

# Strategic Plan 2007

**Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
Cranberry Township, PA

This plan is prepared with full consideration of the input from an open congregational meeting, the guidance of council leadership, and many long hours of prayerful consideration and contribution from the Strategic Planning Committee. It is expected that this plan will be actively used as a guide for council activities in the coming months and years. It is also expected that this plan will be evaluated annually for evaluation of progress and current relevance as our world continues to change rapidly.

Respectfully submitted,

*Dave Merrick*

President, Hope Church Council  
June, 2007

## Mission

**We engage our community in worship, learning, witness and service so that the Word of God in Jesus Christ may transform lives.**

## Vision

*Consistent with the core tenants of Lutheranism, our faith journey begins and is constantly renewed through God's GRACE.*

**G**rowth ... through word and sacrament

**R**elationship ... with God, our community and the world

**A**ction ... through service and witness

**C**ommitment ... through promises to God

**E**ducation ... through life-long spiritual development

## Strategic Focus

*As we continue to be blessed by the rapid growth of both our congregation and community, it is important that we focus our collective time, talent, and treasures on those efforts that will best enable our mission today and into the future, while strengthening a foundation that will withstand challenges beyond those we can currently anticipate.*

*The following areas of strategic focus encompass the necessary range of efforts. Each is further subdivided in the subsequent sections where specific goals are also identified. Short-term and long-term term scheduling targets for all goals are captured in a timeline document that will be used to measure performance relative to the plan and should be reviewed by council on a regular basis.*

*This plan, in its entirety, should be reviewed and refreshed as least once per year to ensure continued agreement and adherence to previously identified objectives, or to make adjustments necessitated by changing conditions.*

### **Staffing/Leadership**

*A review of all relevant data suggests that Hope is understaffed, based on the size of our congregation. The ability of a single pastor to effectively manage the operational and spiritual needs of the entire congregation creates a compromising situation for the pastor. For Hope to continue operating effectively on all fronts, additional full-time pastoral staff and additional lay leadership involvement are required. Continued growth will also dictate the*

*need for additional general staff to support the activities of multiple pastors with an expanded number and complexity of programs.*

### **Services/Programming**

*The vitality of Hope can be largely measured by the fulfillment of the congregation through the use of services and engagement in programs made available to them. As we continue to grow in numbers, we also continue to shift in our needs. Ongoing identification and appropriate adjustments in services and programs supported at Hope will help ensure that the congregational needs are being met.*

### **Mission Outreach**

*We have an opportunity to touch the lives of others and are obligated to act on it. An organized focus on increasing the availability and awareness of opportunities will benefit both our congregation and our community.*

### **Facilities**

*Expanding our building capacity is quickly changing from a want to a need. Proper planning is necessary and will begin in an organized and responsible manner. Since such projects take time, other resources will be specifically focused on the immediate best use of existing facilities and management of existing and interim capital needs.*

### **Communications**

*The growth of Hope presents us with an opportunity to update the methods by which we communicate our messages, both internally and externally. The preferences of our congregation and community have changed as rapidly as the technologies of the communications industry itself. As our level of programs and services increases, we will clarify and emphasize our core message while expanding our methods to ensure that we are effectively reaching all intended recipients.*

### **Organization/Operations**

*With growth comes a continual stream of new challenges. Insuring that we have appropriate mechanisms in place for the operation of Hope will help us face these challenges with confidence. It is appropriate to update the documentation that guides Hope so it is pertinent to our current organizational structure. Overall, clarification of our structural and operational protocols will enable us to more efficiently manage the many opportunities that present themselves in the coming days and years.*

## Staffing & Leadership

*It is imperative that staff and support personnel increase in order to better meet the needs of the congregation. Additional pastoral leadership is of the utmost priority as is an increase in the number of members serving as lay leaders. As these areas are expanded, necessary support positions will be identified and filled. Proactive planning and management of all related issues will become part of the regular staffing process.*

### **Strategic Issue – Pastoral Staff**

*The need has been identified for one additional Pastor to be called as an Associate.*

**Goal #1** – Form a Call Committee for the selection of an Associate Pastor.

**Goal #2** – Call the selected Associate Pastor.

### **Strategic Issue – General Staff**

*In order to properly conduct the business and ministry of the church, it will be necessary to expand the general staff.*

**Goal #1** – Outline the need for and expenses associated with hiring additional general staff members. This would include such positions as secretarial, financial, educational, custodial and dedicated ministry staff.

**Goal #2** – Develop the implementation plan including the organization chart, specific job descriptions and expectations for each position.

**Goal #3** – Hire additional staff appropriately.

### **Strategic Issue – Lay Leadership**

*Develop training classes for lay leaders and expand the breadth of programs in which they can participate.*

**Goal #1** – Identify, develop and publicize volunteer opportunities.

**Goal #2** – Recruit lay leaders throughout the congregation.

**Goal #3** – Organize classes for the training of lay leaders.

**Goal #4** – Develop a program for current and potential Sunday School teachers so there will be members trained to facilitate transition.

### **Strategic Issue – Human Resource Management**

*It is necessary that proper staffing documentation is available for paid and volunteer leaders within the church.*

**Goal #1** – Create and maintain an annual HR calendar which encompasses details as outlined by the Senior Pastor and Church Council, i.e., annual evaluations, training, committee meeting, etc.

## Services & Programming

*It is critical that we establish ministries which provide services and programs that meet the needs of our congregation, including:*

- *Aging-in-place members*
- *Young adults and youth members in need of mentors*
- *Senior members in need of companionship*
- *Families in need of more options for involvement*
- *Demand for small group programs*

### **Strategic Issue – Worship**

*Increase access to current worship services and expand worship opportunities.*

**Goal #1** – Provide transportation options for members and non-members to services and activities.

**Goal #2** – Pursue alternate worship opportunities and the sharing of members' talents.

### **Strategic Issue – Fellowship**

*Provide positive environments to form friendships and a more cohesive congregation.*

**Goal #1** – Offer additional fellowship opportunities for the congregation, i.e., potluck dinners, informal meetings, men's group, Bible studies, etc.

### **Strategic Issue – Programs**

*Add new programs to better serve the current and future membership.*

**Goal #1** – Revamp new member program.

**Goal #2** – Implement mentoring program to include intergenerational and youth-to-older-adult programs.

**Goal #3** – Support and enhance small groups.

**Goal #4** – Expand adult education to include Lutheranism 101, Biblical authority, etc.

**Goal #5** – Increase and publicize Social Ministry opportunities.

### **Strategic Issue – Youth**

*Continue and expand support of youth programs.*

**Goal #1** – Sustain lay led 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade Kidz Klub youth program.

**Goal #2** – Enhance 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade youth programs to include mission and service opportunities.

**Goal #3** – Explore youth director as additional full/part time staff position.

**Goal #4** – Develop and implement high school youth programs.

## Mission & Outreach

*It is important that Hope has the opportunity for its congregation to participate in various forms of Mission or Outreach Programs. The youth of the congregation must become more involved in this effort. There is a need to connect with both our local community and our worldwide community.*

### **Strategic Issue – Outreach Programming**

*Outreach opportunities shall be more available to the congregation.*

**Goal #1** – Identify, develop, and implement new outreach programs.

**Goal #2** – Connect more to the larger ELCA social ministries.

### **Strategic Issue – Mission Programming**

*Mission work shall be a strong focus for our congregation.*

**Goal #1** – Identify, development and implement mission trips for the congregation.

### **Strategic Issue – Member Involvement**

*Maintain participation in outreach programs and encourage new members to become involved in activities that expand the mission and outreach of Hope.*

**Goal #1** – Expand outreach community service, local relief fund, time, talent, treasure.

**Goal #2** – Identify and implement an outreach program for inactive members.

**Goal #3** – Develop and implement a social ministry emphasizing lay visitation Stephen Ministers.

# Facilities

*There is a need to better organize square footage and storage areas. A space management plan not only needs to include the current building, but must also take into consideration the expansion plans of Hope.*

## **Strategic Issue – Space Management**

*Current space management must be reassessed.*

- Goal #1** – Reorganize storage space to better utilize of supplies and equipment.
- Goal #2** – Reorganize square footage to better accommodate furniture, equipment and all tangible goods to provide a more cohesive use of floor space.

## **Strategic Issue – Capital Asset Management**

*Facilities must be maintained in good working order.*

- Goal #1** – Establish an operational and budgetary plan to address all significant capital asset replacement and maintenance needs.

## **Strategic Issue – Capital Improvement Planning**

*It is necessary to plan for expansion of current facility capabilities.*

- Goal #1** – Proceed with raising of the Chancel in accordance with blueprint specifications.
- Goal #2** – Establish an operational and budgetary plan to address all significant capital improvement and purchase needs.

## **Strategic Issue – Expansion Planning**

*There is a strong need to begin the research of building expansion.*

- Goal #1** – Determine possible options and contingency plans for expansion.
- Goal #2** – Organize a committee that will oversee the building expansion.
- Goal #3** – Prepare feasibility studies and cost analysis.

## Communications

*It is imperative that all communication media throughout the organization are current and in good standing. We will develop and maintain effective communication systems throughout the organization. Effective = maximum reach, clarity and consistency of message, speed of delivery, ....*

### **Strategic Issue – Messaging**

*It is prudent to streamline our communications structure and provide a more consistent Hope format for communication.*

- Goal #1** – Develop Hope “theme” or “message” to be consistently integrated into all communications, including new/refreshed logo, GRACE, ....

### **Strategic Issue – Effective Communications**

*There is a strong need to update and/or revamp the current communication system in order to make it more effective. Communications with the surrounding community must be improved.*

- Goal #1** – Increase and improve comprehensive communications program(s), including, but not limited to a youth-specific e-newsletter and a Pastor’s blog, ...
- Goal #2** – Develop and implement a feedback system to evaluate our communications system within the congregation.
- Goal #3** – Publicize current services and programs to the local community more effectively.
- Goal #4** – Maintain and improve current Hope website. (Engage high school members in web site design and management project)

## Organization & Operations

*The organizational and operational policies of HOPE have been in place for many years. It is necessary to review current procedures and update them as needed in order to ensure viability of organizational structure and function of the church.*

### **Strategic Issue – Structural Clarity**

*The organizational structure of Hope must be streamlined. This will provide a more well-defined organizational structure, allowing smoother leadership transitions.*

- Goal #1** – Define job descriptions, Council ownership, and leadership responsibilities.
- Goal #2** – Review and, if necessary, revamp the structure of Church Council to better meet the current needs of the church.

### **Strategic Issue – Constitutional Currency**

*It is necessary to review the current Constitution and determine if it still meets the congregation's needs.*

- Goal #1** – Revisit and refresh, if necessary, the Constitution.

### **Strategic Issue – Financial Responsibility**

*Current assets and financial goals must be revisited and updated to better serve our congregation.*

- Goal #1** – Incorporate a Capital Asset Replacement Plan as part of the budget process.
- Goal #2** – Determine if mortgage reduction is still the primary focus of Hope.

### **Strategic Issue – Operational Rigor**

*Hope's growth demands formal documentation of operational procedures in order to make information be readily available to everyone.*

- Goal #1** – Implement a formal feedback/suggestion system to ensure better communications within the growing congregation and staff.
- Goal #2** – Develop an Operational Documents, Standard Operating Procedures and Organizational Users Manual.
- Goal #3** – Develop a Disaster Plan for both internal and external forces.

Strategic Area	Strategic Issue	Goal	Who	07Q3	07Q4	08Q1	08Q2	08Q3	08Q4	09Q1	09Q2	09Q3	09Q4	10Q1	10Q2	10Q3	10Q4
Staffing & Leadership	Pastoral staff	Form call committee	NC	@													
Staffing & Leadership	Pastoral staff	Call associate pastor	C		----	@											
Staffing & Leadership	General staff	Scope general staffing needs & expenses	C			----	@										
Staffing & Leadership	General staff	Develop staffing plan	C				----	@									
Staffing & Leadership	General staff	Hire additional staff	C					----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Staffing & Leadership	Lay leadership	ID & promote volunteer opportunities	NC	----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	----	>>>>
Staffing & Leadership	Lay leadership	Recruit lay leaders	TTC?	----	@	>>>>	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	----	@	>>>>
Staffing & Leadership	Lay leadership	Train lay leaders	NC		----			----									
Staffing & Leadership	Lay leadership	Sunday school preparedness	TTC?			----	@			----	@			----	@		
Staffing & Leadership	HR management	Create & maintain annual HR calendar	C		----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Worship	Transportation options	NC	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Worship	Alternate worship opportunities	NC				----	----	@								
Services & Programming	Fellowship	Additional fellowship opportunities	NC					----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	----	>>>>
Services & Programming	Programs	Revamp new member program	P	----	@												
Services & Programming	Programs	Mentoring program	NC					----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Programs	Support & enhance small groups	NC					----	----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Programs	Expand adult education	NC				----	@									
Services & Programming	Programs	Increase & publicize social ministries	C					----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Youth	Sustain Kidz Klub program	C	----	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Youth	Enhance 6-8th grade programs	C				----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Services & Programming	Youth	Staff youth director	C						----	----	@						
Services & Programming	Youth	Develop high school programs	C								----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Mission & Outreach	Outreach programming	ID, develop, implement outreach programs	C							----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Mission & Outreach	Outreach programming	Connect to ELCA social ministries	C				----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Mission & Outreach	Mission programming	ID, develop, implement mission programs	C	----	----	----	----	@	----	----	----	@	----	----	----	@	----
Mission & Outreach	Member involvement	Expand outreach community service	C							----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Mission & Outreach	Member involvement	Straying member outreach	C		----	@			----	@			----	@			----
Mission & Outreach	Member involvement	Stephen Ministry	C							----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Facilities	Space management	Reorganize storage space	C	----	@							----	@				
Facilities	Space management	More effective use of floor space	C		----	----	@										
Facilities	Capital asset management	Plan for asset replacements	C		2				@				@				@
Facilities	Capital improvement planning	Raise chancel	C					----	@								
Facilities	Capital improvement planning	Plan for capital improvements	C		@				@				@				@
Facilities	Expansion planning	Determine expansion options	NC	----	----	@											
Facilities	Expansion planning	Organize building committee	NC			----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Facilities	Expansion planning	Feasibility study & cost analysis	NC				----	----	----	@							
Communications	Messaging	Develop messaging strategy	NC	----	----	@											
Communications	Effective communications	Comprehensive communication program	C		----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Communications	Effective communications	Communication feedback systems	C			----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Communications	Effective communications	Publicize to local community	C			----	----	@	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>	>>>>
Communications	Effective communications	Improve Hope website	NC			----	@							----	@		
Organization & Operations	Structural clarity	Position descriptions	C	----	@							----	2				
Organization & Operations	Structural clarity	Review council restructuring	C	----	@												
Organization & Operations	Constitutional currency	Refresh constitution	NC	----	@												
Organization & Operations	Financial responsibility	Integrate asset replacement plan	C		@				@				@				@
Organization & Operations	Financial responsibility	Re-evaluate mortgage reduction focus	C	----	@												
Organization & Operations	Operational rigor	Feedback/suggestion mechanisms	NC			----	@						----	@			
Organization & Operations	Operational rigor	SOPs & organizational documentation	C		----	----	@							----	@		
Organization & Operations	Operational rigor	Develop emergency plan	NC			----	----	@				@				@	

C Predominantly council members  
 NC Predominantly non-council members  
 P Predominantly Pastoral  
 TTC Time & Talent Coordinator (proposed position)

---- Begin/Develop  
 @ Complete  
 >>>> Ongoing