we have discerned that God is calling for the congregation to make significant impact in the coming years. The best way to focus people for future ideas is to use the priorities as a doorway to creativity, thereby allowing energy to be expended in the places that need it most. While not exclusive, they do call for the congregation to focus time, energy and resources in these areas as they carry out God's work.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING CONGREGATIONAL STAFFING

Staff recommendations come in four sections. The first discusses the relationship between the congregation's priorities and how it shapes the role of pastors, other staff and lay leadership. It is a basic philosophy of how leadership impacts priorities.

The second relates to the pastoral staff. The work here has more urgency as the congregation is preparing to enter a search and call process for a second pastor. Cheryl Davis has been a valuable asset as the intern during this transition. The congregation is fortunate to have had access to someone with her life experience and congregational awareness to help in this important time. As her internship concludes and in order for leaders to have the information they need in order to seek out pastoral leadership with the necessary gifts, there is a need to work in a timely way to sort out pastoral responsibilities and priorities for the next chapter of work. The section on pastoral staff below in item "2" gives recommendations for this part of the work.

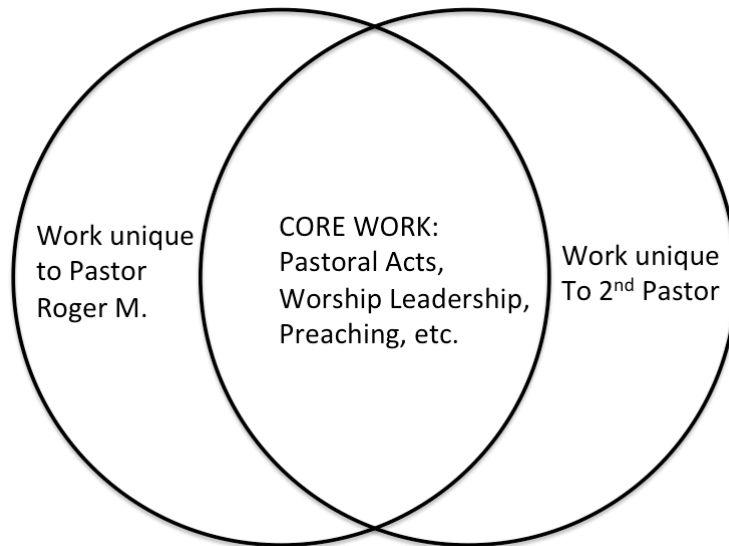
A third set of recommendations relates to other program staff. These can be implemented over a longer period of time. The pace of these adjustments will depend on a number of factors. One of these is the decision made about how to better connect children and youth into the worship life of the congregation while also providing them with good educational and youth activities. This issue was raised repeatedly and is a priority. In addition, there may be gray areas in the places where roles overlap and some of this will best be done by being clear about which role has which responsibilities and them living into the specifics over time. This will allow people to adjust and help each other through the transitions and, if done well, should help staff become a cohesive team.

The fourth set of recommendations relates to support staff. The present staff are capable of working in the current scenario and with a key retirement (office coordinator) planned at the end of 2015, making major changes here during the last few months of the current scenario would be more disruptive than helpful. However, once the time comes for the search for new staff in this area, the transition should be clear and clean – allowing the new configuration and needs to dictate the criteria used to design and hire the matching staff for the work.

1. **Each priority should have clear leadership.** An underlying philosophy should guide the development of staff and lay leadership as the next chapter of the congregation's work is laid out. Without it, any priority that is not also aligned with clear responsible people, is unlikely to have a real chance of making a difference.
 - a. Each strategic priority needs lay leaders (individuals or teams/committees) that feel called to this work. A priority that has no one from the congregation feeling passion and calling to work on it has low chance of sustaining itself.

- b. No strategic priority from the strategy should exist without at least one staff person having a significant part of his or her time focused on that priority. A priority that is not given intentional staff attention is likely to fail.
 - c. Use the strategic priorities as benchmarks to guide the role alignment that will be happening as both pastoral staffing and other program staffing are developed or redefined.
2. **Pastoral Staff:** The change in pastoral staffing is one of the events that triggered this opportunity to reflect on the next chapter of Prince of Peace's work as a congregation. A central piece of aligning the staff and the work for the coming years will be accomplished when the pastoral staff has been envisioned based on the strategy and the put in place based on the pastoral gifts present in the two people who will be the pastors for this next period of time. It is this staff work that provides the most urgency and clarifying this will allow the search committee to begin working in earnest to identify and call the second pastor.
- a. Develop areas of responsibility for Pastor Roger McQuiston that maximizes his current gifts and energy. This will allow him to flourish and to take advantage of the skills, relationships and tenure that he provides moving forward. In addition to the core work of being a pastor that he and the new pastor will likely share (pastoral acts, worship, preaching, etc.), how will his work best focus his gifts, passions and experiences in the congregation to maximize the ministry of Prince of Peace? How much focus of Roger's work will be inside the work of Prince of Peace? How much will be focused on connecting to the community around Prince of Peace? The answers to these questions will help shape the job description for both Roger and the new pastor being called. One way to focus this is to ask, "Which of the five strategic priorities should be in Roger's job description?" as well as, "Which should be in the other pastor's job description?"
 - b. Develop areas of responsibility for a second pastor to complement Roger's work for use in the search/call process. In looking for the additional pastor pay more attention to skills, gifts and experience in the areas of work than to age. For example, a person who relates well and with integrity to new and/or younger people will be effective if they do so proactively and with authenticity, regardless of their age. In addition, specific skills and interests should help match a second pastor to his/her call in the congregation. Therefore, be conscious of the priorities Roger has set for his role and then design the new call to complement that work.

- c. The following diagram may help people think about the roles of the two pastors once they are both in place and working.



- d. Note: Two generalists with broadly shared responsibilities are unlikely to cover the specific pastoral needs that face the congregation and the wider community. Of course, the importance of core competencies (preaching, worship leadership, pastoral care, etc.) cannot be underestimated and will need to be present in both pastors on the team. But some specialization and clarity will be important in this design – even if both pastors will be likely to share some of the core work of preaching, worship, pastoral acts, etc. In the end, there should be increased pastoral clarity about accountable work in and to the surrounding community within the new descriptions as well as relating to priorities that are more internal to the congregation’s ministry.

3. **Program Staff:** Reconfigure the other program staff in order to balance work within and outside the congregation’s current ministry area. Modify work responsibilities in ways that clarify these areas of responsibility. This should be an intentional process, but need not be implemented as immediately as the pastoral work described above.

- a. Realign Katie Witt and Gloria Allhiser’s work within the framework of children and youth. Both have good passion for the work and bring gifts and skills to their roles. However, intentionality needs to be given to working with parents and children from baptism to the start of Sunday School, an age bracket that is currently given little attention and which is a key transition for young families from being uninvolved to being involved in

church life. How can parents of newborn/toddlers be supported in their desire to be Christian parents? A second issue is being intentional to get ongoing education for Katie, who brings excellent passion to her work but would benefit from continued educational opportunities to develop increased skills and knowledge. A third question is, how can the work being done with children and youth be connected to the work with youth and families in the wider community in order to provide relational bridges and ways to reach out and invite in to greater participation? Gloria's educational background in counseling makes her a good resource for some of the mental and social health priorities – how can that be leveraged in ways that help strengthen the congregation's ministry to youth and families?

- b. Cindy Romnek's current role fills a lot of gaps in the way the congregation functions and she provides much of the networking and connecting for the congregation. Over time, it will be important for her work to transition in ways that enhance how people in the congregation are recruited, equipped and connected to ministry opportunities – both in the congregation and in the partnerships with the surrounding community. This process should be intentional but organic, shifting to complement the other staffs' roles and to enhance the effectiveness of people's involvement in the congregation's priorities. In addition, in order for her role to not become overwhelming and create dependency, a key will be for her to work in ways that empower others to recruit and equip people for various ministries for which they have passion and/or leadership responsibilities.
 - c. Realign and/or add music staff to match whatever worship and education outcomes are developed (styles, times/schedules, etc.) in order to better engage children and youth in the worship life of the congregation. Both Sondra Joten and Colleen Perrine are covering the current configuration but there have been adjustments to cover work in the current worship pattern and this is likely to need further attention to firm this up for the short term as well as be open to reconfiguration again should worship times and styles change in the future.
4. **Support Staff:** Maximizing the skills of program staff depends on also providing capable support staffing to provide the necessary elements for program staff to do their work. The more time a person spends compensating for support staff needs, the less time he or she has to use their core gifts in developing programs and people instead. To that end, thinking about what support staffing is needed and what functions they should carry out is essential to the effectiveness of the program staff as well. This is a key part of a successful ministry team.

- a. Develop enhanced office support skills in order to update communication and publication methods. This will include increased attention to the work as desktop publisher, Webmaster, and the use of text messaging, Facebook, Twitter and other social media to connect with members. It is also crucial to be aware and effective at how these multiple ways can be use to effectively communicate into today's world with and engage the surrounding community using paper, the web site, email, social media,, etc.
- b. The retirement of Shirley Foote, the primary support staff person, happening at the end of the year, provides an ideal time to redesign the work of support staff and to bring on a person or persons who can do the work in some new ways. This allows thankfulness and a smooth transition to retirement with appreciation for the work that has been done without overstressing the changes that need to be done ahead. Then, clear thoughts about skills and responsibilities for how the new support staff works can be implemented as new people are brought on at the beginning of 2016.
- c. Current bookkeeping and accounting practices are led by Amy Bartel and seem adequate and the staff and volunteers seem capable in this area and appear to be using generally accepted practices to do their work. It is reported that finances are audited regularly and I see no real need for considering major changes in this work at this time.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING KEY ISSUES

In addition to the above issues that reconfiguring staff will permit, the following issues seem important to deal with. These will strengthen and deepen the impact of the congregation and its work in the lives of people both inside and outside the congregation.

1. **Figure out how to get children and youth into worship!** The current schedule makes it possible and even somewhat encourages many young people to grow up without a significant worship life. Statistics show the long-term attrition of youth who grow up without an engaged worship life is very high. While the current schedule seems efficient for some it may be questioned based on the desired outcome of children who grow up into active, worshipping Christian adults. This may mean rethinking schedules and methods currently in use, which will require good input and communication. The fact that this may be difficult should not overwhelm the need to at least explore options here.

There are a variety of options that might be worth considering. All of these will include some significant changes and cause anxiety in the system. However, the following scenarios are common schedules to enhance the integration and participation of children and youth in worship while also providing for good educational programming. Each of the options below, as well as others that could be added, solve certain issues and raise new ones. However, the following are common ways to integrate worship and education that have been used elsewhere:

- A. Two worship services with a Sunday School held in between. This unifies the community a bit more and allows/encourages people to participate in both education and worship. Key drawbacks here are likely to rest in capacity (can everyone fit in two services with enough room to allow for added growth?) and balancing the traditional and contemporary worship opportunities.
- B. A related scenario is to use the same kind of schedule described in “A” and then add an additional service at another time. The most common time is late afternoon on Saturdays (although a few places are offering them on Sunday evenings, Thursdays, etc.). This allows more choice of times and also increases the worship capacity of the congregation. Most congregations that do this find it to be a good added time for worship – people come who might not come on Sunday mornings. In general, while there is no way of knowing who will attend a Saturday service, the most common pattern for Saturday services is to draw some younger, single adults and a primary audience of empty nesters and older adults in most settings who no longer have children at home.

C. Maintain the current schedule and do one of two things:

- 1) Add a second Sunday School time so that people can choose times to worship and participate in education. This option works occasionally but often has drawbacks. First, two educational times requires many more volunteers. Second, it splits the classes into smaller and smaller sizes and can reduce the critical mass available to classes. Third, people can technically already do this in the current schedule and are opting not to, so the convenience offered to people for simultaneous education for kids while adults worship seems to outweigh the desire to both worship and learn. The current culture would probably defeat this option and there would be a lot of added work with low chance of success.
- 2) Offer worship at another time. Most common is to have children and youth programming on Wednesday evenings and offer a family friendly worship service each week as part of that. The benefit of this is that kids who come will worship. Drawbacks include low adult involvement (these almost become youth services) and generally low connections between Wednesday and Sunday worshippers (since the kids and their parents who worship on Wednesdays are highly likely to not be present again on Sundays).

D. An additional consideration: Some congregations are re-imagining how they do Christian education with people from childhood through adulthood. This means that in addition to more traditional Sunday School models, some congregations have stopped Sunday School and replaced it with midweek evening or after school programming. Others have taken on a more intergenerational model and connect the learning of people in multiple generations together, sometimes within the context of a worship setting. Others have focused on education of parents and equipping people for more education at home (at the dinner table, bedtime, etc.). While Sunday School is still the most common model being used, it is clear that the advent of online tools makes it possible to use a variety of ways for the delivery of Christian educational materials

E. Note: All of the above scenarios have benefits and solve some of the issues raised in this process. All of them also have a cost in staff roles, staff and volunteer time, convenience, emotion, etc. Good communication and processing of this area of the congregation's work will be helpful and is an essential part of working through this issue well. No solution will

solve this in ways that will satisfy every need or desire without also involving some compromise and losses.

2. ***Focus on expanding the use of technology*** for communication in both traditional print and in newer and ever changing digital forms between the congregation as an institution and its members and the wider community. This will require committed volunteers or support staff with skills and some emphasis on this for part of their job description (or, most likely, some combination of both paid staff and volunteers).
 - A. A digital presence involves people inside and outside the congregation in a variety of ways and raises the congregation's profile in the community. Traditional print is also still important but use of formats, art, graphics, etc. has changed radically in the last couple of decades.
 - B. Online and social media is primary a way that many members, especially younger adults and teens, connect with information.
 - C. Enhancement of the web site can allow for people outside the congregation to have a reason to come back to the site (weekly blogs, downloadable resources, sermon podcasts, links to other web sites, etc.) and using things like Twitter and Facebook can effectively drive traffic to the web site.
 - D. The younger a person is, the more likely they are to use mobile devices for information and communication. Mobile platforms and text messaging are central to the way many young people access information. Be sure to develop methods of communication that are compatible with mobile devices (the current web site is relatively useful but only uses computer scaling and doesn't realign for mobile devices) and also to develop ways of reaching people that take advantage of text messaging.
3. ***Strengthen relationships with an increasingly diverse mix of people (racial, ethnic, religious, etc.) living throughout the Appleton area.*** This will allow for a better understanding of the other people and groups in the community, connect local missions to a wider global reality, and increase awareness and encounters with the increasing community diversity in the region. It will also be the basis for new partnerships and possibilities that are not yet evident but will only be seen as they emerge and as the congregation maintains intentional connections to the community. It is likely that one or both of the pastors on the staff will be helpful if they are intentionally involved in this work – depending on how job descriptions are developed. It is also essential that this not be left to the pastor(s) alone. Lay leaders need to be involved in this work, as well.
4. ***Work very intentionally to involve the congregation*** in ways that increase their awareness of this work as well as the processes that involve implementing it. This means good communication, calls to prayer as key steps are taken, and

intentionally equipping and training them for new work (children, youth, mental health with families; worship involvement in new ways; connecting to the community in new volunteer and service opportunities; building relationships and being a part of the community organizations with which Prince of Peace partners, etc.). I see Cindy as potentially playing a key role in this as she does her work. A goal of this is to not just add work and programs to the congregation (which could just increase the work of and dependence on Cindy and or other staff), but to modify the ways people are involved and the ways things happen to allow for increased capacity, ownership and a sense of satisfaction on the part of people in the congregation.

5. ***Investing in the development of people and teams*** will keep people fresh, skills updated and changing, and encourage staff and lay leaders to continue to grow personally in ways that also further the growth of the congregation. The cost of these kinds of things will normally be a few thousand dollars each year in the budget – a relatively small percentage of the overall costs. The resulting creativity, new models, skills, and resources – if good development options are selected – will often bring a return on investment that is severalfold. Some excellent sources for meaningful continuing education include Luther Seminary (https://www.luthersem.edu/lifelong_learning), Vibrant Faith (www.vibrantfaith.org), the annual Festival of Homiletics (<https://www.festivalofhomiletics.com/>), the Leadership Network (www.LeaderNet.org), the Church Network (<http://www.nacba.net/>), among others. These provide many good options for clergy, lay program staff and support staff, and some excellent training for volunteer lay leadership as well.
 - A. Pastors will benefit from training in core skills, working as a team in the larger congregation, and particular skills related to their individual portfolios.
 - B. Program staff will benefit from training in being a part of a team, leading teams, and skills related to the area of focus for their individual work.
 - C. Support staff benefit from ongoing training to keep skills up to date. Many church support staff are using the same skills they began the job with years before, updated on a self-taught as needed basis. This means many of the best ways to do things and produce up to date communications, etc. are left out of the system. Investing here can keep the congregation more efficient and putting its best face forward for the public to see on paper, web, and digital communications.
 - D. In addition, effective teams should spend at least one day per year off site together using a retreat facilitator. This gives staff facilitated time to learn more about each other, understand what will help this particular team function best, and develop a shared culture for the work they do.

CONCLUSION

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is a relatively healthy congregation with people, resources and a ministry that allow for effective programming and good involvement of people. Leaders should celebrate this fact and be sure to affirm the congregation and its staff for the good work that has been in place over the past several years. Putting people in place to work on the issues identified above should position the congregation for effective ministry in the years ahead.

At the same time, the danger of effective and healthy ministry is that it can be disarming. When things are going well it is hard to be proactive about making changes to be ready for the future that is coming, whether we are ready for it or not. With significant changes in the American religious landscape and decline facing many congregations throughout North America, congregations that fail to be proactive often discover too late that the plateau they comfortably enjoyed was simply waiting for faithful people to age a bit and for decline to set in. This is the norm for most mainline American congregations over time.

In order for Prince of Peace Lutheran Church to continue to thrive in a changing world and to increase its relevance to the world around it, leaders will need to be proactive in facing issues that are here now but may seem minor. Staying proactive about spiritual formation, discipleship and stewardship practices among the members; developing and investing in a good staff; solving issues about how best to engage youth and their families in the ongoing life of following Christ; and increasing missional relevance in the community are all essential elements in order for the congregation to be equally likely to find itself healthy and sustainable tens years from now.

Prince of Peace is blessed with good leadership, which has chosen to take this transition time as a chance to envision God's call and to lift up the challenge to enter the next chapter strong. Failing to seize this opportunity over the next two years will most likely result in the previous chapter simply lingering on. But acting boldly will mean the start of a new chapter, built on the many strengths and gifts already present from years of good ministry. Doing so will set the stage for reaching new people and for growth in effectiveness and spiritual depth for the people whose lives this ministry touches.