

Century 3 - Strategic Goals

Manchester UMC - 2020-2026

Background

In the year 2026, Manchester United Methodist Church will begin "Century 3" as a congregation. After 200 years of faithful ministry, Manchester UMC is poised to launch into our third century with renewed energy and purpose.

To embrace this historic moment, in October of 2020 Manchester United Methodist Church undertook a church-wide visioning process themed "Turning the World Upside Down," a phrase from Acts 17 describing the followers of Jesus as "these people who have been turning the world upside down".

During the series we broke into small groups composed of those who were connected with the congregation and asked questions like: "Can the church 'turn the world upside down' again?" "What would it look like to 'turn the world upside down' here and now?" and "What can Manchester UMC learn about energy, community, and vision from the story of Paul and the Thessalonians?"

Upon review of the raw data from the congregation's responses to the visioning questions, four areas of ministry focus were identified. Strategy teams were made up of clergy, staff, & laity and convened in each of the four areas and identified the following strategic goals for the congregation to focus its energy and resources towards accomplishing in each area:

AREA 1

Engagement Building (Evangelism)

Focus Statement: Manchester UMC will develop strategies that foster a culture where more people are invited, welcomed, and engaged with Manchester UMC.

GOALS:

1. Identify the needs and preferences of the groups of people Manchester UMC hopes to reach by Century 3 and share those learnings with the congregation by December 2022.
2. Offer a best-in-class digital presence that meets the evolving needs of the diverse audiences served by Manchester UMC by December 2023.
3. Implement strategies to equip the people of Manchester UMC to talk about, invite and welcome others into the church community by December 2024.

AREA 2:

Generosity

Focus Statement: Manchester UMC will engender giving as an integral part of discipleship, as an act of gratitude and praise. The challenge is focused on culture change ... moving to a common understanding of "Giving discipleship" as mutually inclusive terms and as a year-round way of being in connection with God and with one another as believers in the greatest mission ever gifted to humanity.

GOALS:

1. Grow undesignated giving annually by 3% (over time tie % growth to cost of living, and/or the "investment" needed to "do ministry").
2. Generosity (financial giving) will be understood as Discipleship, not fundraising, by 10% more of the people of the church annually. (Do annual survey as an interactive part of the annual report. Establish baseline 2022)
3. Promote intentional giving as a percentage of income on at least a quarterly basis; best year-round.
4. In cooperation with the Leadership Board, reduce/consolidate fundraisers to five/year with a goal of 25 fewer by 2026. (TBD)
5. Reduce/consolidate all-church fundraisers frequency to three times per year by 2026. (Current seasonal mission strategy includes an Easter focus and a Christmas focus with funds distribution on a Grant Process Model.)

AREA 3:

Mission, Service, and Social Justice

GOALS:

1. Onboard paid social justice employee by September 2022.
2. Familiarize Manchester UMC's community and increase awareness of ministries and resources available through increased and engaging communication. By 2023 30% of church population will be aware of the different missions and social justice ministries.
3. Implementation of a governance and accountability system within the social justice ministries by 2026
 - a. Quarterly Meetings with minutes and attendance.
 - b. Identification of social justice initiatives and subsequent prioritization.
 - c. Integrate the social justice impact into applicable mission ministries.
4. Engage outside expert resources in the realm of social justice to inform and counsel on how best to organize to serve and make a difference in the church community.

AREA 4:

Connectionalism

GOALS:

1. By 2026, the mission, vision, and values of Manchester UMC will be clarified and aligned, so that each ministry will authentically reflect the identity of the congregation and each member will be equipped to share Manchester UMC's story among the community and across the connection.
 - A) The Leadership Board will convene a Vision Task Force that will include staff, board members, and laity. This task force will
 1. Assess the current Mission, Vision, and Welcome statements to discern their sufficiency in clearly expressing the mission, vision, values, and identity of Manchester UMC.
 2. Reframe and/or recreate these statements as needed, so that they accurately and effectively communicate the congregation's story.
 3. Complete their work by January, 2023.
 - B) As the task force completes their work, the Connectionalism Strategy Team will work with staff to develop a plan for communicating the reframed or recreated statements throughout the congregation, the community, and across the connection.
2. By 2026, it is likely that the United Methodist Church will experience a formal division over the issue of full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people. In this uncertain time, Manchester UMC will embrace the responsibility of servant leadership, and affirm its commitment to a hopeful, vibrant, fully inclusive, and thoroughly Methodist ethos within the denomination. In doing so, Manchester UMC will
 - A) Provide learning opportunities, led by the faith formation staff, so the congregation deepens our understanding of our Wesleyan heritage and theology, the work of the general agencies of the United Methodist Church, the significance of the apportionment, and other United Methodist beliefs and practices.
 - B) Strengthen relationships with United Methodist congregations in our area by regularly convening social, educational, artistic, and other connectional gatherings.
 - C) Remain faithful to the mission, vision, and values of the congregation as the denomination reforms, to ensure that all are not only welcome but celebrated as members of the Body of Christ.