

Episcopal Church of the Advent

Strategic Plan 2009-2015 – rolling forward through annual updating
Vestry Endorsement: original 9/27/08; annual update #1, 11/22/09, annual update #2, 2/7/11

Advent's Mission:

To be the very best we can be at implementing *The Great Commission* in the Northwest Valley.

Objectives and Strategies to achieve Goals and Outcomes by 2015

A Work In Progress: Committee action 1/29/09 recognizes Forum I input; Forum II input; draft of Outcomes 4/15/09; 4/19/09; 6/15/09; 8/7/09; 9/8/09; 9/29/09; 10/7/09; 2/7/11

A. Worship:

Advent's worship offerings will address varying individual needs, help those attending feel good, be motivational, and based on solid Episcopalian teachings.

OUTCOMES:

- 1) Worship opportunities will have generated increased Core and New Group attendance at Advent's religious services by 5%/year, reversing the recent trend of declining attendance.
- 2) Worship offerings will be appropriately planned, as needed, to support this Strategic Plan, specifically the Stewardship and Growth Goals.

Objectives & Strategies:

1. Continue traditional Episcopalian church services
 - a. Continue traditional high quality music offerings
 - b. Consider various types of services such as Easter Vigil and Christmas Candlelight services
2. Develop a contemporary worship offering
 - a. Assure it is provided in an appropriate location and at an appropriate time
 - b. Explore the nature of this service with families who live in the greater Surprise area
 - c. Include components such as music that attract what this Plan identifies as the New Group and creates a new sense of connection with attendees.
3. The offering of many varieties of quality music will continue to be fully integrated into all services (except at 8:00 a.m.), reflecting the joy of worship as appropriate for the type of service.

B. Pastoral Care:

Advent will bring to a higher level of integration and awareness the caring services available to meet the emotional, physical health and financial needs of parishioners

OUTCOMES:

- 1) Programs focused on the needs of the Core Group will have been provided at increased levels in the same ratio as increased membership.
- 2) New programs focused on the needs of the New Group will have been developed in relational response to their increased participation at Advent.
- 3) The greater Northwest Valley community perceives Advent as responsive to the changing pastoral care needs of families in both the Core and New Groups.

Objectives & Strategies:

1. In addition to the Rector, Advent needs to engage services equivalent to a full-time ordained assistant priest to carry out its year-round full pastoral care responsibilities.
2. The Vestry will assure the continuation of an on-going member needs feedback program.
3. Advent will assure the implementation of the following pastoral care services for Advent parishioners:
 - a. Ministering to those hospitalized
 - b. Ministering to those in hospice care
 - c. Implementation of grief groups/services
 - d. Ministering to those in need and still at home
 - e. Parish Nursing Program; defibrillator
4. Advent will study the feasibility of implementing new pastoral care opportunities such as:
 - a. Ministering to those with dependency issues
 - b. Program for those with family relationship concerns
 - d. Programs to help with financial concerns
 - e. Availability of Living Will and other legal forms, as available from the State
5. The Parish will more completely communicate the accessibility of its pastoral care programs.

C. Outreach:

Advent will become a major welcoming and religious presence in the broader community of the Northwest Valley

OUTCOMES:

- 1) Advent will have participated in 2-3 new programs, alone or in collaboration with others, that provide pastoral care to non-members.
- 2) The accumulation of outreach activities provided by the many parts of the Parish are annually reported and celebrated.

Objectives & Strategies:

1. Advent will develop pastoral care services for those outside of the Parish.
 - a. Funding will be developed to provide formal training, such as Stephen Ministry, for parishioners wishing to serve in this capacity
 - b. Services will be offered to assisted living facilities and nursing homes in the area
 - c. Advent will look for opportunities to offer these services in collaboration with other denominational caregivers/pastors in the community
 - d. Advent will explore opportunities to offer direct needs, such as assistance with food delivery, in collaboration with others
2. The Parish's Christian Education program will be aggressively promoted to the greater community; non-parishioners will be welcomed
 - a. Expand to other location(s)
 - b. Enhance the library as a significant resource about Christian information.
3. Seek input from those outside Parish membership:
 - a. Advise from other pastors, especially those with thriving churches
 - b. Feedback from Episcopalians who are not Advent members

D. Financial Stewardship (time, talent, and treasure):

Advent will achieve greater financial stability for both the short- and long-term.

OUTCOMES:

- 1) Advent's operating budget will have increased to \$500,000, reflecting the goal of 350 pledging units at \$1300 ave. pledge for a total of \$455,000 pledge income/yr.
- 2) The total of the Major Gift Funds, including new contributions and earnings, will have increased by a minimum of 10% each year.

Objectives & Strategies:

1. Short-term (current): resources that help Advent thrive
 - a. Current income will be increased through the Annual Pledge Campaign by 10% each year
 - i. The number of donors will increase by a minimum of 5%/yr. and/or
 - ii. The average contribution will increase by 5%/yr
 - b. The Annual Pledge Campaign will be based upon a year-around information and education program.
 - c. Advent will implement a year-round program that highlights and recognizes the efforts of its many volunteers.
2. Long-term (planned and deferred): resources that assure Advent's sustainability
 - a. An active Gift Planning program will result in the following increases in year-end Fund balances:
 - i. Operating reserves, 10%/yr until it is annually 15% of the operating budget
 - ii. Major Maintenance/Building Fund, 15%/yr through new contributions, retained earnings and market value
 - iii. Endowment Fund, 15%/yr through new contributions, retained earnings and market value
 - iv. Special Needs Fund
 1. The Parish will look for fundraising programs to maximize Special Needs donor opportunities.
 - b. The Gift Planning program will provide information about estate and planned giving and Advent's opportunities for these gifts to the Parish throughout the year
3. The Investment Committee will strategically invest all Funds so as to maximize long-term growth, per the Investment Policies.
4. The Parish will calendar its many fundraising activities so that they re-enforce each other and support Financial Stewardship responsibilities.
 - a. The Budget/Audit Committee will actively monitor the annual budget and recommend to the Vestry budget alterations and the source(s) of funds needed for un-budgeted items.
 - b. Special needs projects and other major fundraising needs will be coordinated through the Gift Planning Committee.

E. Facilities:

The Parish's current and future facilities and acreage will be managed and developed in accordance with this Strategic Plan and so as to present Advent as a caring, professional organization that supports a welcoming religious community

OUTCOME:

- 1) The physical site and facilities are developed and maintained in line with a Master Facilities Plan that addresses Advent's programmatic needs and reflects Parish Values.

Objectives and Strategies:

1. The Parish will prepare for, seek Diocesan funding for, and engage a professional church facility planner to consult on all development of the land and buildings and evaluate some specific needs, such as and not exclusive to:
 - c. Space for meetings
 - d. Space for socialization
 - e. The needs of the choir
 - f. A place for a Sunday School
 - g. Storage
 - h. Landscaping
 - i. Air conditioning system
 - j. Roof needs
 - k. Altar area needs
 - l. New opportunities that unfold with this Plan
2. Access to Advent's facilities and parking will be improved with acknowledgement of the needs of the handicapped; work with the planner to improve
3. The condition of the current facilities requires planning & constant attention, thus the need for an increased Major Maintenance/Building Fund
4. The determination of whether to develop a permanent labyrinth for meditation will have been made by 2012.

F. Growth:

Advent will achieve the level of growth needed to sustain this Strategic Plan. This growth will result from focusing on the religious life needs of parishioners and potential parishioners that engender Maintenance plus Mission, as identified below.

Maintenance:

Advent will enhance the sense of 'belonging' to its religious community noting the special concerns of those 55+ years of age (Core Group).

Mission:

Advent's membership will grow as it provides access, services, and programs that appeal to families and those not yet 55 yrs of age (New Group).

OUTCOMES:

- 1) Expanded recruitment & retention efforts will have increased membership by 6%/yr. (Projected household membership = 445 household units (from a base of 332)).
- 2) Advent's 3- year rolling all-inclusive marketing plan will be supported by 10% of the operating budget.

Objectives & Strategies:

1. The Growth Study Group will address how the Parish may experience growth by studying the different needs of the two demographic groups identified in Maintenance plus Mission.
2. Advent will expand its recruitment efforts to:
 - a. Encompass those in retirement communities not yet Advent parishioners.
 - b. Recognize the Parish's growth is largely dependent upon its ability to access those who live in Surprise and other communities on the other side of Grand Ave.
 - c. Evaluate which strategies of change in how the Episcopal experience occurs address the varying needs of each market.

3. Advent will strengthen the feeling and messages that convey it is open, comfortable, receptive, and encompassing.
 - a. Plan fellowship receptions following every service (except possibly the 8:00 service).
 - b. Provide multiple opportunities to gather for fun and fundraising, socialization.
 - c. Assure the highest levels of welcoming and comfort with all gatherings.
 - d. Develop a new emphasis on Newcomers programs: welcoming & embracing.

4. The Growth Study Group will research and recommend by Dec. 2011 how Advent might -- either alone or in collaboration with others -- take advantage of possible new opportunities such as:
 - e. Providing services in an off-site facility, across Grand Ave.
 - f. Programming for children
 - g. Programs for young families (see Goal C: Pastoral Care)
 - d. A Pre-and/or K-6 school (Montessori?)
 - e. Collaboration with another congregation/organization for multiple building use across Grand Ave.
 - f. A youth ministry

5. In recognition of the importance of marketing to achieving this Strategic Plan, Advent will work towards 10% of its operating budget being ear-marked to annually support a 3-year rolling Marketing Plan that includes promotion, advertising, and other related costs. This Plan will:
 - a. Be aggressive, promote Advent, and being Episcopalian
 - b. Be targeted, with various market characteristics identified
 - c. Promote all programs and services, according to the messages needed for various target markets.

6. The Parish will support this Plan with enhanced communications within the Parish (more is better!).
 - a. Develop and maintain a comprehensive website that serves as a portal for information and calendaring, engaging the many programs of the Parish.
 - b. Keep current on computer, Internet, and social media capabilities at a level appropriate for volunteer implementation with professional assistance, as needed.
 - c. Enhance specific communication techniques that will broaden the Parish's recruitment and
 1. Inform the Parish of changes and news well in advance of the event
 2. Include more Parish news items in Luminary
 3. Print and announce news items repeatedly
 4. Use a variety of forms to inform the Parish of news items, including new electronic media

- 7. No matter what changes occur to achieve growth, Advent will always be one parish, perhaps operating in two locations.**

Advent: a bridge to a better life through Christ

Advent's creative force toward the future: Maintenance plus Mission

