

University Christian Church Leadership Goals for 2018-2019

The Guidelines for UCC's Planning and Budgeting process call for the Chair of the Board of Stewards to communicate to the governance and leadership units—Elders, Deacons, Administrative Committees, Ministry Divisions and Adaptive Staff Teams—the church's goals and priorities for the coming year. The consensus of the leadership at our February 17, 2018 retreat was to continue to emphasize and build on the goals established by UCC's leadership in 2016 and 2017:

- 1) **Hospitality**: To nurture a sense of community by practicing extravagant hospitality, and by creating a welcoming and inviting campus.
- 2) **Stewardship**: To expand our scope of stewardship by developing and implementing a year-round strategy for giving.
- 3) **Communications**: To work on improved communications, both inter-community and intra-church.

Goal-setting, while important, is just the starting point. The real work is giving these goals concrete expression and formulating actionable steps that help us achieve them. All UCC's leadership units and staff have a role to play in this regard.

Hospitality: To illustrate the point, hospitality on Sunday mornings needs to start in our church parking lots where visitors stand and can literally puzzle over which of our ten entrances leads to our sanctuary. This is an opportune time to introduce oneself while showing our bewildered guests the way. Once they successfully traverse the parking lot, how they are greeted or not greeted as they enter the building speaks volumes about our church's friendliness, acceptance, and warmth. Inside, navigating our numerous halls presents our first-time visitor with yet another daunting challenge. As they hesitantly make their way to their destination, a friendly smile and an endeavor to help offer a welcomed assurance and enhances a caring atmosphere. But a successful arrival at the sanctuary can still cause confusion. Visitors may be fearful of inadvertently taking someone's "special spot." Yet an usher's offer to seat them will assure them once again that they are valued and welcomed at UCC. Thus, while hospitality is a shared responsibility at UCC, our greeters, ushers, Deacons, and Elders lead in setting that tone.

Stewardship: Implementing a year-round strategy for stewardship has been a stated goal of UCC leadership for the past two years. The Board of Stewards took a significant step toward this goal at its March 20, 2018 meeting when it approved the establishment of an additional Administrative Committee on Stewardship. The adopted mission statement for the Stewardship Committee was approved by the CLG and will be submitted to the General Assembly for its approval in May.

As described in their Mission Statement, the Stewardship Committee focuses on: "(1) being wise and faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us; (2) giving as an essential part of our lives as Christian stewards; and (3) connecting generosity with UCC's mission and ministry." Stewardship is viewed as a "comprehensive ministry working collaboratively with UCC's Endowment and Finance Committees." The committees are charged with "developing a year-

long plan and multi-year strategies that uplift the importance of wise stewardship of God's abundance, legacy giving and faithful generosity." Some of the actions and programs included in the year-round stewardship strategy are special events, personal witness, preaching, telling stories, intentional study, and regularly communicating about how the congregation is living out our Vision Statement in practical ways—"Living the good news of Jesus Christ, with open minds and loving heart."

Of the listed actions, UCC's Ministry Divisions, Administrative Committees, Adaptive Staff Teams, Elders and Deacons can play major roles in achieving Stewardship's goals by providing meaningful stories of the difference their ministries make in the lives of people. They can also hold special events, lead study groups, and provide pictures of ministry members involved in church-related activities—mission trips, workday projects, group socials, etc.

Communications: Communication is about connecting with people to share the wonderful, heartfelt and fun stories of UCC congregants and those we have impacted through social media, videos, blogs, and podcasts. Moreover, communication is foundational; the more we communicate the stories and positive experiences happening at UCC with others, the greater the excitement and energy around UCC grows. Eventually, this energy provides momentum for those who have visited us to organically share their excitement with others and enthusiastically invite others to come.

Once guests are visiting us for worship and experiencing UCC's hospitality from the parking lot to their pew seat, it is paramount that we anticipate what they will be looking for next. Most will be looking for more information about UCC, and our new Journal format, brochures and enhanced website should help guide them in their decision. When they are ready, we also must find ways for them to participate in one of UCC's many ministries and events.

Improved communications remain a significant goal for 2018, but as noted, much has already been accomplished in this area including creation of a consistent and recognized brand for UCC, enhanced publications, and a larger presence on social media through videos, blogs, and podcasts. However, there is still more that we can do, particularly with respect to intra-church communications—an area in which both staff and leadership can excel. Beyond openness and transparency, we can work at communicating our decisions more broadly and include others in the conversation before those decisions are made. Simply put, a church that is effectively communicating is vibrant and growing—a place where everyone feels connected and included.

As we begin the planning and budgeting process for the 2018-2019 program year, please reflect on this year's goals and the ways we can incorporate them into the life and ministries of our church.

Grace and Peace,

Ken Hubbell. Chair
Board of Stewards