Vision 2020
Report to Session
September 22, 2015

The Session of Collegiate Presbyterian Church created and commissioned the Vision 2020 team to identify goals and priorities for the church and its ministry for the next 5-10 years. Another way in which Vision 2020 framed its work has been to ask, “What is God calling us to be as a church?” In order to develop an answer to this question, the Vision 2020 team gathered and discussed considerable relevant information including demographic data, visits with area congregations, interviews with numerous groups and individuals, as well as multiple reports to and feedback from members and leaders of CPC. After prayerfully considering and analyzing this information, we have arrived at some specific recommendations for strategic emphases that we believe should be pursued by CPC. In this summary report, we briefly provide some context and rationale before presenting our recommendations.

The community around us.
It is important that we understand demographics, trends, and characteristics of the broader community in which CPC resides so that we may better fulfill the mission and purposes of the church in the future. In particular, it is evident that Ames and ISU are growing rapidly and becoming increasingly diverse. With change, people have new expectations and churches have opportunities and challenges. Presently there are over forty churches in Ames, and the number is growing. Generally, the most rapidly growing churches are evangelical, while mainline church growth is mixed. As a result, we have to ask ourselves two questions, “Are we keeping up with our changing community?” and “Why should people choose Collegiate as a church home?” These questions have led us to consider our strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths and weaknesses.
We perceive CPC’s strengths to include:

- Member relationships and commitment
- Being welcoming and caring
- Our music program
- Worship that is spiritually nourishing
- Proximity to the ISU campus.

Our weaknesses include:

- Lack of a clear identity and direction
- Pastoral leadership has lacked continuity
- Facilities do not consistently fit needs
- University ministry has slipped in participation
- Lack of desired age and family diversity
Aspirations.
In view of CPC’s recently ratified mission statement and the Vision 2020 team’s analysis, we believe that the aspirations of the church in the next 5-10 years should include:

- Becoming more Christ-centered and mission-driven
- Placing special emphasis on families, outreach and mission, and university ministry
- Becoming known in the community as a welcoming, caring, relationship driven, and energetic congregation
- Growing to a more demographically diverse congregation
- Facilities that are welcoming, safe, attractive, and advance the church’s mission
- Sustained pastoral leadership that fits our mission and focus
- Programming that is energizing, relevant, and faith-building.

The committee believes that in order for CPC to achieve these goals and to flourish in the future, several things need to happen (key success factors):

- Attendance at worship services must grow
- Provide a vibrant child and youth ministry
- Pastoral staff must be retained for stability
- Attract and retain new members
- Develop more effective communication with all ages
- Facilities must be upgraded
- Build a vibrant and sustainable university ministry
- Community awareness of who we are and what we are doing must be created.

Focus areas for the future.
While CPC seeks to nurture all of its members and to equip them to carry out the mission of the church, a lack of focus is contradictory to the idea of a strategic plan because of the resulting dilution of our resources and impact. Therefore, we recommend that CPC focus on the following three directions for the future, as we believe the overall attainment of the church’s aspirations are highly dependent on these aspects:

1. Families/Children & Youth—which are critical for CPC to grow and flourish
2. Outreach and mission—both communally and globally, one of our key strengths
3. University ministry—to build on our location and heritage. A vibrant university ministry also has a strong impact on items 1 and 2.
Families/Children & Youth.
Our goal is for CPC to provide meaningful children and youth education, and be a point of attraction for families seeking a reformed Christian church home.

Key actions to make this happen:
1. Support development of enhanced spaces to include:
   - Youth education (pre-k to high school)
   - Middle school and high school fellowship
   - Flexible space for family gatherings, and
   - Spaces responsive to young families, including nursery and nursing rooms.
2. Create meaningful opportunities for young Christians to participate in worship.
3. Strengthen Christian education offerings for youth and young families, including opportunities for whole family sharing and learning.
4. Improve internet infrastructure and embrace technology as means of reaching younger, fast-paced families.
5. Offer more and better intergenerational activities within the church.

Outreach and mission.
Our goal is to show God’s love to our neighbors near and far through:
   a. Every member participating
   b. Growing our mission budget from 12.5% to 15% by 2020, and to 20% by 2025.

Key actions to make this happen:
1. Communicate compelling opportunities to make a difference within the community, the church, and the world.
2. Increase awareness of outreach successes no matter how large or small.
3. Help people recognize how they can use their talents to make a difference.
4. Identify a limited number of high visibility projects to create energy and focus.

University ministry.
Goals:
   a. The university ministry program will experience a wider and deeper participation by students, including students in leadership roles.
   b. University ministry will provide a ministry in which students may deepen their understanding of God, connecting faith and vocation, and experience Collegiate as a church home.

Key actions to make this happen:
1. Create a reserved space for students to use that is welcoming and hospitable.
2. Become more visible on the ISU campus.
3. Offer more and better intergenerational activities within the church.
4. Market and communicate the ministry in new ways (e.g., a new name, signage at the church, website).
5. Offer a worship service that is meaningful to students and congregation.
6. Provide mission opportunities to students on spring break and throughout the year.
Key points to remember.

1. Implementation of these recommendations will be under the direction of the Session, not the Vision 2020 task force.
2. The plan sets a direction. How to implement these plans will be determined by Session, committees, and staff.
3. The plan will have to be adjusted from time to time to adapt to changes.