



Growing the Tree

A Five Year Plan for St. Luke's

St. Luke's Mission Statement, *One family in Jesus, putting faith to work in love*, challenges us to take action. In the past ten years, our five year plans have led to the Nick Finnegan Counseling Center, our Gethsemane Campus, Unbinding Your Heart small groups, The Story Houston and our most recent building expansion and renovation.

The tree in front of St. Luke's stands both broad and tall with deep roots and strong branches. Over the next five years, we hope to grow the St. Luke's tree even more. Our overall goal is increased impact for the Kingdom of God with more lives changed in more significant ways for Jesus Christ. **While past plans have called for the creation of significant new ministries, the plan for the next five years is about expanding and growing our existing ministries in three important ways:** We will **spread our branches** with a goal of average attendance of 3500. We will **increase our fruitfulness**, increasing the number of people actually engaged in doing ministry and outreach, and we will **deepen our roots**, improving infrastructure and governance and building a solid financial foundation for growth. Eight initiatives are planned to accomplish these goals:

- **Overhaul Engagement Processes** for hospitality, belonging, servanthood and leadership development. A new Lay Ministry Committee will have the responsibility of involving people in ministries to move them along their own spiritual pathways, from their first visit to developing and supporting them as leaders of others.
- **Expand Strategic Communications** for traditional worship and all of St. Luke's ministries. We will invest more resources in telling our story to the community outside of the St. Luke's family, including both advertising and social media.
- **Enlarge Outreach Ministry**, especially in the Gethsemane parish. We will significantly increase the number of St. Luke's people involved in outreach ministry and move forward on major initiatives at Gethsemane, including construction of the CONNECT Community Center, an early childhood learning center, and a jobs training program. We will provide funds through an annual generosity campaign and capital campaigns for specific partners and programs, including the Christian Community Services Center (CCSC) and CONNECT. We will develop Fellowships at Gethsemane – cultural affinity groups for African and Hispanic members with their own pastoral leadership.
- **Grow The Story Houston** as an integral part of St. Luke's mission. We have a goal of 1500 in average worship attendance at The Story Houston and will accomplish this by: Staying focused on our simple gospel message; Investing in video ministry and enhancing online presence; Adding multiple worship services including non-Sunday services; Expanding worship space to a 500 seat capacity; Adding a functional space for gathering/meeting/discipleship. We will continue to integrate The Story Houston into the rest of St. Luke's life and work.
- **Strengthen and Grow Encounter Worship Community.** We will provide consistent pastoral leadership at Encounter, enhance the musical component, and focus on increasing lay engagement of new people in the community. We will consider a second Encounter service in the years ahead.
- **Build a Strong Financial Foundation** for growing ministries. We will have a capital campaign to fully retire our debt from the parking structure and the fellowship hall renovation, expand The Story Houston facility and build our financial reserves to support our growth.
- **Improve Technology**, including a new church management system. We will research and implement a new church management system to track involvement of all our members and guests and to facilitate better metrics toward achieving our goals. In addition, we will assess all of our technology so that we can be at the forefront of the use of technology in ministry.
- **Restructure Governance** for more doing and less reporting. We will streamline our governance and turn our focus to recruiting and developing teams to do ministry. We will replace our Board of Stewards with two all-church conferences each year.

Frequently Asked Questions for Fellowship Hall Renovation

Why do we need to renovate the Fellowship Hall?

There are three primary reasons this renovation is necessary:

- The room is not in good shape right now. It is the one room in our church that is well below standards for our church.
- We want to provide excellent spaces for all of our worship communities. We have done so for traditional worship and for The Story Houston, and this would provide such a space for Encounter.
- We removed a new “Great Hall” from our last capital campaign. As a result, we need to invest in our existing space. The room is used for many purposes: Vacation Bible School, Men’s Life, funeral receptions, dinners, luncheons, outreach events, women’s ministry events, concerts and any time we need a room for more than 100 people. It is one of our most used rooms. In addition, we would like for it to be more acceptable for medium-sized wedding and funeral services.

Why do it now? Can’t we wait until another capital campaign?

In the Spring of 2016, we made a difficult decision for The Story Houston to have exclusive use of the new contemporary worship building on Sundays. We simply could not find a way to make the times work, and The Story was already growing extremely fast. We wanted to give The Story the best opportunity to continue to grow. This meant that we would not move Encounter into the new worship facility as we had advertised in the capital campaign. At that time, we committed to those who had made their contributions that we would look at a way to upgrade the worship space for Encounter. We appointed a Building Study Committee in the fall, before we even appointed the Long Range Planning Committee, and this is their recommendation.

Do we have to do all of it right now?

We considered a smaller, less expensive upgrade, including hanging acoustical clouds on the ceiling and putting acoustical materials on all the walls, but this seemed like a poor option. **If we are going to do it, we need to do it right.** We also considered a phased approach, in which we did some things now and the rest after a capital campaign, but that was going to be more expensive and would mean shutting the room down twice.

Aren’t Encounter and The Story Houston both the same kind of worship? Can’t they just combine?

No, The Story Houston has a very specific mission and target. It is to reach irreligious people in the Houston area and is far more than a style of worship. It has its own culture and discipleship and outreach approach. Encounter is a part of St. Luke’s long-standing culture, sharing Sunday School classes, small groups, outreach projects, and has the same broad target constituency as the rest of St. Luke’s, except that it is a different style of worship.

Where will Encounter worship during the renovation to Fellowship Hall?

The Encounter service will take place in the Activity Center during the renovation.

When will the project start, if passed, and how long will it take?

While nothing is finalized, the plan would likely start after the first of the year and take approximately 6 months to complete.

What is the cost of the project and how will it be funded?

The budget is currently \$1.8 million, including Audio/Visual/Lights. The amount will be added to our funding instrument for our *What If* capital campaign. This will increase our debt when all of the current capital campaign pledges are paid to approximately \$7 million. We will retire this debt in a proposed future capital campaign.

Will we be able to have Saturday evening meetings and events?

Yes! We want to enjoy this wonderful space.

Will the kitchen be included in the renovation?

There are no plans for kitchen renovation in this project. However, we will research possible models for expanded use and renovation of our kitchen for the future.

Will the stage be widened and accessible for PureSound, shows and concerts?

Yes!

What is the abatement for?

The abatement is for asbestos removal, typically found in buildings of this age.



Fellowship Hall Proposed Renovation

The Fellowship Hall Building Study Committee has been working collaboratively over the past several months. The committee is comprised of leaders from St. Luke's Executive Committee, staff, clergy, volunteers, Encounter band and Building Committee as well as Design, Acoustical, Audio/Video/Lighting, and construction consultants.

Our goal has been to bring forth a design that not only takes into account the interior of Fellowship Hall but beyond that includes the infrastructure and acoustical needs of a space that will be a multipurpose room that could welcome and host events, meetings, receptions, performances, small groups, Children's Ministry events, as well transform into a worship space for Encounter on Sundays.

New Governance Structure Proposed

As part of the plan for the next five years, the Structure sub-committee of the Long Range Planning Committee is proposing a new governance structure for St. Luke's. The purpose of the change is to move more people into ministries of "doing" on teams and fewer people on committees whose primary function is simply oversight. The specific recommendations are that St. Luke's:

- Replace our current Board of Stewards with two all-church conferences each year for the purpose of communications
- Create a new Church Council with 17 members, serving the same function as our current Executive Committee
- Create an Executive Committee of eight officers of the Church Council
- Reduce standing committees to four—Lay Leadership, Human Resources, Finance & Operations and Advancement; all have nine members
- Merge Audit Committee into Finance & Operations, merge Executive Nominating into Lay Leadership
- Replace Discipleship, Worship and Outreach Commissions with enhanced participation in ministry teams
- Involve representatives from all worship communities in governance bodies

The committee believes that these changes, consistent with United Methodist Book of Discipline, along with specific charters for each of our committees, will make volunteering at St. Luke's far more productive and increase volunteer participation across the whole life of the church. If you would like to talk more about this new structure, please contact structure subcommittee chair Vicki Keiser at vkeiser@swbell.net.

FAQ's About Our Proposed Governance Structure

Why replace the Board of Stewards?

The primary purpose of the Board of Stewards was to communicate to congregational leaders what was going on in the church. Over the years, people have looked to other means of communication to learn about church ministries. Our attendance at Board of Stewards meetings has been low and primarily weighted toward long-time members. Many Board of Stewards members have felt demotivated by being asked to serve on a board and not doing anything except hearing reports. Other church models have demonstrated that all-church conferences with specific purposes are more effective in spreading the word. We want to make each of our all-church conferences a special, high-quality event worth attending.

Does this align with the United Methodist Book of Discipline?

Yes, the "church council" model is one option for churches in the [Book of Discipline](#), and many larger churches are now using this model.

What is the difference between a team and a committee?

Committees provide oversight, resources and coordination of work others are doing. Teams are the people who are actually doing the ministry. The purpose of this adjustment to our governance is to shift our energy from populating committees to building teams.

Why are some of the committees smaller in number?

The goal is to have committees with higher levels of expectation for committee members. Smaller committees encourage committee members to take ownership of decisions that are made.

How will each of the different faith communities be included?

The lay ministry committee will ensure that we have appropriate representation from all of our communities in each committee. In addition, each faith community also has its own leadership team or teams.

GrowingTheTree6-22-17-3:00pm

Church Conference
Sunday, June 25 | 6 p.m. | Fellowship Hall

Congregation will vote on proposed renovations to Fellowship Hall and St. Luke's 5-Year plan.