

**Next Steps Toward Vital Congregations  
Charge Conference 2014**

*“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever!”*  
Hebrews 13:8 (CEB)

Each of us is blessed to have a specific corner of the world to join God in vital ministry. The lay leader and pastor are asked to engage members of the congregation in responding to the following four questions. Please draw on your Vital Signs data to assist you in responding to the questions below. Be specific and attach your answers to this form. After answering these questions for charge conference, continue to reflect upon your responses and how you will implement the next steps toward a more vital church. Thank you for your diligence in completing the Vital Signs data each week. This information is helpful as each congregation engages in self-analysis and envisions the future.

1. As we think about the future growth and vitality of our congregation,  
**who are we as a church now?**

Since our 2004 relocation, First Farragut UMC has experienced a time of pruning or darkness. We are now a church that is coming out of that time with a renewed vision and purpose. John Brewster played a critical role in stabilizing our congregation; Amy Probst has led us out of that time of darkness and into new life.

2. As we think about the future growth and vitality of our congregation,  
**what is our purpose now?**

Our vision statement, developed earlier this year, explains our purpose: *God desires FFUMC to be an intentional, vibrant, growing faith community transformed through prayer, scripture, worship, and study. God wants us to make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors and each other as we invite, accept, connect, serve, and share the love of Christ.*

We make disciples by developing the inner life with God (described in the first sentence of our vision statement) and taking it out into the world (the second sentence of our vision statement). James Harnish, former pastor of Hyde Park UMC in Tampa, describes this as “breathing in holiness and breathing out mercy and justice.”

3. As we think about the future growth and vitality of our congregation,  
**who is our neighbor now?**

Although we draw from a larger area, our immediate neighbors are south of the interstate, west of Concord UMC and stretching into parts of Lenoir City/Loudon County. Through our mission efforts, we serve neighbors throughout the Holston Conference and in other areas served by the global UMC.

4. As we think about the future growth and vitality of our congregation, **what is our next step now in the following areas:**

- Offering inviting and inspiring worship?
- Inviting persons into new and deeper relationships with Jesus Christ?
- Engaging and connecting the local church/disciples in mission and outreach?
- Equipping and inspiring more effective pastoral and lay leadership?
- Developing small groups that focus upon children's ministry, youth ministry, and other small groups?
- Assisting disciples/members in generous giving for missional needs local and worldwide?

FFUMC continues to offer both traditional and contemporary worship and will work to make it more relevant and experiential in the coming year. Our Inviting Team offers events for our immediate neighbors (Trunk or Treat, Breakfast with Santa, Blessing of the Animals, etc.), and we follow up with those who attend. Our church is open to groups including Family Promise, National Alliance on Mental Illness, and Scouts. We invite persons into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through small groups. These groups help grow our family life ministries, youth ministry, and other groups. Our Nominating and Leadership Development Committee works to develop our lay leadership. Our Serving Team support a countless number of ministries including mobile food pantries, Wesley's Attic (children's clothing ministry), FISH, and many others. First Farragut UMC works toward good stewardship in all areas of life and will address debt reduction again this winter.

Date: November 30, 2014

Church: First Farragut United Methodist

Pastor: Rev. Amy Rollins Probst

Lay Leader(s): Renni Morris and Jason Yarbrough

Others Who Participated in the Preparation of This Action Plan: