

Let The Light Shine



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## ENVISIONING OUR BEST FUTURE

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OCTOBER 3, 2021

ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## Let the Light Shine – Envisioning Our Best Future

The congregation of St. Paul's met for the 2015 Planning Advance to listen for God's direction for our church. Over the next 6 years, St. Paul's actively walked that path and carried out God's plan as we understood it at that time. In 2021, our church leadership determined that it was time once again to listen for God's voice sending us forward to shine His light in our world.

We began the process of discerning God's call for St. Paul's in July, following an electrifying Laity Session at the Florida Annual Conference in June. During the Laity Session, Conference Lay Leader Alice Williams introduced the concept of the 4 Ps – Purpose, Presence, Partnership, Passion – which became the foundation for our visioning process at St. Paul's.

*Purpose:* God speaks to each of us and we share the leadership of the church, especially the local church. In Acts 1, Jesus tells us we are to use the power of the Holy Spirit to minister in Jesus' name. We share the love of Christ through our Christian service. We exist to welcome others into the life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ that we ourselves have experienced.

*Presence:* We need to be present – not just within the walls of the church on Sunday morning, - but every day out in the community. The Gospel of Matthew concludes with what has come to be known as the Great Commission (Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. . .) which with the promise that Christ will abide with, and be present in His church until His return. The church, in turn, is to embody Christ's presence in the world. We are meant to be present for one another, in worship, study, and fellowship. We are meant to be present in our community, spreading a positive message and helping to address the needs that exist. And, we are called to be present to those we may never meet in person, through our support for ministries in other places.

*Partnership:* It takes all of us to do God's work. In Romans, chapter 15, the apostle Paul encouraged the people to work together, with one voice, in partnership as they engaged in God's work. We, too, need to work together to carry out God's work. This partnership can be experienced on many levels - first, our partnership with God through the Holy Spirit; next, our partnership within the church, among each other and between our pastor and our congregation. We can even be experience partnership as one church works with other

congregations and ministries in the community. Every one of these partnerships is critical to the success of our mission for Jesus Christ.

*Passion:* As people of faith, we have the power to dream of a world as it ought to be, and to put our thoughts and prayers into positive action. We each have a unique outlook on life and faith, and God has given each of us unique gifts and talents that can be used to carry out His will. It seems that each of us also possesses a specific interest in some dimension of God's work. Some of us have a passion for worship; some of us have a special concern to care for the church's physical property. Some of us have a passion for working with children; some of us love to help with food drives or meals for the hungry. The Holy Spirit invites each of us to identify what it is that causes us to respond to the realities around us just as Isaiah responded to the Lord's invitation to ministry in Isaiah chapter 6: "Here I am, Lord - send me!"

At a meeting on June 29, the Church Council agreed that it was time to begin a planning process to take St. Paul's into the future. Council Chair Pam Michell asked for volunteers to participate in a Visioning Committee (Norma Fisher, Deborah Pritts, Jane Darling, Lay Council Chair Pam Michell, Pastor Robert Roseberry). This Committee developed and implemented a process to gather information from the congregation to discern the direction for St. Paul's for the next few years.

The Committee identified 3 pillars that support all the activities at St. Paul's:

*Worship:* all the components of the worship services, including but not limited to, liturgy, sermons, music, special events and supporting technology.

*Church Family:* the programs and activities that engage, support, educate and care for our membership.

*Community:* the missions St. Paul's supports and participates in to meet the needs we see in our community outside our church walls. This includes our local neighborhood, the City of Ocala and Marion County, and state, national and international initiatives.

The process the Committee designed was a conversation-based framework, using a set of questions that would engage participants and encourage imaginative and bold thinking. To reach as many people as possible, including those who worship online, we offered in-person meetings, virtual meetings, and the opportunity to participate through a written questionnaire. The sermon series leading into the Visioning sessions would focus on the Book of Revelation, and we would introduce one of the 4 Ps each Sunday, concluding on World Communion Sunday when we would present the findings to the congregation. In late August we sent letters to the congregation inviting them to participate in the way most comfortable for them.

During the week of September 12, we conducted an in-person session for the congregation, an in-person session for the youth, a virtual session via Zoom, and received written responses from those who were unable to attend any of the other sessions. Approximately 55 people participated in-person, virtually, or in writing. For the

in-person sessions, participants were seated at tables in groups of 6, including one table facilitator who was a participant but was tasked with capturing the table conversation. The conversation during the virtual session was captured in the Zoom chat feature by a facilitator assigned that task. All the participants, regardless of their means of participating, were presented with the same questions. Those questions and a summary of the responses are presented below. Please see the attached spreadsheet for a detailed compilation of participants' responses.

**How we see ourselves:** How would you describe our church? What is most precious to you?

We view ourselves as warm, friendly and welcoming to our members, visitors and the community. We enjoy fellowship socially and while working on projects to support our church family and our community. Our youth, music and outreach programs/activities are precious to us, as are our memorial garden and relaxed and comforting worship services

**Context:** What is going on in your community that affects you as well as St. Paul's? Remember to include the good as well as the challenging.

At the top of everyone's minds is COVID and all the accompanying disruption caused by it: isolation, alienation, fear and division within our larger community, but also within our church. Masking and social distancing remain controversial. We also noted homelessness, a rise in crime and violence, and political and social tensions. But, in the midst of these negative thoughts, there are many beacons of light. St. Paul's has displayed resilience and creativity in keeping the congregation connected and engaged. Our virtual worship services and Bible studies provided welcome alternatives to meeting in person. We continue to support Interfaith through serving meals, food/clothing drives; Rays of Hope (Food 4 Kids); and the Salvation Army toy drive. St. Paul's Christian School continues to provide quality education to pre-school children. Many of our members support our local arts community and other charitable organizations.

**Envisioning our Future:** It is now 2026. Thinking about our discussions of the 4 P's (purpose, presence, partnership, passion) and our Worship, Church Family, and Community pillars, what has God called us to do? What is our passion? What are we able to do now that we were not able to do before? What is St. Paul's known for?

The future St. Paul's is passionate about outreach and service to the community, focusing on powerful, authentic and creative worship, diversity in the congregation across generations and races, and being known as a strong neighborhood church. We aspire to respond to social issues such as helping the homeless, providing care and activities for seniors, expanding our youth programs, and partnering more closely with St. Paul's School. Our church is vibrant with a growing congregation that is truly diverse and inclusive of all ages, genders, races, and those who are differently abled. A strong and sustainable financial situation allows us to support various forms of worship and service to our community.

**Analysis of Current Activities:** The final question posed to participants was an analysis of our current activities to determine what we should continue doing (Keep); what activities, if any, we should stop doing (Abandon); what activities we might start doing (Invent); and what activities we could improve (Re-invent).

As you reflect on your responses to the previous questions, and looking at our current ministries and activities, what is working well that we should keep or continue doing? What has outlived its usefulness that we should give up or abandon? What need do you see that we are not addressing that should become a new activity or ministry that we should invent? What are we doing well, but if tweaked or re-invented a bit could become much more powerful.

**KEEP:**

*Programs/Ministries:*

- Music (x8)
- Peace by Piece (x6)
- Youth (x3)
- Children's
- Youth programs (church sponsored and facility utilization)
- Virtual and in-person worship
- Children's ministries all in the Fellowship Hall
- Virtual service
- Online ministry for services and Bible study
- Youth – mission trip, excellent!
- The choir is a given
- Online ministry, service
- Hymn singing during service
- Bible study

*Outreach:*

- Rays of Hope/Food 4 Kids backpacks (x3)
- Interfaith (x2)
- Interfaith food collections
- Trunk or Treat
- Ft. McCoy
- Open Arms
- Tools for Teachers
- Thanksgiving food collection
- Salvation Army toy drive
- Food drives
- Schools support

*Education:*

- Christian school (x6)
- Scouting (boys and girls)

*Congregational Connections:*

- Name tags (x2)
- United Methodist Women (x2)
- United Methodist Men (x2)
- Home visitations
- Telephone contacts
- Online newsletter

**Abandon:**

- Holding Hands
- UMM BBQ
- Political/Progressive movement from traditional services
- Resistance to advancing to the computer age; with proper tech support we can do this!
- The idea that a thriving church only means an in-person congregation
- Masking – at least for the vaccinated and for Robert and musicians who are distant from everyone else
- Nothing – all programs are good and had a purpose

**Invent:**

*Programs/Ministries:*

- Senior Activities
- Special needs
- Early service at 9 a.m.
- Saturday evening service
- Worship
- Ministry for the developmentally disabled and their families
- More inventive ways to reach the sick and disabled
- Children's choir - having the children in worship always draws a good crowd
- Respite program
- Prayer group vigils – novena type scheduling, open sanctuary for meditation

*Outreach/Missions:*

- Spring Fling
- Rise Against Hunger
- School outreach with Marion County
- More opportunities for hands on mission service that is easily completed in a morning or a day
- Mental health & dementia outreach
- A support ministry we could provide to the bereaved in the church and in the community
- Peanut butter and jelly fund

*Facility/Operations:*

- Transportation to services (x2)
- Church transportation
- Clean up days
- Use of campus for relational activities that lead people to the belief of the Gospel
- Band shell for outdoor concerts to attract the neighborhood
- Paved walking trails around property, possibly with prayer stations leading to the prayer garden

*Congregational Connections:*

- Church Membership Outreach
- Congregation postcard
- Small group fellowship
- New small group opportunities for service, enlightenment, shared interests, mutual support
- A new membership model that incorporates in-person and virtual participation
- Teen tech support group – teens adopt a senior to help them learn technology
- A support ministry we could provide to the bereaved in church and in the Community
- Movie night

*Neighborhood Connections:*

- Rummage sales for our community
- Trunk or Treat
- Do we really know the neighborhood right around the church? Is there a possibility for growth there?
- Intentional community ministry that is designed to allow us to share the Gospel

*Education: Church/School Integration*

*Marketing/Communications:*

- Someone with responsibility for getting church in the local media
- Need to tell our story within the broader community
- How well represented are we in our current telephone directories and other directories for Marion County?
- Get in Ocala Gazette (weekly paper, maybe more accessible than Star-Banner)
- Participation in Ocala Parade

**Reinvent:**

*Programs/Ministries:*

- Worship Experience
- Even more music
- Music - More Upbeat music occasionally - maybe once every two months

Closing Song for Sunday  
Shut in Ministry  
What we are doing for the virtual worship service  
How Virtual Service is perceived/used  
Develop a Contemporary worship service lead by youth and young adults  
Continue to integrate new technology into services and communication without forgetting about those who do not/cannot use them  
Prayer Chain

*Education:*

Closer, more substantive with the St. Paul's school  
Closer relationship with the Christian school could grow our congregation and attract more young families  
Leadership training & motivation  
Adult Sunday School Classes  
Bring back social / educational activities for adults

*Congregational Connections/Membership:*

Membership growth  
What membership in St. Paul's means  
Congregation Phone Call Checkup  
Scheduled Potlucks  
Family potluck  
Potluck dinners  
UMW and the means we use to participate  
Coffee/Breakfast on Sunday's  
Visitations  
Bring back social/educational activities for adults  
SPICE – St. Paul's Culinary Experience  
Come early/stay late  
Coffee hour

*Missions/Outreach/Special Events:*

Peanut Butter and Jelly Sunday  
Food packing project - maybe we should do something locally  
UMM Service  
Holiday Specific Gathering  
Garage sale  
Specific Outreach Products for Peace by Piece  
Our mission outreach to our community (in proximity to the church and city-wide)  
Target community service for the hungry, poor and homeless (or near homeless)  
Food packing brought in a lot of people, and it would be great to be known for our steps against hunger



May need to rethink how we do some of these important ministries to keep us safe while allowing us to keep doing these important programs

*Marketing/Communications:*

We need more information about what various groups in the church are doing and where we can better support one another in our various projects

Need promotion of current programs

Take a look at how we are communicating within the congregation - is the weekly mailer meeting needs?

Mailed Flyers

Continue to integrate new technology into services and communication without forgetting about those who do not/cannot use them

*Facility:*

I believe that the trustees should be taking care of the things like repairs, etc., instead of always hiring everything to be done by outside companies. That would eliminate a lot of expense.



St. Paul's United Methodist Church

## **Visioning Session Input**

September 2021

**How we see ourselves: How would you describe our church? What is most precious to you?**

### **Atmosphere/Personal Relationships**

- **Friendly (x9)**
- Everyone is kind and friendly
- Friendly, older, musical, warm, relaxed traditional
- Warm, friendly
- Friendly and welcoming
- **Welcoming (x6)**
- People are welcoming
- Welcoming warm, friendly, musical, welcoming
- Intimate, elderly, welcoming are characteristics that I would use to describe St. Paul's.
- Warm and welcoming
- Very Comforting/Welcoming
- **Caring (x2)**
- People talked to us
- Kind
- Right at home
- Feels like family
- Intimate
- Familiar
- Willing to work together
- We disagree, but we still want to be together
- Cooperative
- Support each other
- Sense of community
- Community

### **Family and Youth**

- **Family atmosphere (x2)**
- Family accepting and welcoming
- Family based
- Family oriented
- Commitment to children and youth
- Kids involved in all activities
- Youth services
- Youth Program

- Ministries - children, music, discipleship
- Youth oriented
- Children and youth
- Youth and children services
- Children's ministry is growing
- Youth band
- Nursery
- Children

#### Fellowship/Longevity/Groups

- **Fellowship** (x2)
- Opportunities for fellowship
- Womens organizations
- Mens organizations
- Invitation to women's group was spontaneously extended
- UMW
- Bible Study - leading and participating!
- Longevity - raised two children in this church
- Great to see folks who've been here for 20-plus years still in the pews
- Memories
- Remembering people
- We love the size of our congregation.

#### Inclusion/Makeup

- Open to all age groups
- Something for everyone
- Open
- All inclusive
- No one is left by themselves
- Intergenerational
- Small congregation
- People
- Senior congregation
- Tight Knit

#### Worship: Style and Focus

- **Music** (x3)
- Music and choir
- Choir and music ministry
- Choir
- Music is my passion, and enjoy participating and hearing it - means a great deal

- St. Paul's is known for having a strong music ministry
- Choir best in the city!
- Good music program
- The choir is one of the best, if not the best. They give great messages which is missed a lot right now and the members are very caring
- Friendly music loving giving children/youth loving
- Worship that combines tradition and new touches
- Traditional service
- Non-Rigid Services make me feel welcome
- Children's sermons
- Closing benediction song
- Closing hymnal
- Services
- Bible church both in teaching and practice
- We are teaching our members to be disciples of Christ
- Slightly more progressive messaging and application of Biblical teachings
- Praying
- Our church lets you feel the presence of God.

#### **Campus Features**

- Pleasant facility
- Memorial garden
- Memory Garden is a great reminder of who we are and what we're supposed to be about
- Serenity spot

#### **Neighborhood Connections/Local Outreach**

- Christian School
- Preschool
- Scouts
- Scouting program
- Neighborhood church
- Convenient
- Fellowship Hall sharing with communities
- Election

#### **Community Outreach**

- Community service
- Community outreach
- Community outreach - dependable
- Dependable

- Connected to community around us - outreach through Interfaith, food collections, etc.
- Being able to help community
- Service Centered
- Widespread drive for community outreach
- Desire to help others in the community
- Outreach
- Commitment to service in the community
- Undie Sunday!!
- Accommodating to projects
- Peace by Piece
- Peace by Piece does a lot for the community and more
- Toy drive at holidays
- Generous

#### **Leadership and Individuals**

- Leadership
- Precious - Pastor Robert
- Pastor Robert
- Our Pastor is great and gives wonderful messages
- Precious - Frank Rasbury
- Heather



St. Paul's United Methodist Church

## **Visioning Session Input**

September 2021

**Context: What is going on in your community that affects you as well as St. Paul's?  
Remember to include the good as well as the challenging.**

### **COVID**

- **COVID** (x5)
- Even though we've been handicapped by COVID, we have done a great job keeping many of our programs going
- Pandemic
- COVID surge
- COVID spread
- Fears and anxieties about COVID
- Everything is COVID
- COVID has had the effect of isolating people, both physically and emotionally, from one another
- COVID comes to mind first, but political division affects us also
- Isolation created by COVID
- Isolation - exacerbated by virus
- Miss social interaction
- Difficulty with fellowship because COVID keeps us separated, where are the potlucks
- Impact of COVID restrictions
- COVID restrictions seem to hit directly on many of the things we have said we appreciate about our congregation
- Mask wearing is a divisive issue
- Reduction in ability to serve the community because of COVID

### **Financial Impact**

- Financial constraints
- Financial concerns
- Financial situation in entire community
- The pandemic has increased financial problems for the church and others.

### **Community: Needs - General**

- **First responders** (x2)
- Thankful for public service
- Interfaith
- Interfaith services
- Thankful for Interfaith, Open arms, Salvation Army and other service organizations
- A lot of people in need in our community - we have responded with food drives, toy

- drives, Interfaith, St. Mark's
- A lot of people close to the edge socially and emotionally, and now the stress of life has pushed many people over the edge
- Lack of services for the disabled

#### **Community: Homelessness**

- **Homelessness** (x2)
- Homeless
- Homeless people just about everywhere
- Number of homeless people in Ocala and surrounding area
- Seems like we have more homeless people on our streets - yet also seeing revitalization of downtown Ocala
- Hatred poverty, homelessness
- Declining to create a homeless resource center while building the World Equestrian Center

#### **Community: Food Insecurity**

- Interfaith feeding and 10,000 meal drive - 13 million kids starving in our country as we speak. We need to continue to do what we can and do EVEN MORE.
- Feeding at interfaith
- Food 4 Kids program
- Schools provide free breakfasts and lunches - a lot of school programs have fallen by the wayside due to lack of support
- Feeding the poor. Sharing covid. Partnership possibilities ie school. Ft McCoy
- Feeding the hungry
- Food for children

#### **Community: Crime and Violence**

- Violence
- Increasing violence
- Rise of crime
- Rise of crime, even in Ocala
- Crime on uprise

#### **Ocala: Other**

- Ocala does a great job of supporting the performing and visual arts
- Ocala has worked hard to preserve its arts and civic organizations through this difficult time
- Our community is growing and developing
- Ocala has a small-town feeling
- Youth - boys and girls club
- Aging community

- Elections
- City election

### **School-Related**

- Beginning of school year. in person versus on line
- School and community partnerships growing with SPUMC
- School year starting
- School districts trying to keep students safe
- School district steps to keep all students (especially special needs students safe)

### **Politics/Polarization/Isolation/Compassion**

- Most people have a great deal of patience and compassion.
- Polarization in society between persons of different points of view
- Politics getting in between Church and Family
- Everything is political
- Politics & Race
- Political impact and divisions caused by politics
- Politics - partisanship -
- Politics and polarization
- Alienation between those with varying viewpoints
- Media (who do we believe)
- Environmental consequences
- Superiority complexes and lack of true empathy for those marginalized or taken advantage of by society
- Growing extremes in the distribution of wealth
- Lack of compassion
- Neighbors are not neighborly, building fences
- Lack of trust
- LGBT community
- Disasters

### **Weather**

- Wet weather
- Good weather - no hurricanes so far!

### **St. Paul's - Church Connectivity**

- We have the ability to connect virtually
- Worship creativity
- Radically different approaches from churches to the pandemic
- Varied services in church. Care for our shut ins
- There are new ways to attend church, physically and virtually
- How do we stay connected as a church when some of us are online, some in person,



and some have had little contact with us for the past 19 months?

- Virtual church has helped some
- Online worship
- Communication/chats
- In Person Service is a blessing
- Have been creative in how we address the pandemic
- Online services
- Troubled by members who seem no longer interested in the church
- Church and family always keep me grounded
- Resilience of those who have stayed with the congregation
- Facebook - how outreach is being done now - hoping its being a positive experience, but...

#### **St. Paul's - Other**

- These conversations about the future and our focus are a big plus!
- Proud of St. Pauls for maintaining some semblance of normalcy in the midst of everything going on
- Childrens' School is a Joy
- Positive - St. Paul's school
- Not enough employees
- Trunk or treat
- We have a lot of parents who are not parenting in our society - but here at St. Paul's, it seems that we have parents who are modeling the right way to do it

#### **Other Comments**

- Underlying health concerns
- Creative
- Love
- Lack of younger people to step in and take the reins



St. Paul's United Methodist Church

## **Visioning Session Input**

September 2021

**Envisioning Our Future:** It is now 2021. Thinking about our discussions of the 4 Ps (purpose, presence, partnership, passion) and our Worship, Church Family, and Community pillars, what has God called us to do? What is our passion? What are we able to do now that we were not able to do before? What is St. Paul's known for?

### **Our Congregation**

- Inclusive church. racially and culturally. Growing c/y program. Many off campus ministry and evangelism. Shared building space
- A wide variety of ages, races and ethnic groups at services.
- Changing age paradigm
- More diverse and packed congregation
- A congregation excited about their faith, and committed to each other
- Younger people take more active roles in church
- More interaction between Christian school and traditional services
- More families
- Generational Diversity
- Express true inclusivity and welcoming embrace of people different from ourselves
- Younger aged congregations
- Vibrant, growing youth involvement, young families, teens
- Focus on families and children
- Our diverse membership in age, race and ethnicity
- Passionate and caring
- Mutual respect
- Work together as a church in person with no masks or social distancing.
- Love each other!
- We have learned from the past and therefore, better able to handle our new problems
- We are made in the image of God, so therefore we are confident in the future because of our relationship with God and who He has created to be
- Known for the school and friendliness
- Church as a place of community rather than entertainment

### **Our Worship Services**

- Our worship services will continue to be offered both online and in person, and we will be continually developing our technological expertise.
- Authentic, powerful worship services
- Cell phone turn off during service
- Full congregation every Sunday to witness the choir and music

- Technology systems that easily and reliably undergird the church's ministries
- Musical guests as part of service
- Guest sermons
- Meeting altogether as a congregation and welcoming new people. I felt welcomed and comfortable from the moment I first walked in
- Youth led intergenerational worship service with contemporary music
- We have an active online and in-person congregation, doing the work we are called to do in whatever location our members find themselves.
- Use of new technology
- Hospitality before service

### **Church Vitality**

- Fewer financial resources will require us to be creative about how we do ministry
- Thriving membership
- Thriving finances
- Financial capacity, personnel, intent and desire to respond to needs in our community
- I think until we can grow our congregation we can't grow in our ministries. We need to grow our congregation now and reach more people for Christ before we can concern ourselves about the future.
- Without membership, tithing and people who are willing to be involved, we can grow.
- Growth
- Do we need to work on a campaign to grow our membership as a step towards realizing these visions?
- Having exceeded our current capacity - have become a major contributor to Ocala/Marion County
- Increasing membership - figuring out how to do it - getting our name out, its hard for folks to know we're even here.

### **Church Activities/Fellowship**

- Fellowship dinners
- Weddings
- Scheduled luncheons for fellowship
- Annual Picnic
- More opportunities for fellowship
- Women's - Men's - and various groups continue to meet
- FUN congregational activities when the virus situation permits
- Group Specific Ministries/Fellowship
- Peace by Piece has continued to develop, with its own space at the church.
- More and varied opportunities for adult education

### Support of Children and Youth

- Great preschool - lots of families go there, but hardly any are involved in our congregation - would like there to be some family events in common, more social events, to attract younger families
- We are known for our preschool ministry
- We are offering after school opportunities for the children of our members and the neighborhood
- Inclusion of Christian school and services/youth ministries
- Christian School & Youth Programs Flourish
- Youth program we have is great - needs to be expanded
- Making a difference in the lives of troubled youth/teens
- Large youth program

### Property Utilization

- Use of property
- Outdoor stage and concerts to attract the neighborhood
- The St. Paul's Games
- Skateboard paths
- We have a lot of property here - an assisted living facility right here on our property!!! Could also be partnership between our assisted living facility, our congregation, and the preschool.

### Serving Others

- We will be taking care of the less fortunate among us, we'll be known for compassion
- Services for the developmentally disabled.
- Targeted assistance for the underprivileged including food, clothing, shelter, education
- Reaching out to other congregations for community service
- Support groups for those going through difficult or confusing times - divorce, bereavement, etc.
- Community center / service
- Services for the developmentally disabled and their families.
- We would be one of the key congregations driving the effort to help lift people out of homelessness
- Doing the same things that we should have always been doing - feed the poor, clothe the naked,
- Depends on the need around us - purpose of the church is to respond to perceived needs - so we would be an organization flexible enough and faithful enough to endeavor to respond to any need around us.

- Our special needs ministry
- Ministry to those with homelessness and mental issues - how do we support those who are not willing or able to transition out of their current condition?  
There is so much distrust of the "system".
- Caring for the homeless
- Missions
- Partner with Marion County for school outreach
- Expand peanut butter and jelly
- Mission to help homeless
- Known for helping people
- Hospitality for mission growth
- Youth Vol in service
- Outreach is our passion
- We support the community, we are known for our service ethic
- We put others needs ahead of our own
- Broader embrace of the term "service" - if we're not serving in the community, what good are we? Hope this is more of a shared mindset
- More vitality and purpose in our service to the community
- As a church, we should be serving!

#### **Community Ties**

- Closer community ties as communities & neighborhoods grieve together
- Hopefully we will feel comfortable going out into the community. more people able to attend church activities.
- I heard reaching out to those close to our physical presence
- Community presence known
- St Paul's as a pillar of the community
- Expand our service to the community
- Still be a major player in the community - Trunk or Treat, draw for the neighborhood
- We are THE neighborhood church
- I think St. Paul's is known for what they do for the community

#### **Social Consciousness**

- Be more environmentally conscious
- Politicians think more about the people they are there to serve, rather than about their own political ambitions
- compassion for the young and elderly
- We are known for our integrity and the way we work together
- Take a more progressive stance on social issues such as homeless, hungry, elections, voting rights

- Speak out and speak up regarding social issues
- God has called us to do exactly what he instructed from the very start of his time here on this planet
- Conduct regular series of participative exercises where fundamental beliefs are translated into actionable steps regarding social justice issues, environmental impact and advancement of the arts

#### How We Do It

- Radically realigned resources as a local church and denomination. More emphasis culturally on what can be done in the present along with less certainty on long-range planning for churches and institutions.
- Maybe a better question is, how can we do this.
- The UMC will have split/be in the process of splitting - will allow us to utilize our human and material resources in other ways, once the decision is made.
- As we think about reaching out, we need to think about what we're reaching out WITH - what is our core?
- Congregate
- Here I am, Lord - send me
- Church bus
- Partnership/Ministry for transportation services to Sunday services
- Overcoming fears - COVID and otherwise
- Overcome our timidity and be bold! Faith over fear! In 2026 instead of Let Your Light Shine: our motto is BE BOLD!
- Hope we are all still around

Let The Light Shine



Envisioning St. Paul's Best Future

# Worship Pillar

Explore how we might refresh our worship style to help people deepen their relationship with Christ.

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- ⚡ Consider ways to incorporate a variety of worship styles in our congregational life.
- ⚡ Integrate technology effectively into the worship experience.
- ⚡ Integrate mission activities into the service, especially hands-on activities.



# Church Family Pillar

Explore ways we might expand and deepen our fellowship with each other.

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- ✦ Seek opportunities to gather for social and educational purposes
- ✦ Strengthen our ministries for Congregational Care
- ✦ Expand our understanding of church membership and learn ways to meet the needs of our virtual family to incorporate them into the life of St. Paul's

# Community Pillar

Explore how we might share our love and support with the community around us.

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- ⌚ Develop a ministry for those with special needs and their families
- ⌚ Deepen our relationship with St. Paul's Christian School
- ⌚ Expand opportunities to partner with public schools
- ⌚ Educate ourselves regarding the reality of homelessness in Ocala and consider how we might respond
- ⌚ Encourage the creative use of our property to build relationships with our community

# Next Step?

Consider how you might let the light of St. Paul's shine.

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- ⌘ Think about your interests and talents to see where you could offer your passion
- ⌘ Champion your passion by leading the effort to make it a reality
- ⌘ Prayerfully support our financial awareness campaign