

Vision Council DRAFT Recommendation Summary

The Vision Council has reviewed the feedback provided by the four leadership teams (EGLT, ROLT, NFLT, RDT) on the [Mission Vision Task Force recommendation report](#). With this feedback in mind, the Vision Council discussed the recommendations and divided them into three groups: dark gray, gray, and light gray:

- Recommendations designated in “dark gray” are already in progress or have the full support of the Vision Council.
- Recommendations designated in “gray” have some support and/or require additional discussion and consideration.
- Recommendations designated in “light gray” are items with a significant cost component, and/or deemed lower priority with need for additional study.

The Vision Council welcomes additional input from the congregation and will be holding forums this fall to listen to additional perspectives and to discern appropriate areas of focus for the 2023 budget.

“Dark Gray” Recommendations:

3.1	The current LCGS Mission and Vision (see p.14) continues to be relevant today.
3.2.1	Maintain a single service Sunday schedule
3.2.2	With the exception of special services like Christmas and Easter, LCGS should continue with only one church service each Sunday. At least twice a month, services should include communion.
3.2.3	Explore more variety in worship music for Sunday services. For example, instead of simply offering a traditional service w/ organ or piano one week and a contemporary service the following week, consider the use of a blended worship music. Planning for the worship service music could center around asking questions like: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● What are we planning this Sunday that will engage children?● What are we planning that will engage youth?● What are we planning that will engage those who love traditional worship?● What are we planning for those looking for new/creative/contemporary?● What other activities or service components could further the message and theme for the day.
3.2.5	Continue to live stream worship as a priority for ministry for members and outreach to our community. Request Experiencing God Leadership Team periodically review posted videos for quality.
3.3.1	Continue to provide mid-week experiences on occasions like the Lenten soup suppers on Wednesday nights during lent, mid-week summer “praise” services or other offsite services from time to time. Explore an outdoor Sunday evening service in summer. These experiences also create opportunities for intergenerational relationship building.
3.4.3	Install better signage for church building areas (e.g. bathrooms, offices, facility map, AED, etc and at locations of building entry, top and bottom of stairwells etc.).
3.4.6	Host a series of workshops (or similar) like those provided by the NE MN Synod Anti-Racism Team and that address other peace and justice issues. http://www.nemnsynod.org/antiracism.html (scroll to “What kinds of workshops do you lead?”).

3.4.9	Vision Council and other Leadership Teams designate a liaison(s) to regularly seek out the wisdom and perspective of youth, young adults and young families. When Colleen Bernu spoke to our team this summer, she emphasized the importance of accompaniment. “Singling out one young person to join a leadership team feels like the opposite of accompaniment to me. Accompaniment focuses on "meeting people where they are". This may look like adding youth and young adults to a leadership team - and in some cases that may be a good fit for a particular youth. However, a stronger vision would be for leadership team members to visit Confirmation, Peer Ministry, Youth Gathering Meetings, Sunday School, etc. Meet the youth and young adults where they are, ask questions. and listen to them. (e.g. How are things going here at Confirmation? What was your experience like at the Youth Gathering? How can we help you connect more with worship?)”. An annual “youth council” meeting could also be convened to gather input.
3.4.10	Review and consider modernizing (e.g. online scheduling tools) church related volunteer scheduling (readings, ushering, etc.) and ministry commitment and interest inventories. For example, explore the usefulness of a tool like ACS Realm Software which integrates giving & accounting, individual & group engagement, event management and more .
3.4.12	Consider a survey every third year to develop action items for the leadership teams to consider and report out progress during the three year cycle.
3.5	Request Leadership Teams review survey responses, recommendations included in this report, and develop action items and recommendations.
3.5.4.1	Propose a two year revenue and expense projection which reflects staffing recommendations and considerations included in this report.
3.5.4.2	Develop a 10 year capital plan which identifies property needs and a high level estimate of costs anticipated over the next ten years (e.g. new roof, new carpet, landscaping, parking lot, furnace, water heater, etc.)
3.6.2	Review procedures for scheduling church leadership team meetings with the goal of increasing accessibility while also considering staff time.
3.7	Budget for staffing levels which support the missions and vision and recommendations included in this report while ensuring financial sustainability.
3.8	The church’s overall annual budget should reflect the realities of the present size of our active congregation and pledged giving and taking into consideration current and best practices for church operations in response to the changing dynamics of our church, community and the present issues we face.

“Gray” Recommendations:

3.2.4	Seek to limit service to one hour in duration. Additionally, sermons should strive to be no longer than about 20 minutes in length. People appreciate knowing when they can expect the service to end as they plan their day or work schedule. Further, when the service runs late it can confuse those who arrive for Sunday School as to if Sunday School is on or when it will start.
3.3.3	Continue to encourage bible study groups.

3.4.1	Adjust the pew spacing in the sanctuary to be no less than the recommended 36" and potentially more space to make it easier to move between the pews and pass by those that are seated. This will also help create more of an atmosphere of community and togetherness. Further, additional wheelchair spaces should be made available throughout the pews.
3.4.4	Consider how worship leaders and leadership teams interact with Sunday school families regarding the upstairs/downstairs comments from the survey. Do we need signs to encourage everyone either upstairs or downstairs to coffee and treats rather than having them in both or can we make sure that congregants always gather in both places? Additional options to consider include planning regularly (such as Sunday coffee hour), special events, and ministry programming with increased thought to enhancing the ability of church leadership and members of different generations within the church to personally meet and build relationships.
3.4.7	Enhance our website and social media presence and consider how best to do so.
3.4.11	Allow the congregation to more regularly provide solicited feedback after changes in ministry programming.
3.5.1.2	How should ministry change?
3.5.1.3	What should stay the same?
3.5.1.4	Explore ways to better utilize and redesign the chapel for smaller services, weekly prayer, etc.
3.5.2.1	Develop an annual action plan to reach out and listen to the needs and concerns of community members. Develop community outreach programming based on these needs.
3.5.2.2	How can we attract more community use of our building, kitchen, and grounds including analyzing our building use policy and rates?
3.5.2.3	Determine whether to enhance staff resources for our reaching out mission (for example, hire a Deacon of Outreach Ministries to lead and organize our activities).
3.5.2.4	Determine how best to add a significant (or broadened) social justice component to our Reaching Out mission.
3.5.3.1	How can LCGS best nurture the faith of others? How can we meet the faith needs of others where they are at?
3.5.3.2	Consider redesigning the Youth room.
3.5.3.3	Consider adding a guided post-confirmation youth bible study with food, etc.
3.6.1.	Council, Board, Team, Committee and Task Force memberships and approved minutes, including a summary of the financials, should be maintained and readily available on the church website.
3.7.1	The MVTFF provides the following guiding parameters for staffing consideration:
3.7.1	LCGS revenue will remain flat or decline in the near term at ~\$485k. Increases to an area (benevolence, staffing, building & property, etc) will require a reduction in another area(s).
3.7.1	LCGS should have one full-time pastor and one director of youth and family ministry and full-time office manager.

3.7.1	The Pastor position description will need to be revised to include core responsibilities from the current lead and associate pastor job descriptions. This may also require changes to the desired qualifications and skills.
3.7.1	Continue to monitor and appropriately fund keeping our building clean and adequately maintained. This includes either assisting current or future LCGS staff to earn and maintain needed licenses or, if feasible, hiring outside experts with appropriate credentials for specialized tasks. LCGS staff must gain certification in a timely manner such that the church maintains compliance with regulations.
3.7.1	All position descriptions will need to be reviewed and revised. Some current responsibilities may need to be eliminated and entirely new responsibilities may be added depending on congregationally adopted mission and vision recommendations.
3.7.1	All staff will be asked to share their ideas and recommendations for how their own role, position description, and the staff organization structure could be revised/improved.
3.7.1	Staff should receive performance appraisals at least annually based on updated job descriptions.
3.7.1	LCGS will strive to ensure all staff are competitively paid and aligned with synod guidelines based on performance, skill and experience.
3.9	The Vision Council should review this report recommendations and determine appropriate next steps which may include additional congregational forums on final VC approved recommendations and a mid-year annual meeting to formally adopt any necessary changes to LCGS governing documents and financials.

“Light Gray” Recommendations:

3.3.2	Staff should experiment with offering a mid-week devotion (5 minute max) delivered via a video posted on YouTube and shared on Facebook and the LCGS Website.
3.4.2	Explore the costs and logistics required to install Air Conditioning in the sanctuary and/or other areas of the building.
3.4.5	Start the process of becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation.
3.4.8	Reach out to the community to identify ways we can be more of a resource for the community. Look for ways we could be more outward focused/outward mission oriented. Examples could include addressing neighborhood issues like food insecurity, student success rates, and childcare needs.
3.6	Review and consider a redesign of the many layered committee structure which exists beneath each Leadership Team. The current leadership structure includes several layers and is a very large committee structure which may need to be streamlined given the current size of the active church membership. The current structure may require too much time from staff and volunteer time in some cases. In addition, it’s sometimes unclear what the specific roles and responsibilities and hierarchical structure is for each of these teams and committees.