

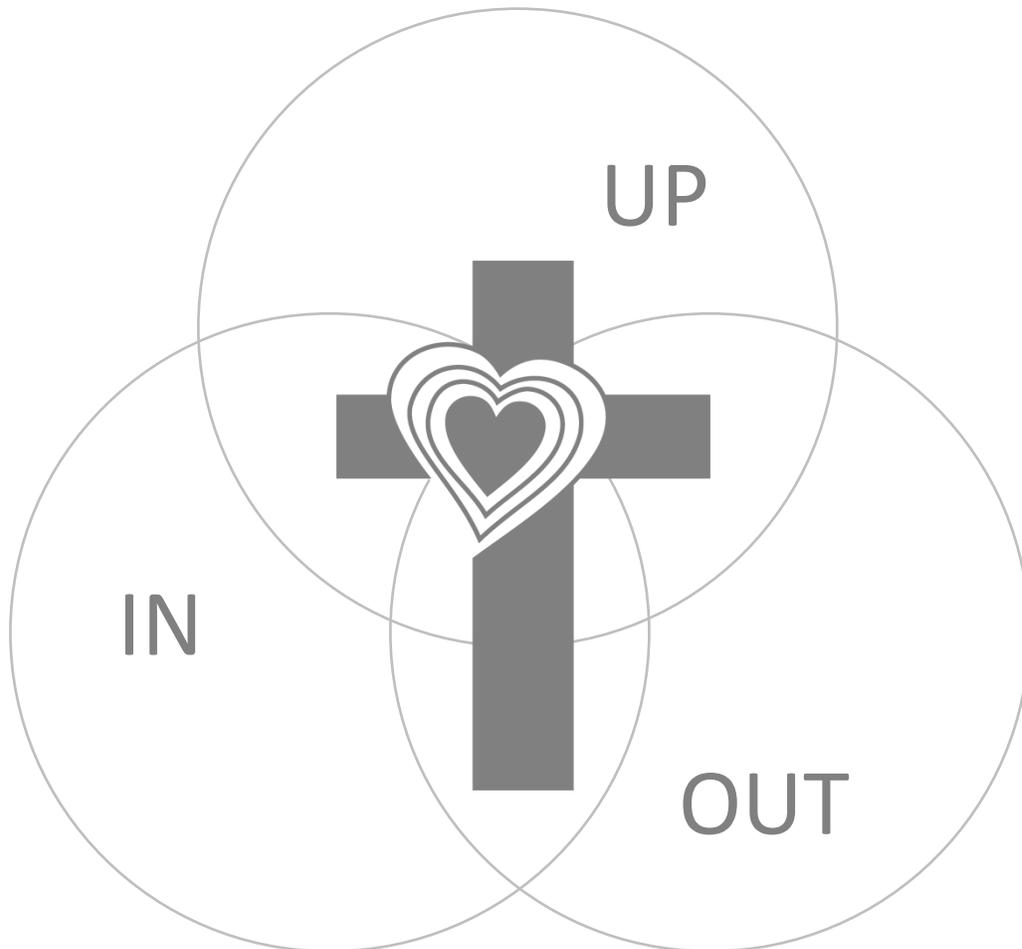


# 2016 Evaluation

## 2013 Vision and Ministry Plan

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Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church



August, 2013

# A Revised Vision and a New Plan

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Fifteen years ago NCRC was going through a similar process to the one we are undertaking now. At that time, 60% of our members were under the age of 30 and our pastor was contemplating retirement. As a congregation we determined, among other things, that we needed a Youth Director. The group that spear-headed the process was called the Ministry Evaluation Committee. Today the group is called the Visioning Team. Notice the shorter, modern, forward-looking title, a sign that times have changed and we have changed.

Every organization that wishes to stay current and effective undergoes a visioning process every five or ten years. So too in a congregation, each generation needs to re-define the way it wishes to do Christian ministry. Some ministries that used to be well supported no longer have our passion today. To be an effective volunteer you need to have passion in your heart. Different people at different times have different passions. That's OK. As long as the cause of Christ is advanced we use the gifts of the people who are able and willing to carry the torch today.

Our pastor search process began in earnest last September when the Blacketers left. As a church family, we had to look in the mirror to find out who we are, what we are doing, and why. Last December we filled out a Healthy Church Survey which asked us to look around the corner like a prophet and imagine, once again, who God is calling us to be, what God is calling us to do, and why. Based on that input, we had two Congregational Conversations in January and February. You passionately told the Team that we, as a congregation, need to combat Biblical illiteracy as well as our lukewarm devotional lives. You were also clear about the importance of enfolding members who live on the edges of our fellowship and about the urgency of training our leaders. And finally, you underlined the importance of more of us being neighbours, both locally and globally.

The Ministry Plan is represented by three circles, UPWARD, INWARD, and OUTWARD. The area of intersection, God's love for us, gives meaning and purpose to the entire plan.

It was important to keep The Plan manageable. Simplicity and integration are key ideas. It focuses our attention and resources on a few simple goals. The goals of each circle are connected and aligned with the others. Word and Deed go together. Jesus would agree. No new committees were recommended in the Ministry Plan. Hallelujah! As well, each part of the Plan will be implemented one stage at a time over a few years.

We began the process by asking for the prayers of God's people. It is our prayer that this Ministry Plan may unite us in Christ, help us grow in the knowledge of our Lord and mature in loving our neighbours as God has first loved us. And by the way, we hope that this Plan will enable our Search Team to find pastors with the right interest and skill sets!



## *Purpose and Calling*

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*of Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church*

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. Love your neighbor as yourself.

## *Vision*

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*who we are as God in Christ calls us to be*

We are Christians, expressing our faith in the Reformed tradition, growing deeper in our knowledge and experience of God's gracious steadfast love for us. Obediently and thankfully, we share his love with others.



# Core Values

*the principles that shape congregational life and practice*

## Communion with God

*We Value:*

- Reading and reflecting on the Bible
- Developing our knowledge of the Bible
- Prayer and daily devotions

### Circle 1 2016 Evaluation – out of 5

- How important to NCRC? High (5)
- How well are we living? Med (3)
- Personal ownership? Med (3)
- NCRC Ownership? Med (3)

## Fellowship with One Another

*We value:*

- Our unique God given gifts
- Inclusion and integration of all members
- Unity and fellowship among us
- Development of leadership skills
- Teaching and learning as God’s covenant people

## Loving our Neighbours

*We Value:*

- Outreach as a lifestyle
- Generous stewardship
- Identifying with and working alongside our neighbours
- The promotion of justice

### Circle 2 2016 Needs Most Attention:

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Unity & Fellowship
- 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>: Leadership, Teaching Learning

### Circle 2 2016 Evaluation – out of 5

- How important to NCRC? Med High (4)
- How important to you? High (5)
- How well NCRC living it? Med (3)
- How well are you living it? Med (3)

### Circle 3 2016 Needs Most Attention:

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Promotion Justice
- 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>: Outreach lifestyle, ID w/ Neighbours

### Circle 3 2016 Evaluation – out of 5

- How important to NCRC? High (5)
- How well are we living? Med (3)
- Personal ownership? Med (3)
- NCRC Ownership? Med (3)

# Communion with God

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*growing deeper in our knowledge and experience of God's gracious love*

## *challenge*

Commitment to personal and family Bible reading, reflection and prayer is waning. Bible literacy is declining.

## *vision*

As people loved by God, we are filled with deep desire to experience and respond to God's love. We are growing in knowledge and understanding of God's written Word, the Holy Bible.

## *goals*

By October, 2013, we will have a congregational Bible reading plan in place. Regular opportunities for learning Bible knowledge and devotional skills will be provided.

## *Action Plan*

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- Leader: Education Committee
- Tasks & Timeline
  - a. In consultation with the Pastor, Elders and Worship Committee, the Education Committee will research, develop and publish a Bible reading plan. The plan will be appropriate for various age and literacy levels, will be easily understood and followed, will have a realistic number of readings per week, and will integrate with the seasons of the church year.  
Preparation Time: July – September, 2013  
Launch: October 6, 2013  
Duration: 3 Years with option to continue.
  - b. Schedule and plan Cross Training lessons that nurture Bible reading skills, teach Bible knowledge (background and overview of current Bible books) and teach devotional practices that will help us experience God's love as revealed in the Bible.  
Dates will co-ordinate with reading plan itself.
- Integration with Congregational Life and Present Programs
  - a. Worship Services: Pastor and Worship Committee may use current scripture passages for regular and special worship services.
  - b. Home Visits: Elders may use current readings for devotions during visits.
  - c. Meetings & Events: Current readings may be used for opening devotions.
  - d. Baptism: Give Story Bible at baptism as tool for using scriptures in households with young children.

# Circle 1 – Communion with God – 2016 Evaluation Comments Summary



## 1. We REMEMBER God's Work

### a. Bible Reading Plan.

- i. We have a bible reading plan in place with many participating and finding it helpful for personal and family devotions.

### b. General.

- i. Cross training, and worship services continue to be important for our spiritual lives.
- ii. God's love and learning to know God and know about God often comes to us through other people; many in our congregation experience this by participating in small group bible studies.

## 2. We LAMENT

### a. Bible Reading Plan.

- i. The reading plan is not very visible or integrated in our everyday church life.

### b. General

- i. We are not whole heartedly living out our vision; we treat attending church as we would a social function. In general, we spend minimal time on devotional/prayer practices.
- ii. Increasing our biblical understanding and knowledge of catechism are not a priority.

## 3. We DREAM

### a. Bible Reading Plan

- i. The majority of members are participating in the (or a) bible reading plan and it becomes part of our cross training, worship and congregational life.

### b. General

- i. More members are involved in small group inter-generational Bible studies.
- ii. Any time we gather as groups or committees, we take the opportunity to study God's word together.
- iii. We are in tune with our church community because we pray with and for each other.
- iv. We have forum/opportunity to study and dialogue about difficult and controversial subjects.

# *Fellowship with One Another*



*obediently and thankfully, we share God's love with others*  
*challenges*

Much fellowship takes place within the congregation; however, we want members on the fringes to experience that fellowship also.

Although church members are willing to be leaders, training to develop and improve skills for specific roles and responsibilities is often inadequate.

## *vision*

As people loved by God, recognizing the strength of our diversity, we actively promote unity and fellowship. We nurture the unique gifts that God has given to each member for the building up of the body.

## *goals*

By January, 2014, fellowship groups which include every member of the congregation will be formed. Groups will encourage all members to attend at least two gatherings a year.

Training will be regularly provided for leadership positions in the church.

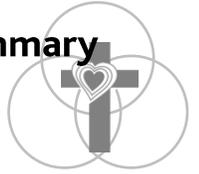
## *Action Plan 1 – Fellowship*

- **Leaders: Pastoral Council, Education Committee**
- **Tasks & Timeline - By January, 2014:**
  - a. The Pastoral Committee will re-organize all members of the congregation into elder groups which will also function as fellowship groups.
  - b. The committee will create a schedule for use of the fellowship hall by each group two times a year starting and provide a flexible outline for how the gatherings will function.
  - c. All members will be personally invited to participate.
- **Integration with Congregational Life and Current Programs**
  - a. Use existing elder group structure to create the fellowship groups.
  - b. The new NCRC Bible reading program may be used as devotional time.
  - c. Fellowship groups may choose to participate in outreach activities promoted by the deacons (See Loving our Neighbours section.)

## *Action Plan 2 – Leadership Training*

- **Leaders: Pastor/Elders/Deacons**
- **Tasks & Timeline**
  - a. Mentoring Program. Starting in the current term, match each new office bearer with a mentor elder or deacon .... Develop written guidelines ... to be ready by March, 2014 ...
  - b. Leadership Training Sessions
    1. Starting in 2013, promote elder and deacon participation at Day of Encouragement ...
    2. In the summer ..., beginning 2014, the three branches of council will research, organize and schedule (1-2) role specific leadership training sessions per year based on areas of greatest need and ... opportunities available.
    3. Admin council will plan a general cong leadership training event once per year.
  - c. Add the above tasks to each council mandate.
  - d. All committees are encouraged to participate in educational opportunities provided and to seek out leadership training specific to their comm.
  - e. Each committee is encouraged to include funds for training in their yearly budget.

## Circle 2 – Fellowship with One Another – 2016 Evaluation Comments Summary



### 1. We REMEMBER God's Work

- a. **Fellowship (re: Action Plan 1)** Fellowship groups and small group Bible studies are in place and when well attended are effective at getting members of all ages and social groups together.
- b. **Leadership Training (re: Action Plan 2)** We have had effective training for ministries such as Coffee Break, Sunday School and Youth Programs
- c. **General**
  - i. Our unity is the strongest when our community experiences tragedy and loss.
  - ii. We demonstrate and experience unity when we are using unique God given gifts together on committees or planning events like our centennial celebration.

### 2. We LAMENT

- a. **Fellowship (re: Action Plan 1)** Fellowship groups are often not well attended; there are many members not fully experiencing benefits of this fellowship.
- b. **Leadership Training (re: Action Plan 2)** We do a poor job of training professing members for leadership and have difficulty trusting leaders; as a result there are not enough people willing to step into leadership positions. This action plan has not been carried out at council level.
- c. **General**
  - i. We have been judgemental. A lack of trust and impatience with each other has sapped our participation and energy.
  - ii. We are selective in who we fellowship with so despite our increased fellowship there is still lack of unity amongst the whole group.
  - iii. In general, men are not as involved in active ministry as they could be.

### 3. We DREAM

- a. **Fellowship (re: Action Plan 1)** no specific 'dreams'
- b. **Leadership Training (re: Action Plan 2)** We develop, train and mentor leaders.
- c. **General**
  - i. All aspects of the life of our congregation are centered on God's Holy word; when we have a desire to know more about God, everything else follows.
  - ii. People with diverse views worship in harmony because we deal with issues constructively, we repent and forgive each other, and we respect one another despite our shortcomings.
  - iii. Our congregation will be a safe place to be vulnerable, where we share & are honest w/ each other.
  - iv. We encourage growth and involvement of our members before and after they have made profession of faith through improved biblically sound training.
  - v. We have guidelines in place for disagreeing in love. We practice gracious love and respect for each other. We recognize strength in diversity.
  - vi. All members have opportunity to participate in the life of the church and are encouraged to identify and use their unique gifts in service of God and each other.

# Loving our Neighbours

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*obediently and thankfully, we share God's love with others*

## Challenge

We have adopted complacent & comfortable lifestyles with limited engagement and responsibility towards our local and global communities. As a result, we have missed the heart of what it means to live as neighbors with one another.

## Vision

We show the love of Christ within our communities. We identify with and support our neighbors, both nearby and far away, through active and intentional involvement. We extend ourselves in service, engage in acts of mercy, and promote justice.

## Goals

We will learn about neighbouring. Starting in October, 2013, we will establish partnerships with 3 or 4 local and regional diaconal organizations and we will develop a global partnership with a community outside of North America.

## Action Plan

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- **Leaders: Admin Council, Deacons, Mission Committee**
- **Tasks and Timeline**
  - a) **Learning** (Admin Lead)

Schedule and plan regular Cross Training lessons before and during partnerships (see b and c)...:

    - i) Learn principles of neighbouring with the help of classical and den specialists and resources.
    - ii) Are introduced to and learn about the ministries of our partners.
    - iii) Share and celebrate our interactions with these communities.
  - b) **Local / Regional Partnerships** (Deacon Lead)
    - i) Explore mutual benefits of partnership and opportunities for service by the congregation with 3-4 local and regional organizations starting in October, 2013.
    - ii) Introduce congregation to first partner organization in Nov, 2013 & add partners ... during 2014.
    - iii) Facilitate service and outreach opportunities in that organization.
    - iv) Communicate regularly b/t organization and congregation with news, needs and opportunities.
  - c) **Global Partnership** (Mission Comm Led)
    - i) Lead the congregation in participation in the 'Global Partnership Program' facilitated by W Renew.
    - ii) For best use of resources and to allow max congregational involvement, the global community will be in Central Am.
    - iii) 2013-14 season will be used for preparation, followed by active partnership for a set period of time before re-evaluation.
- **Integration with Congregational Life and Current Programs**
  - a) Service Project Trips – Youth, YAs
  - b) Offering Schedule
  - c) Sunday School interaction and offerings
  - d) Fellowship Grps – service (local/regional)

## Circle 3 – Loving our Neighbours – 2016 Evaluation Comments Summary



### 1. We REMEMBER God's Work

#### a. Local

- i. We work co-operatively with the greater community on events such as July 1st and the Neerlandia Centennial celebration.
- ii. Many members of our congregation actively support regional (eg. CLAC, CPJ, Rehoboth, Habitat for Humanity, Mosaic Centre, church plants) and local (eg. Refugees, GEMS, Cadets, Coffee Break, services/singing in senior homes) ministries.

#### b. Global

- i. **(re: Action Plan)** Honduras Partnership is started!
- ii. We love our global neighbours by actively participating in or generously supporting CFGB growing projects, World Renew, and multiple missionaries.

#### c. General.

- i. Many members support causes that are not church or denomination affiliated.

### 2. We LAMENT

#### a. Local

- i. We lack engagement with local ministries and hesitate to work ecumenically.
- ii. **(re: Action Plan)** Our task of setting up local/regional partnerships with deacon leadership does not seem to have been carried out or has not been publicized enough.

#### b. General

- i. We lack passion for justice issues (eg. abortion/ProLife, homosexuality, transgender washrooms); in part due to disagreement within and lack of leadership from the denomination.
- ii. Societal shifts and past conflict within have caused us to be too inward focused.
- iii. We are too comfortable, busy and complacent to fully engage in local and global ministries.

### 3. We DREAM

#### a. Local

- i. We work with area churches to actively search out where there is local and regional need and do what we can to help.

#### b. General

- i. All members, using Jesus as our model, love our neighbours as ourselves. Our humble, hospitable and cheerful giving nature is evident in all circumstance and areas of life.
- ii. We are involved in justice issues, willing to interact with government on issues such as refugees, abortion, dignity for all, poverty, and hunger. We learn what biblical justice looks like and partner with organizations that promote justice.
- iii. We practice generosity (giving more) & conservation (using less) as stewards of creation.