

First United Methodist Church: A Five-Year Vision • 2007-2011

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2637 McCool Rd.
Portage, IN 46368
(219) 762-3846

Pastors

Dennis L. Ticen
pastordennis@csinet.net
Debbie Rousselle

Staff

Susie Hidalgo, secretary

**Wanda Samuelson, director
of music**

**Linda Mitchell, accompa-
nist**

Connie Ellefson, treasurer

Ed Peterich, custodian

Elaine Jacobs, nursery

affirmed by the Administra-
tive Council on November
7, 2006

OUR MISSION

The mission of the First United Methodist Church of Portage is to empower people from all walks of life to develop their personal and spiritual growth through Jesus Christ.

As the people of God, called to serve God's kingdom at the First United Methodist Church of Portage (PFUMC), we believe our calling to be:

1. Love God Fully

a. We will live this out by worshipping faithfully. Currently, our worship attendance stands at around 70% of our membership. We will work toward having a regular attendance nearing 90% of our membership. We will have three distinct services that provide opportunities for people to experience God's presence. When those services reach 80% capacity, we will intentionally explore additional options (more space via new seating, an additional worship service, etc.).

b. Included in our learning to worship faithfully is the discipline of giving. Giving must not be seen as "paying the bills" but as an act of worship to God who has already given us so much. We will continue to grow in becoming a tithing church. We will emphasize "equal sacrifice," and work toward every family giving 10% of their income to God through the local church. We will model this disciplined act of worship by being faithful in our tithe to the Annual Conference.

2. Love Each Other Deeply

a. Small Groups - We will work toward having every member and constituent of PFUMC involved in a small group of some sort. Some of these will be church-sponsored and church-organized.

Worship...Discipleship...Education...Mission

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Others will be more spontaneous. These will include Sunday School classes, small group Bible studies, youth groups, Emmaus or other accountability groups, prayer groups, TGIW groups, among others. We will seek to develop and encourage small groups that build Christ-like character, Christian fellowship and spiritual support.

b. Caring Ministry - We will broaden our ministry of caring to include involvement in Stephen Ministry. Our initial goal will be to train 2 Stephen Ministry trainers (plus the pastors) and to have an initial class of 12 Stephen Ministers. Classes will continue each year, adding 10-15 Stephen Ministers each year. At the end of five years, we could have 54-74 trained Christian caregivers, ready to help meet the growing needs of the congregation.

c. Hospitality - We will engage in intentional hospitality for those who are guests to our congregation.

(1) We will ask for a group of people who will make a 1-year pledge to not spend time chatting with friends until they have greeted those they don't yet know before and after the worship service. Our hospitality team will develop a plan for greeting people and helping them find their way from the parking lot to the pew to the (coffee) pot. They will schedule volunteers to carry that out.

(2) Additionally, our hospitality team will train others who lead groups in ways to be more guest-oriented.

(3) We will also, in 2007, develop a more effective plan for assimilation of newcomers which will involve strengthening our pie and letter ministry as well as developing more points of contact beyond the first visit.

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3. Exhibit a Passionate Concern for the Lost

Invitational Outreach - Research indicates that a large percentage of unchurched people would attend a church if someone just invited them. There are many new houses being built in subdivisions throughout Portage, many especially close to First UMC. There are also many existing residents of Portage and the surrounding area who do not yet have a relationship with Jesus or a church home. Therefore, we will...

a. Train the people who are already present at First UMC in personal evangelism, particularly helping people get over the baggage they have about evangelism and help them find a style that fits their personality (using *Becoming a Contagious Christian* or similar training materials).

b. Grow as a church that intentionally invites people to come and meet Jesus at this place. We will host an annual "Bring a Friend" Sunday, while emphasizing that, in reality, every Sunday is "Bring a Friend" Sunday at PFUMC.

c. We will have services and sermons every week that help people, guests and members alike, to experience the grace of Jesus Christ in relevant and powerful ways.

d. We will seek to grow our worship attendance by 10% each year. Membership will, we believe, naturally grow in a similar proportion. If we meet this goal, our worship attendance by 2011 would be 75% higher than it was at the end of 2005:

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2006 - 271	2009 - 359
2007 - 298	2010 - 394
2008 - 327	2011 - 433