

Visioning Team Report 2021

The Visioning Team was formed in October 2020. The members are Kipene Tabu, Tony Hall, Mandy Grace, Charlie Smith, Susan Saunders, Rob Backus, and Jennifer Jorgenson. Initially Pastor Elissa acted as chair of the team, but we soon contacted Rev. Claire Bamberg to work with us. She accepted this call and became our strategic planning consultant and mentor in early 2021. Our ultimate charge from the Trustees is to prepare a written, formal Strategic Plan that is able to clearly elucidate, based on research, how we believe we, as a congregation, are being called to live our faith. We were formally commissioned before the congregation and truly began our work at that point.

Our research started with soliciting wide congregational input. This was done through a series of meetings, mostly remote, but some in-person. Most of you have participated in one of these meetings. At the meetings, which consisted of up to six individuals, the same four questions were asked of each of the participants. What brought you here, why have you stayed, what is your vision for first church three to five years from now, and what do you think it will take to get from where you are today to your vision of our future. A facilitator led the meetings, and a scribe recorded the answers. We are now in the process of compiling those answers into a format for distribution to the congregation.

We have completed the congregation phase of asking these four questions except for talking with youth and New American members of the congregation. We will soon be reaching out to community groups and members to engage in a similar discussion with them. The members of those meetings will be asked questions tailored to our needs in consulting with folks who are active in the Burlington community but are not part of the congregation.

As you can imagine, the team members have devoted a great deal of time to hosting the meetings with congregation members and to meeting with each other to continue developing and implementing our plan for this team. It remains our goal to complete the strategic plan by this summer.

We are grateful to Reverend Bamberg for her devotion, skill, and guidance and to all those people in the congregation whose commitment to the visioning work will bring life to our congregation for years to come.

Sincerely,

Your Visioning Team