

Rocky River United Methodist Church
Capital Campaign Vision Statement
Building on our Mission...Continuing our Tradition

122 years of ministering

The people of Rocky River United Methodist Church began as a congregation meeting in a school house in 1885. Since those days we have been “A Beacon for Christ on The North Coast.” That is no small feat. While many churches with a 122 year history are in decline or have died, we are strong, growing and have a bright future. Our morning worship average has grown by 22 persons to 441 in 2006 and our membership showed a positive growth of 12 in the same time frame. Since 1995 our average worship has grown from 335 to 441.

Ministering to our community

We also have a bright future because we reach out beyond ourselves to serve the needs of others. For instance, we support:

- Five hunger centers and the Cleveland Food Bank.
- Three United Methodist Missionaries,
- A mission church in Estonia
- An endowed scholarship for Africa University in Zimbabwe.
- A variety of local and city-wide mission centers including Brookside, Westside Community house and Berea Children’s Home.
- Many more examples of outreach could be cited as recipients of our time, money, and Christian love shared with God’s children.

The “most community minded church in the city”

The best illustration of our influence beyond the church walls may be the situation that took place a few years ago in Dr. Martin’s office. A couple from the community made an appointment to discuss the fact that they were setting up a charitable remainder trust with RRUMC as the beneficiary, because, as they put it, “Rocky River United Methodist Church is the most community minded church in the city.” That’s the how folks talk about us on the community grapevine – caring for the needs of those outside our own circle.

Defining our future needs

We want to keep that presence and ministry focus strong in the future. With that goal in mind, we are embarking on a bold move to insure the future will continue as bright as we have experienced it. In June of 2005, in a special Church Conference, approval was given to conduct a capital campaign for the purpose of meeting the identified needs of the congregation and as a result position ourselves for strength and growth in the future.

In 2003 the Administrative Board authorized a Facilities Study Team to review and assess current usage of the church facility. A final report was given in December of 2003 that identified four specific needs of the church. Since then the needs have been refined to the following four categories:

- Increased fellowship opportunities with additional space.
- More space for growing youth ministry and children's education including the nursery/toddler area.
- Increased worship space for multiple worship opportunities.
- Address some security concerns including nursery and pre-school security, additional lighting around the building and with a new central entrance better control as to who has access to the building.

Meeting these needs

These needs would be met in three ways.

1. A building addition that would include a large multi-purpose facility that could accommodate up to 350 persons at sit-down dinners and around 400 for other functions in rows of chairs. This facility could also be used as primary space for youth gatherings and as the location for our present contemporary worship service.
2. A central lobby/informal fellowship area would provide the central focus point for entrance and exit as well as a meeting place for the congregation from multiple services, gathering areas for refreshments and fellowship and very important to first time guests - a reception area where their questions could be easily answered. Large directional signs would help people find their way from this central location and during the week a welcome desk would provide a way for persons to be directed and access controlled from this focal point.
3. Enlarged nursery and toddler space for increased number of children.

Many opportunities of ministry

We who are part of RRUMC know that God is good and has blessed us in many ways. It is that gratitude and forward look that is directing this effort. We know from our statistical studies that in all the communities we serve there are as many as 37-40% of the residents who claim no faith involvement at all. But more than statistics, all we have to do is look at the increasing number of young families and youth who are attracted to RRUMC to know that we could have many opportunities to assist persons get in touch with their spiritual lives. Seeing the challenge, we have the opportunity to impact many lives for Christ.

A historic leap of faith

This vision is without a doubt, the greatest leap of faith God has asked this congregation to take in the last forty years. It involves raising approximately \$2.5 million dollars to invest in an additional 10,000 square foot facility that will enhance ministry for the next forty years. Some of you may never experience the full impact of what we are about to embark upon. But God is calling all of us to take the leap of faith and move forward into the bright future of mission and ministry.

The prophet Isaiah reminds us that God is “*is doing a new thing*” in our midst (Isaiah 43:19). Then he asks, “*Do you not perceive it?*” Look with me for a moment into God’s bright future as we “perceive” together the “new things” God has in store for us.

Our vision for enhanced and expanded ministries

Can you envision with this space. . .

- Hundreds of youth from the communities involved in multiple ministry options: summer work camps, a weekly youth worship service led and attended by youth, a sports ministry that involves young persons in physical fitness and spiritual growth?
- Fellowship events where we could get to know a greater number of the congregation and bring us together to just enjoy each other’s company?
- Special events and programs offered to the community that speak to the needs of young families?
- An Alpha ministry that has grown and is located in the fellowship hall?
- A small group ministry that enables people to grow in faith, life, love and mission through Bible Study, prayer and fellowship together?
- A volunteer corp. that has grown and has its annual appreciation dinner in the new facility?

- Informal fellowship that radiates from the central entrance and offers a sense of hospitality to anyone who enters the church.
- Expanded nursery and toddler facilities that accommodate the increased number of families?
- Caring ministries for older adults that compliment but do not duplicate the activities of our community Senior Adult centers?
- Informal gatherings at the coffee bar for fellowship, support and Christian witness.
- Expanded mission options that include adult and intergenerational work camps, more local “hands on” opportunities, a tutoring ministry to area youth and adults?

We have the opportunity to help set the course of the church into the future and to strengthen our mission and ministry. It is an honor to be part of the church at this juncture of its history. *Building on our Mission... Continuing our Tradition* keeps the two-fold emphasis that has kept Rocky River United Methodist Church such a strong and vital influence to the present day. Our prayerful dedication and commitment to this effort can chart the course of this church for many years into the future.