



**Key Initiatives Overview**  
**2005**

Saint Nicholas Lutheran Church  
Huntingtown, Maryland

Prepared for: 2005 Church Council and Ministry Sponsors  
Date: December, 2004

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## **Reading this Document**

Before you begin to read that which follows, please take a moment for prayer. Pray for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit. Pray that the Spirit would grant you good discernment, clarity of thought, and a sense of God's leading at Saint Nicholas. May God bless you richly with peace and contentment through prayer.

You will note that the graphic placed on the cover of this document is the one used for our capital campaign underway. We do, indeed, continue our building on faith as God's Spirit guides and guards us. We claim God's faithfulness.

As you read through this document, please do so particularly with the following in mind. *First*, consider the points presented within the current state of ministry at Saint Nicholas (e.g., what are the current strengths and weaknesses of the overall ministry). *Second*, consider the points presented in light of your particular area of ministry. Would a particular initiative provide a strong enhancement to the ministry area? Is there good synergy between the initiatives within the framework of a particular area of ministry? *Third*, please consider how a particular initiative – or the initiatives taken as a whole – enhances our being in ministry together.

## **Guiding Principle**

As always, may all that we seek to do be under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit that calls us and strengthens us to the blessed task of proclaiming God's Good News of salvation from death to new life through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Redeemer.

## **Congregational Mission**

*“Growing and empowering disciples of Jesus Christ for the work of God's ministries in the world.”*

## **Introduction**

We are called and blessed as children of God to be involved in the world in a positive and affirming manner. As disciples of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we are to follow him in the way of the Cross; a way that is based on self-sacrifice and humility. This translates in a variety of ways, but chiefly in the daily surrender of our will to that of God's will: that all would come to know the saving love of God through Jesus Christ. Thus the Holy Spirit challenges us to constantly discern together our active involvement as leaders and otherwise in the church. This document seeks to serve as an avenue available for us to be in continuing dialogue about the specific work to which God's Spirit is calling us.

## **Document Purpose**

The intent of this document is to provide an *overview* of the key initiatives for 2005 that are either underway currently within the parish or are before the leadership for continued discussion and consideration. There are, in fact, many activities in process at Saint Nicholas that do not make this list. They are all considered important to the work that God calls us. However, those listed below are considered to be significant undertakings that could impact a variety of ministries, and/or require significant commitment on the part of the congregation.

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## Key Initiatives (in no particular order)

### Maintaining Quality Pastoral Care

- **Expanding Need**
  - Requests for pastoral care increase with congregation growth.
  - Unexpected crises bring significant degree of additional demand.
  - While the most critical needs are addressed first, even critical care issues may not all be addressed as well as desired when they occur at the same time.
  - Vicar interns cannot provide the broad range of pastoral care and oversight that is required with a growing and diverse congregation.
  - Value for youth-oriented pastoral contact increases with burgeoning child population. [See next item]
- **Solution -- Calling an Associate Pastor**
  - To serve caring for youth as well as pastoral care support, we seek to call a youth pastor.
  - Process:
    - Agreement that an associate pastor is needed. [Council has affirmed this after leadership retreat consideration.]
    - Contact with the ELCA's synod office that begins the dialogue for the call process.
    - Establishment of a "Call Team" that is representative of the congregation and is charged with the task of eventually recommending to Council a candidate for call.
    - Receiving candidate profiles from the synod office for consideration.
    - Interview process of potential candidates.
    - The Call Team recommends a candidate to Council who in turn recommends the candidate to the congregation for vote.
  - While calling an associate pastor typically takes a year, we aim to bring in an associate pastor by the start of school year, Fall, 2005.

### Caring for Youth

- **The Need (as expressed in Key Initiatives Overview - 2004)**
  - We are being blessed with many youth in our congregation, at all ages.
    - The youth of the church are its future.
  - We want our youth to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, who shows God's love clearly and unconditionally.
  - We are called by our Lord to be active in helping our youth grow in their Christian faith and practice. This involves providing the environment and leadership that facilitates, encourages, and affirms the involvement of our youth in the various ministries to which God calls us.

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- The document entitled, “Responsibility and Commitment: Youth Involvement” presents these issues.
  - Family life today is hectic and demanding.
    - Families are busy with school activities, sports, etc. There are great demands placed on their time. The most attractive and beneficial programs for their children will be selected.
    - Families want their children to be involved in church activities that are edifying for their children and fun. They want (and need) their time to be spent well.
  - **Solution – Youth Leadership**
    - The aim of providing thoughtful and coordinated planning for youth activities and involvement was first served by hiring a part time youth leader.
    - Youth teams coordinator and team leader volunteers were found.
    - A youth pastor (See associate pastor discussion above) may bring more training and dedicated time to the opportunities of youth ministry.

### **Enriching Our Music Program**

- **The Need**
  - We continue to be blessed with wonderful leadership in various parts of our music programming.
  - Our Sing & Rejoice Team is lead by an interim leader who seeks to provide basic planning, practice, and direction on Sunday mornings. Increased attendance shows that worship leadership has been successful. This team does still seek a strongly trained music leader.
  - Also, we miss
    - Children’s music programming
    - Coordinated instrumental music programming (e.g., bell or chime choir)
    - A person, other than the pastor, who is aware of our overall music planning process..
- **Solution -- Director of Music**
  - It is reasonable to expect that we will be called to plan for and hire a (initially, part-time) director of music within the next two years.
  - The director of music will be responsible for providing overall leadership for music programming for all services of worship.
    - It is expected also that the director will identify, develop, and incorporate into our worship services a diverse range of musical and vocal talents (e.g., Chancel Choir, Requiem Choir, Chime/Bell Choir, musical quartets, soloists, children’s choir, broadened musical team for Sing & Rejoice, varied worship liturgies).
    - The director will also provide musical leadership for the Sing & Rejoice service as this service continues to grow in attendance.

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## Infant Care Ministry

- **The Need**
  - There is a severe shortage of available infant care in Calvert County. This outreach ministry would provide working parents with a safe and welcoming environment for the care of their infant and/or toddler.
  - Framed as a “*Triangle of Care*” in conjunction with Plum Point Elementary and Middle Schools.
- **Solution – Renewed Effort**
  - Partner with the building team to include infant day care operation codes in the North Wing Plan.
  - Plan for target date after opening of North Wing. Additional investigation is underway regarding liabilities and staffing requirements.
  - This would be a fee-based, not-for-profit endeavor offered for children aged 0 to 2 years. Meeting state mandates, the care-giver ratio is one adult for every three infants.

## Building of the North Wing

- **The Need**
  - This initiative is underway. A capital campaign has prompted pledges of over a half million dollars to build a North Wing.
  - The North Wing will serve as a multi-ministry facility.
  - The need for the North Wing is predicated on growth in membership, expansion of ministry activities, and requirement for additional under-roof ministry space.
    - Continuing assessment underscores the risk of building a facility that is too small to serve our current Sunday School and other ministry needs.
- **Solution – Continued Planning Effort**
  - Engage congregation in reviewing building plans drawn from requirements provided to architect.
  - Refine plans.
  - Follow through with construction, targeting completion in 2006.

## Strengthening Fellowship Opportunities

- **The Need**
  - As Saint Nicholas continues to grow it becomes more difficult for connections to be made and relationships established and nurtured. That fellowship is valuable to drawing us together for sharing our ministries.

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- Many members join for the fellowship and some express disappointment in how that need is later met.
  - **Solutions –**
    - Foster interest or affinity groups driven by individual member interests, leading to activities that are shared by members and God-honoring.
    - Offer new adult-age classes, forums, or activities.
    - Investigate new ways to welcome and engage new members in the “family” after joining.

### **Future Initiatives**

Of significance are the following areas for future ministry growth. They continue to be on the horizon, yet are not a key focus for 2005. Please continue to be mindful of their potential development and their impact on our congregation.

- **Stephen Ministry.** Specially trained lay leaders provide confidential assistance and help in times of need for members as an adjunct to pastoral care and under the pastor’s coordination/direction. This ministry is a blessing for both our pastoral leaders and the members who are its direct beneficiaries.
- **Small group ministries.** Trained “coaches” participate within the group of approximately 8 adults, providing an opportunity for fellowship in which participants can establish and develop relationships to a greater depth. Sharing life events and challenges, Bible study and reflection, prayer and general fellowship, caring for each other during difficult times are just some aspects of this broad based ministry.
- **A Southern Calvert County Ministry,** or “South Campus” as it has been referred to previously. We continue to grow our membership in the south county and across the bridge. A 20+ mile drive becomes a considerable barrier for many. This ministry would require additional pastoral staff, physical space in the Lusby/Solomons area for worship, Christian education, and ministry, and considerable advance planning at the local, synodical, and national levels.