



# Mission Study Report

June 27, 2018

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# Concord Mission Study Report

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## I. Introduction by the interim pastor

Welcome to Concord Presbyterian Church! You are about to read a Mission Study that is significantly different than ones you may have read before. This church is not waiting for a new pastor to come in order to listen for God's leading and to move in new and exciting directions. They are looking for a pastor with vision who will walk alongside them in work that is already underway. I would like to give you a little background on the work that has been done.

It was the end of a long and intense Elder, Deacon and staff retreat in January. We had been very honest in lifting up the strengths and challenges that faced Concord in this interim time. Everyone recognized the strengths of our staff, the excellence of our worship and music, the strength of Christian Education. Our vibrant preschool is a strong mission.

We also recognized that our mission and outreach had stalled, that we did not have adequate means of communication between all committees and that other areas of church focus were "tired". There was still grief over what Lynn Horan's departure meant to Concord. Most had gotten over the shock of Lynn's unexpected leave-taking, but not over the loss of the hopes and dreams attached to her ministry. There was anxiety over what an additional interim period would do for the overall health of the church. Lynn had only begun to put in place some of her vision when she left.

Therefore, we came together to pray and to read Scripture and to listen to God for God's leading of Concord at this place and time. We knew that we needed to find a way forward to address some of these issues right now. Concord could not afford to wait for a new pastor to come to address its pressing concerns. The mission team structure that had been put in place only a year previously was not cohesive and that there were some serious gaps in the work of Concord Presbyterian Church.

It was decided at that meeting to appoint a group of dedicated Concord members to go back to very basics. Concord needed to move beyond what the Presbytery would require for a Mission Study. This 'initiative' would be a place to truly engage in spiritual discernment for the future of Concord Presbyterian Church. I am trained as a spiritual director as well as an interim pastor, so we decided to use a spiritual direction approach to this work.

Al Lund and Carley Twilley would represent Session and Sally Coulson and John Barineau would represent Deacons. The initiative also drew on the strengths of Raven and Steve Studer, Kay Jewett and Liz Rowe. We met together for two hours every Monday evening for a period of twelve weeks.

What you have before you is the result of that intense prayerful reflection. It is both analysis of where Concord is at present, and a way forward that does not depend on pastor initiative. It does depend on a 'collaborative ministry' that requires true oversight by the Session and

Deacons. It does not require as much oversight by staff. It is a process we can begin now and can continue without interruption when a new pastor is installed.

The Mission Initiative is a deep dive into how God is calling Concord, based on the gifts and skills that are already present. It is, as Fred Buechner would say the, “place where your deep hunger meets the world’s deep need”. Therefore, it is a document of hope.

I pray you find this work to be part of your discernment as you listen to God’s leading for our next call.

In Christ,

Rev. Elizabeth Lyman  
Interim Pastor  
Concord Presbyterian Church  
June 25, 2018

## II. Mission Initiative

### A. Purpose and approach to the mission Initiative

Initiative Purpose: Discern God’s yearning for Concord and propose a missional direction and priorities for the congregation consistent with the leadership of the Holy Spirit and Concord’s gifts.

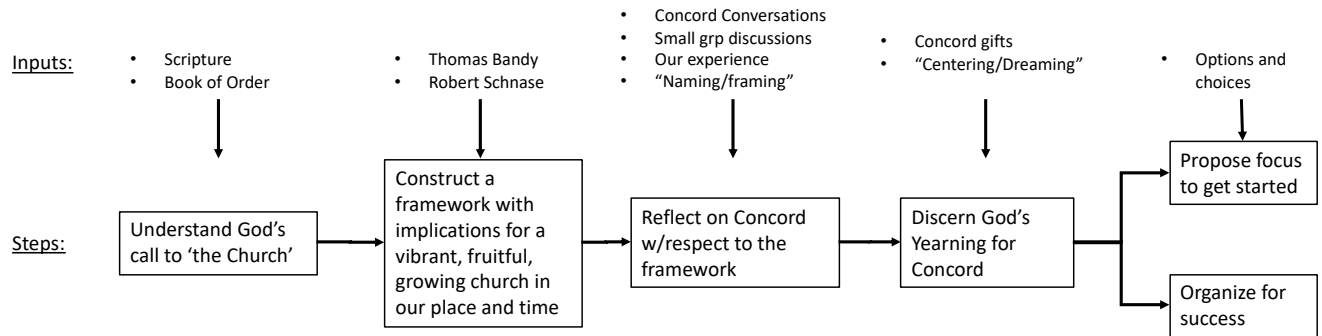
#### Who and When:

- Nine of us met 2 hrs, once a week for 12 weeks in March-May 2018
- Rev. Elizabeth Lyman, Carly Twilley, Liz Rowe, John Barineau, Kay Jewett, Sally Coulson, Raven & Steve Studer, Al Lund

How: We started each meeting with a short worship and were guided in the process by the book, Listen for God’s Leading: A workbook for Corporate Discernment by Valerie K. Isenhower and Judith A. Todd, Upper Room Books. It was useful as it:

- Refocused us on God’s call and guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Helped us let go of preconceived ideas/past, personal issues
- Encouraged patience to listen to each other
- Provided a common terminology for the team

## Initiative Road Map:



## B. God's Mission and a collaborative ministry framework

### God's Mission:

In order to ground ourselves on the biblical basis of the church, we studied several scripture passages and the summary of God's call to the church as interpreted in the Presbyterian Book of Order. The following is what we called God's 'Big Picture' for the church.

*"The triune God creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and all people, bringing the Good News to all who are impoverished, sight to all who are blind, freedom to all who are oppressed, and proclaiming the Lord's favor upon all creation. In Christ, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God's love, offering to all people the grace of God and calling all people to discipleship in Christ." Presbyterian Book of Order (2017-2019. F-1.01)*

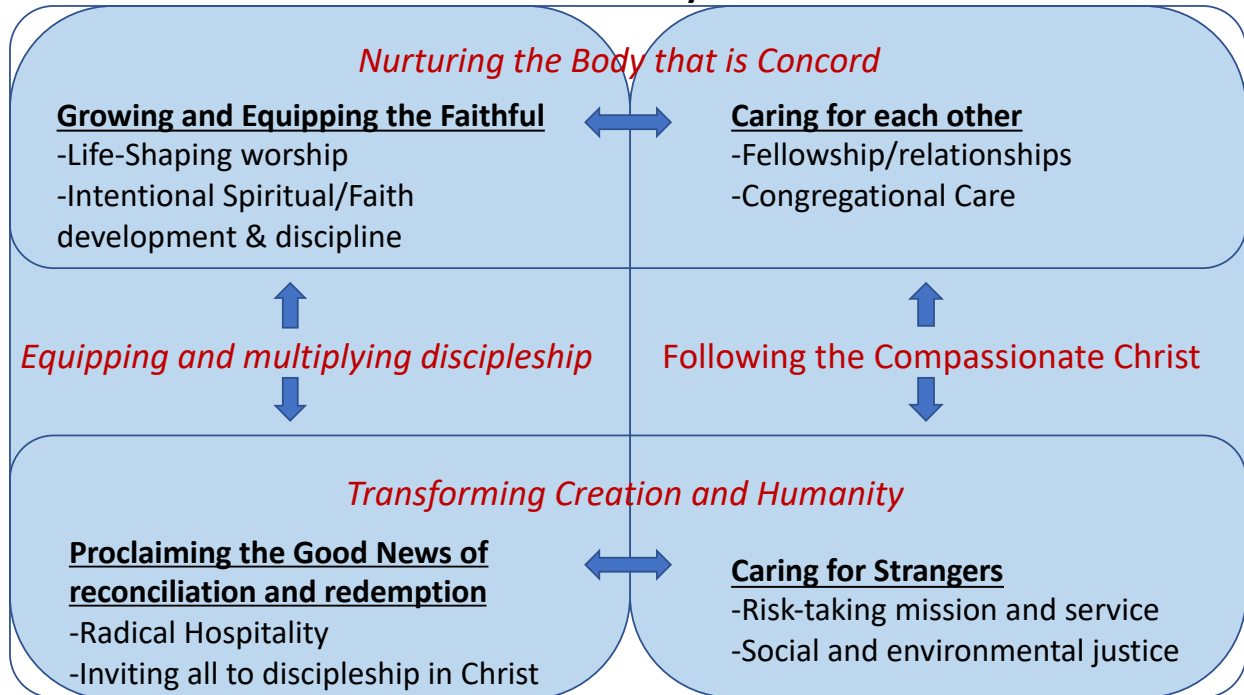
From this and other passages it is clear that the church is to 1) reach out and minister to all people in need and 2) help transform creation and humanity by proclaiming the good news and inviting all to discipleship. The emphasis is on an outward focus on others rather than an internal focus on congregations.

### Definition of a vibrant, fruitful, growing Church:

We studied two reference books by respected consultants on the characteristics and practices of successful and growing churches in 21<sup>st</sup> century North America: 95 Questions to Shape the Future of Your Church, Thomas G. Bandy, Abingdon Press and Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations, Robert Schnase, Abingdon Press. These two authors present perspectives on translating God's 'Big Picture' Mission into approaches that seem to be working in our post-secular society today.

Based on these texts we constructed a composite Collaborative Ministry Framework for a vibrant, fruitful and growing church to use as a reference for assessing where we are at Concord versus this ideal and to stimulate our thinking on the possibilities for our future.

## Collaborative Ministry Framework



In this framework, the ministry of the church is broken down into four, key elements within which we placed the characteristics and practices of fruitful congregations.

Life-shaping worship refers to worship that is pragmatic and purposeful. Not just about praising God, but about doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with the Lord. The objective is inspiration, motivating faithful people to do the right thing, live more Christ-like, and share the joy. ‘Good worship’ is any worship design that accomplishes that. Congregations with life-shaping worship come to worship with open hearts, expecting something important to happen to them today rather than coming with an attitude of evaluating the quality of the elements of the service.

Intentional spiritual and faith formation and development involves high-quality learning opportunities specifically designed to nurture the development of faith in all congregants no matter where they are in their faith journey. It takes advantage of mentors, bible study, and hands-on service. It is not about gaining biblical knowledge so much as cultivating in us the ‘fruits of the Spirit’ of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These spiritual qualities are relational and we only learn them in the presence of others.

Worship and faith development together are about developing the spiritual basis and motivation for Christian discipleship over time and thus equips the faithful for the work of God’s mission.

Caring for each other through fellowship and congregational care builds and solidifies the church community and develops a familial intimacy which is required for sharing our lives in Christ. It creates the personal support and camaraderie required to be effective in carrying out God's mission.

We note that these top two boxes, Growing and Equipping the Faithful and Caring for Each Other, are mostly internally focused on the congregation and serve to nurture the faith community so that it can be an effective force for God's purpose. We also observe that this internal focus on church community and faith development, while essential, does not by itself advance God's 'Big Picture' mission of ministering to all in need and transforming the world. For that, we must embrace the ideas in the bottom two boxes.

Risk-taking mission and service flows naturally and inescapably from the teachings of Jesus Christ. Ordinary Christian service (ushering, serving communion, serving on a board, etc.) is about making ourselves useful and building the Body of Christ. Mission turns service outward reminding congregations that Christ's compassion, grace, mercy and love extend to the entire world. Mission changes the lives of recipients as they get to experience God's love and grace through the volunteers. Hands-on mission changes the lives of volunteers, altering attitudes and assumptions about strangers. Risk-Taking Mission steps into greater uncertainty, a higher possibility of discomfort, resistance, or sacrifice. People naturally love those that love them. The stretch of discipleship is to love those for whom it is not automatic, easy, common, or accepted, to love those that do not look like us, think like us, or live like us and to express respect, compassion, and mercy to those we do not know and who may never repay us in kind. Schnase asserts that Risk-Taking Mission is one of the fundamental activities of church life that is so critical that failure to practice it in some form results in a deterioration of the church's vitality and ability to make disciples of Jesus Christ! No matter how well you care for the congregation, turn inward with time and resources and spiritual vitality wanes.

Radical Hospitality is more than being friendly and welcoming. It comes from a restlessness, calling, and a responsibility to pray, plan and work to invite others. It focuses more on the stranger than on the congregation. It is achieved when members offer the utmost of themselves, their creativity, their abilities, and their energy to offer the gracious invitation and reception of Christ to others. Radical hospitality looks at every aspect of congregational life through the eyes of a stranger and seeks to adjust attitudes, practices, and values to make every interaction with a stranger a demonstration of God's love and acceptance.

Proclaiming the good news and inviting all to discipleship in Christ meets with special challenges in our culture. Media advertising is not very effective. Door-to-door visitation is unwelcome, people are wary of others. Successful invitations to discipleship extend the church attitude of radical hospitality to designing programs that speak to the life issues of the community and ministry opportunities that appeal to strangers. Creating acquaintances between church members and strangers in which church members model Christ's love and acceptance can afford opportunities for meaningful conversations. Growing and deploying

laity to interact with seekers is not easy or automatic, but requires spiritual discipline and a commitment to personal mission.

So, the bottom two boxes on the framework are externally focused and directly linked to God's 'Big Picture' mission. It may also be helpful to notice that the left two boxes have a shared theme of equipping and multiplying disciples. Bandy talks about activities focused on integrating these two areas as a 'discipling process'. Likewise, the right two boxes share a common theme of following the Compassionate Christ. Loving and caring for members and strangers gives church members the opportunity to practice Christ-like compassion, which further cultivates in us the fruits of the spirit and matures our faith.

Finally, we have observed, that as helpful as this framework is in dissecting church ministry into its elements for organizing our discussions, the power of the church is best revealed when we begin to see how the elements and their individual purposes and practices are integrated into ministerial themes that link, for example, worship and spiritual development with mission, or mission with hospitality and inviting. It seems clear that this requires that Christians work together to be successful and thus we named this model of a vibrant, fruitful church the "Collaborative Ministry Framework".

### C. Concord and the collaborative ministry framework

The next step in our process was to do an informal assessment of Concord's strengths and challenges or opportunities mapped onto the framework for vibrant, fruitful, and growing churches. Our notes from those sessions are shown below, but overall it is clear that Concord has some of the desired characteristics and practices in place. In some cases, we have lost the thread of why we do certain things, getting focused on tasks and activities rather than our purpose, and therefore fail to inspire or maximize our effectiveness. In some cases, small changes or focus could make a big difference. And in some areas, it may require further development of ourselves to better carry out God's Mission.

#### ***Life Changing Worship***

##### Concord Strengths:

- Music – strong choir; special guests; range of music; Concord Concert Series
- Creativity – traditional services with a variety of creative and contemporary elements such as music or dance
- Worship Service – scripture-based, well-coordinated, high-quality, consistent. Strong worship connection between sermon, music, liturgy and children's sermon
- Friendly & welcoming congregation
- Children's Involvement – children are welcomed and included in worship; they are a valued part of the congregation; weekly children's sermon; opportunities to participate in worship as part of the children's choir or as acolytes or ushers

##### Concord Challenges & Opportunities:

- Only one worship service (maybe provide another worship option 2x per month?)



- Need more accessibility to services via media/technology/audio/video options
- Offer more Bible study opportunities
- Need to cultivate our messages of personal ministry and mission more effectively
- Improve disabled to other parts of the building from the Sanctuary

### ***Spiritual and Faith Formation and Development***

#### Concord Strengths:

- Adult Sunday School
- Children’s Sunday School/Youth Group
- Mug & Muffin
- Lenten Study/Lunch & Learn opportunities
- Acceptance of diverse views/populations; non-judgmental; welcoming
- Deep caring for one another

#### Concord Challenges & Opportunities

- Limited opportunities to worship
- Worship not necessarily a “transformative” experience
- Spirituality not held up as a priority – more talk around mission/current events than personal spiritual development
- Not comfortable speaking to others with “self-witness” spiritual language
- Need to mentor/share with each other more about personal spiritual development and faith journeys

### ***Caring for Each Other***

#### Concord Strengths:

- Mug & Muffin – opportunities to share personal beliefs/experiences
- Concord Connects – genuine time of fellowship
- Informal network of support for others especially shut-ins

#### Concord Challenges & Opportunities:

- Need more fellowship opportunities – especially intergenerational events
- Support for members/shut-ins is informal so sometimes people fall through the cracks
- Need to help people build more personal confidence so they can do more congregational care – needs to come naturally and not feel like a task
- Offer more opportunities to support local families in the community
- Make sure Pastor and staff are recognized appropriately for their work/dedication
- \*\*\*Deacons are currently working on how to better build relationships with those members of the congregation that need care so it is not all left to the pastor/associate.

### ***Caring for Strangers***

#### Concord Strengths:

- Welcoming/Inclusive congregation
- Mission work is the soul of Concord
- Mission outreach is consistent to Friendship House/Emmanuel Dining Room/Seamen's Center, etc.

Concord Challenges & Opportunities:

- Provide alternative mission opportunities (short term projects) that include all ages to provide more fellowship between our members while also connecting mission projects as a way to 'live out our faith'
- Better connect with young families from the preschool and members of the Fairfax community
- Partner with other organizations for mission work to gain more diversity/cross-cultural experiences
- Cultivate more mission leadership and share more personal stories with the congregation
- Provide social work support and/or resources for members and needs in the local community
- Be willing to take risks beyond our current comfort zone

***Inviting all to Discipleship***

Invitation to mission through doing good works – attracting people to discipleship

Concord Strengths:

- Welcoming visitors – we are known for our friendliness and welcoming nature
- Concord Connects – time of strong fellowship after worship that members enjoy
- Concord Concert Series – Quality and execution of the Messiah and other special concerts is done very well and receptions offer time for fellowship

Concord Challenges & Opportunities:

- Learn about the notion of "Radical Hospitality" -- more than friendliness, what can we do for YOU?
- Need to take our welcoming nature OUTSIDE the church walls (we do well with visitors that come through the door on their own – but need more follow-up with them)
- Need more meaningful outreach and relevant mission projects that connect us to the local community as well as more ways of communicating with them
- Develop stronger spiritual mentoring relationships between members
- Offer additional spiritual retreats/events
- Close the loop on the CCS events to get those visitors to come back more often – make better use of time for meaningful conversation during fellowship/receptions
- Better follow-up after major worship services (Christmas and Easter)

**Notes:**

- Life changing worship is about motivating people to go DO...starts from the pulpit

- Holy Indifference - If we only focus on what WE want...Do we miss what GOD wants? how does that serve others?
- Intellectually we know we WANT to be inclusive/diverse...but what are we missing? How do we serve the STRANGER over the member?
- How do we become a MISSION-DRIVEN church as opposed to a MAINTENANCE-DRIVEN church?
- Financial committee is concerned about Concord's survival through money/investments...but can we be good stewards and also be willing to take risks for mission purposes?
- Our history is of being mission-driven but we need to revitalize our leadership in that area

### ***Concord as a person metaphor***

Based on our reflections about Concord, we did an exercise aimed at helping us further describe who we are as a congregation and how we as Concord are perceived at least by the team members. The exercise challenged us to describe Concord as if it were a person. The following is a sort of composite description you may find interesting.

*Concord is a white, middle-aged, upper middle-class person with graying or thinning hair and looking a bit frazzled. This person is generous, warm, friendly, helpful, well educated, and musically talented. This person has a strong faith and life experience, but is introverted and reserved in sharing that journey. He/she has a mature, realistic commitment, good leadership qualities, and has financial resources managed for conservation and longevity not risk-taking. He/she is analytical but comfortable with low-tech means of sharing and processing information. The Presbyterian 'Decently and in order' ethos has developed into a strong sense of organization, fairness, playing by the rules, and a certain resistance to change. This person tends to assume everyone knows the rules and may not perceive the danger of inadvertent exclusion when that assumption is not true. He/she has a touch of midlife crisis, mourns the loss of youth, is nervous about retirement, suffers angst about the younger generation, and approaches the future with equal parts optimism and pessimism, excitement and fear. After many years of dedicated service to others, he/she has grown to be somewhat more focused on personal health and security than on the needs of others. This person is easily distracted by activities and can lose sight of the mission. He/she is sensitive to what others think of him/her and thus the reaction to stress and conflict is more covert than overt, and conflict is avoided if possible. He/she relates well to God both personally and corporately in worship, but has a tendency to relegate God to the background in daily living and in carrying out the routine work of the church.*

#### D. God's Yearning for Concord

Given our new understanding of a vibrant, fruitful church illustrated by the Collaborative Ministry Framework and our assessment of Concord strengths, we endeavored to discern God's Yearning for Concord by answering 5 questions.

God, what is your yearning for Concord in Worship? We sense that through worship, God yearns for Concord members to abide in Jesus and to feel alive, motivated, and inspired to carry out God's mission of redemption, reconciliation, and caring for others. We are urged to include all, designing worship opportunities for people that experience the Holy Spirit in different ways and that speak to the hearts and minds of people where they are right now. Examples of things we could consider doing include: Continue inspirational, scripture-based preaching and variations in musical styles and selections that support the message, continue providing lay leadership opportunities and supporting participation of children, maximize the use of our flexible worship space to offer fresh experiences that prevent worship from becoming routine, reassess the details of worship and greeting to assist strangers unfamiliar with our services feel included and supported starting their very first week, use technology to make worship more accessible to shut-ins and to reach the un-churched, expand worship opportunities to different places, times, and styles, retain elements of fellowship and sharing associated with worship.

God, what is your yearning for Concord in spiritual formation? We sense our Creator yearns to cultivate in us the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In order to do that, God yearns for us to re-establish Spiritual formation and growth as a priority for Concord. We are urged to lose some of our shyness or self-consciousness in sharing our spiritual lives with each other in order to provide mutual support for spiritual formation and growth of all. Examples of things we could consider doing include: Design and offer Christian education learning experiences at different levels of learning including times other than Sunday morning, partner with other churches on spiritual development opportunities and extend invitations to the surrounding community, create opportunities in worship and in small groups to share faith journeys, experiences and questions, develop some members into mentors for others, emphasize the spiritual growth opportunity of every mission and service initiative.

God, what is your yearning for Concord in Caring for each other? We sense that The Holy Spirit yearns for us to be present and to care for each other in body and spirit, to genuinely appreciate and value each individual in our church family by recognizing the divine among the human flaws and frailties in each person, seeing the goodness first, and being quick to forgive. We think this is already a Concord strength, but some ideas we might want to consider further include: Continue to cultivate informal support networks among members, establish a more formal process to shepherd every member, active and inactive (already happening through Deacons), retain sharing of joys and concerns, create opportunities for people to get to know each other through small group activities, create fellowship opportunities for subsets of the congregation and some that are intergenerational, promote routine service activities (ushering, serving communion, choir, serving on a board or

ministry activity, etc.) as acts of caring for our church community, pursue next-stage opportunities for improved disabled access (e.g. chair lift on stairs, help with heavy sanctuary doors, etc.)

God, what is your yearning for Concord in caring for strangers? We sense that God yearns for us to be a visible expression of Christ's love, a beacon shining light into dark places. We think Our Redeemer yearns for Concord to reignite the excitement for outreach and social justice that is Concord's heritage, to strengthen the Concord community through worshipful work, and thus to experience the joy of selflessness and to appreciate the gift of our abundant lives. Some ideas for doing this could include: Better understand the needs of subpopulations in our community and design specific activities to address them, develop collaborative mission opportunities over individual mission that also create opportunities for dialog between recipients and volunteers, design mission opportunities for people of different ages, skills, physical abilities, and work schedules, invite non-members to participate in Concord mission projects, plug Concord into mission activities initiated by other organizations, design with other organizations an approach to create readiness for responding to unexpected needs of the community, focus on a few, well-planned mission opportunities each year (some short term, some long term) and design in components of spiritual growth, radical hospitality and inviting others to discipleship thus transforming 'philanthropy' into 'mission', offer both adult and youth mission trips, create and voice faith-based positions on social justice issues.

God, what is your yearning for Concord in inviting others to discipleship? We sense that Christ yearns for us to extend the fruits of the Spirit to others through an increasing confidence in reaching out to the unchurched so that they may discover their need for God's grace and the love of Christ by experiencing it from us. Some ideas for doing this could include: create and take advantage of meaningful contacts with targeted subpopulations of the community including those that are using or could use our building (preschool, AA, Fairfax Civic Association) through service projects, mission, concerts, lecture series, classes, worship, etc. to invite others, increase promotion of such opportunities through multiple modalities, engage people, listen to them, help them feel accepted, respected, connected, needed, involved, loved, equip members in inviting ('we have a service/activity coming up that I think might interest you') and increase comfort in sharing our witness, reassess the details of worship and greeting to assist strangers unfamiliar with our services feel included and supported starting their very first week, develop information packets for visitors and reevaluate our follow-up process for visitors.

#### E. God's yearning and our vision for Concord

This prayerful discernment also reconfirmed our commitment to our Vision Statement which was first approved by session in 1998. It states:

*As Concord Presbyterian Church, we commit ourselves to be a Christ-centered people of God. By the Grace of God and energized by the Holy Spirit . . . We Will Feed the spiritual and intellectual hunger of God's people.*

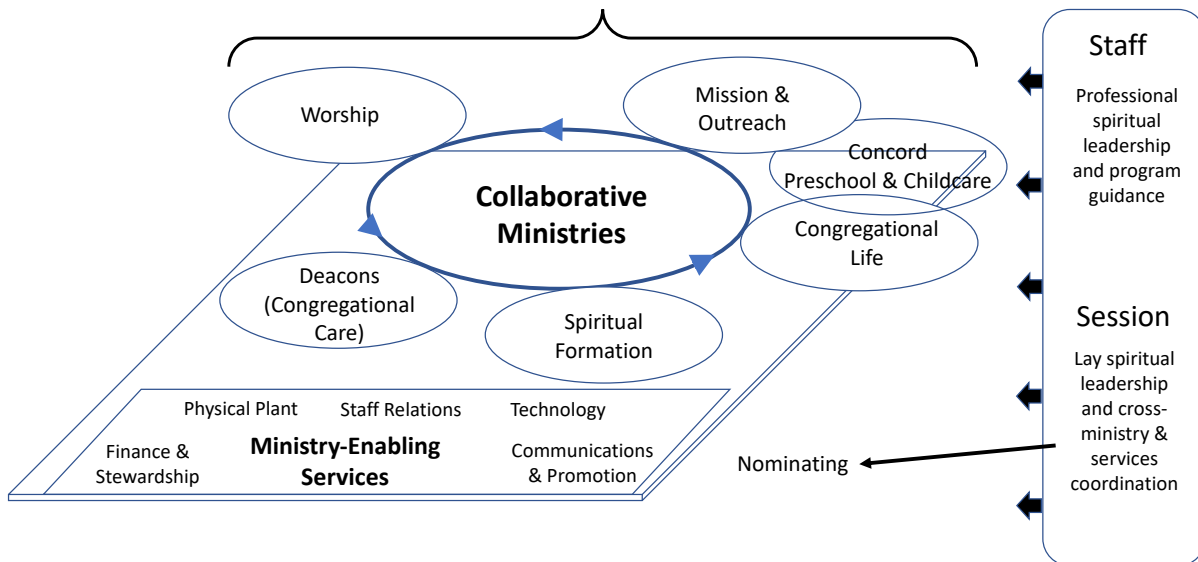
*We Will Build a church family that welcomes, embraces, and loves all people, excluding no one from full involvement in the life of the church.*  
*We Will Serve the world around us, sharing in the concerns and struggles of its people.*  
*We Will Respond to God’s goodness with celebration!*

**F. Plan for moving forward with “Concord Collaborative Ministries”**

With our new understanding of Concord’s strengths, God’s yearnings for Concord, and a list of possible actions we could take to respond to those yearnings, we considered how we could organize our efforts to be more effective. From that exercise we make 4 recommendations which are described below and also illustrated in the following diagram:

**Organizing for Concord Collaborative Ministries**

**Collaborative Ministry Characteristics:** Life-Shaping Worship, Intentional Spiritual Formation, Fellowship, Care for Others, Risk-Taking Mission, Radical Hospitality, Inviting Others to Discipleship



1. Organize our efforts around “Concord Collaborative Ministries”. We recommend that we organize our efforts into five ministries: Worship, Spiritual Formation, Deacons (Congregational Care), Congregational Life, and Mission & Outreach. The concept is that each ministry will have lead responsibility for a subset of the overall Concord ministry, but planning, scheduling, and implementation of certain key initiatives will require inputs and cooperation across ministries, thus the notion of ‘Collaborative Ministries’. As one small example, consider the Advent festival. That would involve partnering of Worship (how do we intentionally coordinate this event with the seasonal worship message of Advent?), Spiritual Formation (what elements of this event create opportunities for spiritual and faith development for children and adults?), and Congregational Life (how do we use hospitality and fellowship with this event to have fun and build intergenerational relationships?). “Collaborative Ministries”, then, are a consequence of an initiative sponsored by one ministry but supported by the others in order to build in as many of the characteristics of a vibrant, fruitful church as practical

into each initiative. Joint annual planning and calendaring will allow each ministry to understand its part in the key events throughout the year.

2. Recognize the support role of “ministry-enabling services”. We recognize that several of our current committees are not directly involved in planning and implementing Concord ministries, but instead provide essential services that enable all ministries. They include finance and stewardship, physical plant, staff relations, technology, and a new one, communications and promotion. We propose that we formally differentiate the role of these services from the collaborative ministries. We envision that the Collaborative Ministries and the services will work together to define and fulfill the needs of the ministries for facilities, staff, money, initiatives, communications, and technology. One committee, nominating, is neither a ministry nor an enabling service. Rather we view it as a direct subcommittee of Session with a specialized function as defined in the Presbyterian Book of Order.
3. Shift role of session toward spiritual leadership and cross-ministry coordination. We recommend further developing and strengthening the spiritual leadership role of elders. In addition, in this design, Session becomes the vital cog in collaborative ministries, helping make the connections between partnered ministries and enabling services on initiatives and taking responsibility for the effectiveness of Concord’s overall ministry. We envision a shift in Session meetings focus from reporting on various activities to finding ways to include many ministries in the work.
4. Continue the role of staff as professional spiritual leadership and program development. While we do not anticipate a fundamental change in the role of our staff members, it is clear that new ways of working will be required with the collaborative ministries, services, and session. We envision that as our ministries develop and strengthen with lay leadership and participation, staff will be able to devote more energy to ministry enhancements and innovations.
5. Continue support of Concord Preschool & Childcare as an outreach partnership to the community. While the Preschool daily operations are largely independent from the church ministry, it is Concord’s largest and most visible outreach initiative serving more than 100 families, 170 students, and employing more than 30 staff. Together the Church and the Preschool share financial support of the facilities, administrative responsibilities (an Elder is a member of the preschool board and the board is formally a committee of Session), and the preschool receives support from the church staff. In this design Mission & Outreach and Congregational Life ministries have responsibilities for identifying mission and fellowship opportunities to build relationships with and support the preschool staff and families.

To be clear, our perception of God’s yearning for us is driving our need for organizational change. Of these five organizational recommendations, we see the move toward Concord Collaborative Ministries as the key to successfully shifting our ministry priorities. The

following table provides a more comprehensive view of collaborative ministries. It relates each ministry to the results of our discernment, lists the lead responsibilities for each ministry, and recommends some priorities each ministry might focus on to get started.

Once a draft report was completed and accepted by Session, we engaged the congregation and solicited feedback. Pastor Elizabeth Lyman presented the characteristics of vibrant, fruitful churches to the congregation in a series of sermons. God's yearnings and our approach to them were published in our monthly newsletter. A broad overview of the Mission Initiative results was presented to the Congregation at Sunday worship, and copies of the full report were distributed. Feedback was incorporated into the final document and this Mission Study Report approved by Session.



## Discerning God’s Yearnings for Concord and Moving Forward with Collaborative Ministries

God’s Yearning for Concord		Concord Collaborative Ministry Structure	Responsibilities	Short-Term Priority Recommendations
<p><b>Inviting others to Discipleship:</b></p> <p>We sense that Christ yearns for us to extend the fruits of the Spirit to others through an increasing confidence in reaching out to everyone so that they may discover/rediscover their need for God’s grace and the love of Christ by experiencing it from us.</p>	<p><b>Life-shaping Worship:</b> We sense that through worship, God yearns for Concord members to abide in Jesus and to feel alive, motivated, and inspired to carry out God’s mission of redemption, reconciliation, and caring for others. We are urged to include all, designing worship opportunities for people that experience the Holy Spirit in different ways and that speak to the hearts and minds of people where they are right now.</p>	Worship	Seasonal Sunday worship planning, worship music, space set-up, flowers, paraments, liturgists, acolyte schedule and training, children’s sermons, Deacon’s-In-Charge, Communion Servers, home communion in conjunction with Deacons, usher & greeter training and schedule, Bulletins, pew maintenance, visitor welcome packets, visitor follow-up process, Technology in support of worship, exploration of other worship options. Work with Spiritual Formation to coordinate children and family participation in Worship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and lead inspirational worship with variation in elements of our otherwise traditional services with the purpose of motivating discipleship.</li> <li>Complete our plans to record services for posting on our website</li> <li>Add video projection capability in the sanctuary as another tool for worship and augment the sound system for hearing impaired worshippers.</li> <li>Explore opportunities for alternative worship times and styles for subsets of worshippers.</li> <li>Reassess Sunday morning practices to maximize radical Hospitality toward strangers, e.g. Prepare a ‘welcome easel’ for the narthex, consider a prayer board for the narthex, and train greeters to meet and assist visitors.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Spiritual Formation:</b> We sense our Creator yearns to cultivate in us the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In order to do that, God yearns for us to re-establish Spiritual formation and growth as a priority for Concord. We are urged to lose some of our shyness or self-consciousness in sharing our spiritual lives with each other in order to provide mutual support for spiritual formation and growth of all.</p>	Spiritual Formation	Children and Adult CE, youth group, Children’s ministry, Bible studies (M&M), circles, book groups, men’s group, Christianity 101, Vacation Bible School, Safe Space Group, develop spiritual mentors, promote spiritual discipline and practices, encourage witnessing. Work with Mission & Outreach and Congregational Life to create spiritual formation in Mission and fellowship activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design opportunities to share faith stories in worship and smaller group activities</li> <li>Offer Adult VBS along with Children’s VBS</li> <li>Develop a group of members willing to mentor newcomers/seekers.</li> <li>Develop an education opportunity for a broad range of people that focuses on Christian basics, and consider alternative opportunities for spiritual formation (i.e. Safe Share group, Spiritual Meditation, etc.)</li> <li>Investigate collaborative opportunities with other churches.</li> <li>Continue to support our strong Children’s ministry.</li> </ul>

**Discerning God’s Yearnings for Concord and Moving Forward with Collaborative Ministries (Continued)**

God’s Yearning for Concord		Concord Collaborative Ministry Structure	Responsibilities	Short-Term Priority Recommendations
<p><b>Inviting others to Discipleship:</b></p> <p>We sense that Christ yearns for us to extend the fruits of the Spirit to others through an increasing confidence in reaching out to everyone so that they may discover/rediscover their need for God’s grace and the love of Christ by experiencing it from us.</p>	<p><b>Caring for each other:</b> We sense that The Holy Spirit yearns for us to be present and to care for each other in body and spirit, to genuinely appreciate and value each individual in our church family by recognizing the divine among the human flaws and frailties in each person, seeing the goodness first, and being quick to forgive.</p>	Deacons (Congregational Care)	Member visitation, transportation, meals, flower delivery, memorial receptions, Deacon’s fund, prayer shawls, home communion – in conjunction with Worship. Work with Spiritual Formation and Worship to better support those with spiritual, emotional, or physical needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue reorientation of Board of Deacons toward Congregational care and associated services (meals, transportation, home communion) for active and inactive members.</li> <li>Reassess building access by the disabled and work with Physical Plant to design corrective action as appropriate.</li> </ul>
		Congregational Life	Membership initiatives, plan ongoing, regular fellowship events, Concord Concert Series promotion and reception, Sunday Concord Connects, Trunk or Treat, Advent Fair, Chili cook-off/chocolate challenge, intergenerational events, new member shepherding/inclusion, hospitality events for preschool. Work with Mission & Outreach, Spiritual Formation, and Worship to promote fellowship components of those ministries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage fellowship opportunities for subsets of the congregation by adding one event to the calendar for each month.</li> <li>Increase promotion, hospitality, and inviting components of CCS events. Explore ways to promote Concord in the community, e.g. electric sign.</li> <li>Review fellowship opportunities across the wide range of church activities and assess the balance of opportunities for different ages, personal schedules, and physical abilities.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Caring for Strangers:</b> We sense that God yearns for us to be a visible expression of Christ’s love, a beacon shining light into dark places. We think Our Redeemer yearns for Concord to reignite the excitement for outreach and social justice that is Concord’s heritage, to strengthen the Concord community through worshipful work, and thus to experience the joy of selflessness and to appreciate the gift of our abundant lives.</p>	Mission & Outreach	Promote and oversee ongoing mission: EDR, Seaman’s center, fleece for keeps, Friendship House, Hanover food closet, clothing bank, scholarship program, blessing bags etc. Develop new mission opportunities: Discern needs of local community, discover partners, new service projects, mission trips, platforms for social, environmental issues. Propose annual list of designated benevolences and session benevolence for approval by Session. Work with Congregational Life and Spiritual Formation to expand the fellowship and spiritual development opportunities associated with Mission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission an effort to study the needs of the surrounding community (neighborhood, Preschool, AA) with the aim of identifying possible mission opportunities and partners. Design elements of Inviting others to discipleship.</li> <li>Reassess each of our current missions and redesign as collaborative ministries.</li> <li>Explore the opportunities for additional or alternative ministries.</li> <li>Plan 1-3 events/year (seminars, speakers, discernment efforts) aimed at understanding/advancing our Christian response on specific issues of social and environmental justice.</li> </ul>

## G. The pastor we seek to join this ministry

Our recent shift to Concord Collaborative Ministries and Enabling Services is new for us and will require continued ordained and lay leadership for us to realize our potential for revitalizing the church. We seek a pastor who is excited about joining this ministry who is prepared to use worship, spiritual formation, and congregational care to inspire and equip the faithful for external mission and inviting others to Christian discipleship. Other specific pastoral gifts we seek include:

- Above all, he or she must really want to be here. We want a pastor who genuinely strives to act out of faithfulness to Christ and love for God's people, and with whom we can build a caring relationship.
- Spiritual leader: We seek a skillful preacher who is theologically sound and thoughtful while helping us engage our imaginations and relate scripture to our lives. We want to be comforted and challenged and are not looking for easy answers or dogmas. We think an articulate and expressive style is important for effective and inspirational communication.
- Pastoral care: Our congregation needs and expects visible presence in pastoral care through home and health facility visits and home communion for the elderly, infirm, and troubled. Support of lay congregational care by the Deacons and informal care networks are areas of collaboration.
- Community building: We seek a pastor who listens well, provides guidance, encourages and develops lay leadership to build on Concord strengths. A team leader who knows when to lead and when to follow is likely to be most effective bringing people together and working with Session and Staff.
- Strong Moderator of Session. Our new collaborative ministry framework requires someone who is open to this model of Session-based leadership and collaborative ministry. We expect that there will need to be changes along the way. We seek someone who is comfortable with ongoing change and can help the congregation through it.
- Other personal characteristics a mix of which would describe a strong candidate
  - Warm, approachable, empathetic, authentic—speaks from the heart
  - Good sense of humor, energetic
  - Creative, combination of new ideas and tradition, forward looking
  - Open minded, encouraging, willing to try some new things
  - Ability to relate to different groups, different age groups including children
  - Ability to lead staff through ongoing changes

## III. Concord in 2018

### A. Membership

At the end of 2017 Concord had 217 members on the roll. Our average worship attendance for the year ending June 10, 2018 was 75. While Concord seeks to be a diverse community, we are almost entirely white with 3 African Americans on the roll. The congregation is mature with the largest age group being over 65. The congregation is relatively affluent and well educated. In a 2012 survey with 100 members participating, the median household

income was \$83,000. 38 reported having a bachelor's degree and 30 held a master's or doctorate. Forty-four were retired with 29 employed full time and 11 employed part time.

## B. Concord leadership

### Church Boards and committees:

Session (10 Ruling Elders transitioning to 9)

Concord Collaborative Ministries:

Worship

Spiritual Formation

Mission and Outreach

Deacons (Congregational Care) (11 Deacons transitioning to 9)

Congregational Life

Ministry-Enabling Services

Finance and Stewardship

Physical Plant

Staff Relations

Technology

Communications and Promotion

**Preschool Board**—Composed of a Session member, Preschool Administrative Staff, teachers, parents and church representatives.

**Staff:** Concord's staff consists of: One full-time, solo Pastor, Minister of Music (30 hours), Director of Children and Youth Ministries and Youth Music (35 hours), Office Manager (30 hours), and a Building Maintenance Engineer (20 hours). Housekeeping is performed by a contract cleaning service.

## C. Ministries

### 1. Worship

*"Welcoming", "warm", "friendly", "loving"* – these words describe the essence of Concord's Sunday worship service and the congregation itself. Concord follows a traditional order of worship. See Appendix A for typical worship bulletins. We are serious in our faith but not formal. Laughter is often heard within the service; it is loving, not disrespectful. Children are welcome at Concord, and they are active participants in the service as acolytes, ushers, and weekly children's sermon.

As one enters the narthex before the 10:30AM service one hears friendly conversations and laughter from those who have already arrived. A musical prelude signals the beginning of the service, followed by announcements by the worship leader. An acolyte carries the light of Christ up the center aisle followed by two youth carrying the pulpit Bible and chalice. Joys and Concerns are freely shared as preface to our Prayers of the People.

Scripture readings and the sermon are central parts of our worship service. Hymns, anthems, and other service music compliment and reinforce the scripture lessons and sermon. Each week at offering time, the ushers bring forward both monetary donations and the baskets of food and other items donated for local missions.

In worship, music is both an experience of God's presence and an expression of faith and praise. Concord's music, though primarily traditional in style, includes hymns and anthems from a wide spectrum of musical genres, classical, gospel, contemporary. The music staff members are classically trained professionals who lead a Chancel Choir of thirty voices, a Concord Quartet, and a Children's/youth choir which occasionally participates in worship. Several times a year, instrumentalists, both members and guests, share their gifts, whether guitar and percussion for Gospel Sunday, strings for Christmas or brass for Easter or budding musicians for prelude or postlude.

Throughout the year, worship is celebrated in a number of special ways:

- Special Advent liturgy, Christmas Eve services, (5PM staged drama which involves children and youth of all ages and 10PM candlelight service of hymns, carols and Communion).
- We reaffirm our baptismal vows on Baptism of the Lord's Sunday.
- Gospel Sunday features gospel music rooted in a variety of genres.
- Youth Sunday, usually in March, is planned and conducted by the children and youth of Concord.
- Ash Wednesday and weekly midweek services are held during Lent.
- The Maundy Thursday evening service combines Holy Communion with a Tenebrae service.
- Palm Sunday and Easter feature special choir music with additional instrumental music.
- Graduates, Vacation Bible School and Youth Mission Trip are also highlighted in worship services.

See Appendix B for worship attendance.

## **2. Spiritual Formation**

**Church School** Concord is committed to education for our children and adults, although in recent years, numbers in attendance have been dwindling. Sunday School for children is held during the worship hour. At 10:30am children sit with their families at the beginning of worship and participate in the Children's sermon at 10:45am. Following that, all children break into their respective Sunday School groups or go to childcare for the remainder of worship. Currently, we have a pre-K/K class of 6 students using Spark curriculum. Our 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade class with 13 students uses a rotation model also with Spark curriculum, this year covering art, science, cooking, video and music. A combined Jr. High and Sr. High class of 5 uses Re:form Ancestors curriculum. Confirmation classes are held when there is a viable group. The last class was in 2012, when 9 youth were confirmed. Childcare for 0 through 5 years is offered during worship

following the children's sermon. There is also a "soft-space" option in the back of the sanctuary with a large rug and quiet toys for families with small children that would like to remain in worship.

Two adults are scheduled with every Sunday School class, and typically one of the volunteers is a parent. This helps to increase the participation of parents in the program. All teachers and volunteers undergo a background check and are required to take part in Concord's Child Protection Policy to work with children.

Each year Christian Ed organizes a Youth Sunday in which all the classes lead the worship service, and deliver the sermon.

**Vacation Bible School:** Held one week during the summer, it is attended by community, preschool and Concord children. Every year, over 40 children, and their adult and youth leaders learn about a lesson from Jesus through drama, music, games and art.

**Youth:** Concord Presbyterian Youth Group is open to youth in grades 6-12 who may, or may not, be members of Concord Presbyterian Church. The group meets a few times a month for fellowship, outreach and service projects. This year five youth and three adults will travel to the Massanetta Springs Middle School Conference where they will deepen their faith and relationships with one-another as well as participate in a service project while enjoying fellowship and activities. In past years there have also been mission trips to repair homes in areas that have been hit hard by the economy and/or natural disaster. In 2016, thirteen senior high youth and four adults participated in a work camp in Elizabeth City, NC.

Throughout the year youth build fellowship and raise money for these trips by holding fundraisers that are intergenerational and create community. Some of them include the Advent-fest, Chili and Soup Cook-Off, Chocolate Challenge and Silent Auction, car washes and hotdog/bake sales.

The youth group also does local outreach, sometimes in collaboration with other groups including:

- Baking and delivering apple pies to members who need a visit.
- One Shot Service Sunday, where youth from New Castle Presbytery hold a one-day outreach project. This year youth assembled >21,000 meals for Stop Hunger Now.
- Seaman's center: Concord Youth lead a church-wide project to assemble Christmas gift boxes to donate to the Port of Wilmington for seamen who are a long way from home.
- Fleece for Keeps: children and youth make hand-made fleece blankets to provide to Delaware children in the foster care system.

Other events are purely for fellowship such as bowling, movies, lock-ins, fishing, and rock climbing. In addition, there are family events scheduled throughout the year including a hayride, Trunk or Treat, and movie nights. Concord Preschool and Fairfax families are intentionally invited to attend as a way to include our community.

**Adult Ed:** Adult education includes a Sunday morning class from 9:30-10:20 a.m., typically with 8-10 attendees. A variety of programs are presented: Biblical study, Presbytery information, spiritual disciplines, art, movies, and religious beliefs. This class is occasionally led by the pastor, but usually by a lay person or guest speaker or as a DVD series. Occasionally, a “Lunch n Learn” follows worship focusing on current issues, which have included the Death Penalty in Delaware, the new Presbyterian Hymnal, and the Israeli/Palestinian issue. Starting in the fall we will be participating in a year-long collaborative Bible study curriculum with 5 other churches. We are also looking for ways to meet the needs of people who cannot attend during our regular Sunday School hour, like our choir, which rehearses at the same time. Mug & Muffin Bible Study meets Wednesday mornings: a group of 15 led by the pastor discusses the text for the following Sunday. There is also a weekly men’s Bible Study. A monthly Book Group meets in the home of a parishioner focusing on where faith is found in a variety of short stories. A women’s circle meets monthly for Bible Study and fellowship.

### **3. Deacons (Congregational Care)**

As a result of this Mission Initiative, the Deacons have adopted the scripture from Matthew 11: 28 – 30 as their charge: “Live as examples of Jesus.” Each Deacon has volunteered to shepherd the sick, shut-in and infirmed congregants of Concord. This is done either by phone call, written note or personal visit. If the congregant is able to attend worship, the Shepherd makes a point of a face-to-face contact to inform him/her the Deacon is praying for him/her. We have become the arms of the church. Meals/Transportation, weekly flower delivery, point responsibility for memorial receptions, and maintaining our inventory of disposable supplies for various church functions are other responsibilities performed by a Deacon as part of Congregational Care. At this writing, several services continue to be performed by the Deacons, but the plan is to transfer the leadership of these to other ministries. They include Pew maintenance, scheduling worship and in-home communion, flower delivery, ushers, Deacons in Charge (Worship Ministry).

### **4. Congregational Life**

Concord provides opportunities for fellowship among members such as:

- **Homecoming** is a celebration welcoming people back to the “regular” church schedule of activities in early September with potluck, music, games and activities.
- **Hayride at Bellevue** is a big favorite with both church members and preschool families with as many as 60 adults and children.

- **Lenten Suppers** are simple mid-week dinners prepared by various groups within the church during the Lenten season. Members come together to share food and fellowship prior to special Lenten worship services.
- **New Members Receptions** are church-wide celebrations held after worship welcoming new members. New members are matched with Shepherds, who guide the new members into the fellowship of the church.
- **Name tags for worship.** We have evolved from specific 'name tag Sundays' to providing permanent name tags for all.
- **Concord Connects:** A time after worship for those attending to enjoy each other's company and light snacks/beverages. This time of fellowship unites and bonds the congregation and welcomes new participants.
- **Sundaes on Sunday:** A special Concord Connects after church a couple of Sundays in the summer to have build-your-own sundaes.
- **Advent Fest:** An annual event with lunch and Christmas crafts to welcome the season of Advent with fellowship and creativity.
- **Chocolate Challenge and Chili Cook-off:** A collaboration with the youth program in Spiritual Formation where members enter chocolate desserts or chili/soup and sell samples at \$1.00 each. The cook that sells the most samples is awarded bragging rights and the proceeds go to support of the youth mission trip and other youth spiritual development activities.
- **The Concord Concert Series**, founded in 2006 by the Minister of Music, promotes larger musical endeavors which minister to the cultural and spiritual needs of the neighboring community while charging no admission fee. The Christmas program featuring selections from Handel's Messiah has grown to require two performances. The success of these events is indicated not only by increasing attendance, but increasing participation of individuals from other churches and the community.

## 5. Mission and Outreach

We are in the process of reestablishing our commitment to mission beyond the church as the key to returning to being a mission-driven rather than maintenance-driven church. Our intent going forward is to focus and organize our mission activities by turning more of our total energy and attention outward.

### **Benevolence:**

Concord Presbyterian Church has a history of making mission giving a priority, through pledges, designated monetary gifts, and in-kind gifts (food, clothing, supplies). One of the designated benevolences, the Deacon's Fund, is intended to meet emergency needs of those in Wilmington. This program is administered for Concord by Friendship House. For details on Mission giving see Appendix C. The Mission Committee is currently looking at new ways to involve members in hands-on projects and in global awareness and commitment.

### **Outreach:**



Concord members are also active in contributing their time and talents to a variety of mission activities. Current examples include:

- Friendship House: A local ministry committed to making a difference in the lives of homeless people. Concord members provide clothing and food, breakfast on a rotating basis with other churches, and monthly dinners at a woman's house for women returning to the community from prison.
- Emanuel Dining room: A mission to serve meals to those that need them. Concord members provide the meals and service for two meals per month that together serve about 320 people.
- Hanover Food Closet: Church members contribute food each week as part of the offering and transfer these to Hanover Presbyterian Church for distribution to those in need.
- Youth Mission Trip: A week each year is devoted to a work camp to do construction or remodeling in a community of need providing opportunities for both Youth and their Adult leaders.
- Adult Mission Trip: Concord members have participated in Presbytery Mission trips for Hurricane Katrina relief, and to Guatemala to build stoves, but have not had a trip since 2012.
- Presbyterian Missionary: We have supported Karla Koll, now in Costa Rica, for many years.
- Seaman's Center: Wilmington has a very busy port and we provide Christmas boxes for the Seaman when they come into the port during Dec. We are currently looking at going twice yearly to work on gardening, car washing, or providing other services they need.
- The Church Has Left the Building: We will be initiating this in the fall for members as they are able, to go out into the community on a Sun. a.m. instead of worship on a variety of local projects, with others to remain at the church working on inside projects. We are hoping to ignite a passion for hands on ministry and a presence in our own community.
- Blessing Bags: Bags for the homeless with a long list of supplies are provided to church members to take to hand out whenever they run into someone in need.
- Prayer Shawls: A dedicated group of knitters keep the pastor supplied with prayer shawls to hand out to people needing extra care. Members are also encouraged to take them to friends who are hurting.
- Mom's Night Out: New this year, we held one very successful evening to get Mom's out with a meal provided and an evening to share, watch a movie, play games, or just chill.
- Safe Space: A new program starting this year with a pilot this summer, to get parents together to talk about whatever is on their mind, including fears for their children and their families. This is led by a member with training in counseling.
- Fleece for Keeps: Children, youth and adults work on fleece blankets to be provided to children going into Foster Care.

- Share the Spirit: An annual Christmas project between the church and preschool provides gifts to people in need in our local community.

**Community hospitality:** In addition to benevolence giving and mission service, Concord seeks to make maximum use of the building to support community groups including: AAUW, AA, Hugs and Stitches, Spiritual Direction, and two neighborhood civic associations, space for a polling place for elections, continuing education programs.

#### D. Physical Plant and Technology

Concord's buildings were constructed between 1954 and the 1960's in a typical brick colonial style. The buildings are debt free and have been well maintained. There are 3 interconnected pieces in a U shape. Unfortunately, the elevations of the levels in each building are different so that stairwells are necessary at every interconnection. There is a ramp to the sanctuary and ground level access to Fellowship Hall through a back door. All other entrances involve steps.

Sanctuary building: The sanctuary seats 300. The chancel was renovated in 2016 to provide greater flexibility. Below the sanctuary are classrooms used by the Preschool. Behind the sanctuary is a sanctuary lounge, office and storage rooms. The Narthex has been recently renovated to add an accessible bathroom and a kitchenette.

Fellowship Hall building: A large Fellowship Hall includes a commercial grade kitchen. Sunday School classrooms are housed on the second floor with storage space on the first floor.

Administration Building: A small chapel also used as a choir room, a meeting room and church offices are housed in this wing.

Other features include a 50-space parking lot also used as a Park and Ride lot during the week and a courtyard that contains a Memorial Garden and a play area.

The church is adjacent to a county park with recreational areas. The Preschool playground is located on county parkland.

**Technology:** Concord has new lighting and sound amplification systems in the Sanctuary, with both wireless lapel and wired microphones that are used routinely for Worship and special services. A new video projection system for the Sanctuary comprised of two large LED screens is currently in the planning stages. Audio recording of sermons is routinely practiced; streaming video of worship services is under consideration.

Concord has a multi-line voice-over-internet phone system with FIOS internet access. A Wi-Fi network covers most of the facility, including the Sanctuary. Laptop computers have been provided to the staff members. A file server is available for the use of both staff and session members. All laptops and the file server are backed-up daily. Both commercial and custom-made software is utilized to facilitate the work of the staff and manage the finances of the church and preschool. About three fourths of the congregation, including all of the

Session, is connected by email. A website is currently being renovated. The church has a managed presence on Facebook. The monthly Concord Courier newsletter is provided both on-line and paper. A weekly one-page email called Concord Connects started in 2013.

#### E. Finances

At the end of 2017, Concord had liquid financial assets of about \$2.4M, comprised of cash and securities. About \$782,000 of that is in an endowment fund. The church is debt-free. The 2018 operating budget is about \$529,000, of which about \$135,000 (26%) is for benevolence. Staff expenses are just under \$318,000. A copy of the 2018 budget (Appendix C) is attached. The number of pledging units, 65 in 2018, has been steadily declining as the congregation ages and dies faster than new members are received. However, this decline has been partially offset by robust giving from remaining members, with an average of over \$4300 per pledging unit in 2018. Pledges for 2018 were \$285,000. In the face of declining pledge income, budgets have been sustained by taking income from investments and by sharing facilities expenses with the Preschool. However, growth in the investment income is not likely to keep up with declining pledges indefinitely.

Over the years, the congregation has been generous in supporting capital campaigns for major projects. The latest of these was in 2011 called Brightening Concord's Future with a goal of providing funds to upgrade and modernize the facilities. \$400,000 was pledged over a three-year period with all income received by June 2014. Ten percent of the funds raised were designated for mission work. Capital improvements included chancel renovations for greater flexibility, a kitchenette and bathroom in the narthex, window replacement, new carpet in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hallway of the Fellowship Hall building, a new floor in Fellowship Hall, and a new freezer and refrigerator. A structural problem with the roof, largely covered by insurance, led to a refreshment of the sanctuary, including new floor, painting, asbestos removal, new lighting and new roof. The boiler was replaced, a new floor and cabinets were installed in the kitchen, and viewing windows were added to the pre-school class room doors.

#### F. Preschool

Concord Preschool, a non-profit organization, has been an outreach of the Church since 1956. The school has both a Preschool and Child Care Administrator and Director with a staff of 30-35 people supporting an enrollment of 155-180. A summer camp program for school age children was established for parents needing childcare year-round.

Though the preschool operates fairly independently, it is governed by the preschool board, responsible to session, comprised of a session member, church members, staff and parents. It has the full support of Concord's staff. It is important for the Pastor to be very visible to the children (and parents) who are attending the Preschool. Some examples of this are:

- Pastor attends Open House/Parent Orientation
- Pastor co-leads weekly chapel

- Wednesday, prior to Thanksgiving, for Grandparents' Musical Program
- Christmas Chapel
- Spring Musical
- Kindergarten graduation

The church and preschool intentionally seek opportunities to collaborate in mission and fellowship.

## IV. Concord and the community in which we live

### A. History of Concord

Concord was founded in 1952 as a new church development of New Castle Presbytery and started in an empty shoe repair store, a few blocks from the current location of the church. Sunday School was held in members' homes. The church's growth paralleled that of the surrounding Brandywine Hundred suburbs. By the late 1960's membership reached 1500 members. Membership has been on a decline since then, (see Appendix D). Some of that decline can be attributed to the founding of other Protestant churches including 2 PCUSA churches in the surrounding suburbs.

The founding pastor served as architect for the church building. Worship moved from the shoe store in 1954 with the construction of the chapel. Construction of all of the church buildings was completed in the mid 1960's. The Preschool was started in 1956.

Concord has had 7 installed pastors:

Henry Jacobs—1952 to Dec. 31, 1961

Gilbert Van Bever—Sept. 23, 1962 to Dec. 31, 1976

(Andrew) Thomas Murphy—Oct. 23, 1977 to July 20, 1986

Donald Purkey—Sept. 18, 1988 to April 30, 1991

Neta Pringle—Nov. 22, 1992 to Sept. 15, 2002

Francis (Fritz) Ackerman—Nov. 28, 2004 to Sept. 30, 2012

Lynn Horan—Oct. 27, 2014 to July 10, 2017

Interim pastors have served between pastorates beginning with the transition following Tom Murphy's pastorate. Concord also had Assistant or Associate Pastors from 1957 until 2002.

### B. Demographics of the community

Concord is located in Brandywine Hundred, which is a largely residential area dominated by developments of single-family homes. Demographic data is provided by Percept Group based on a 4-mile radius around the church. There are 145,000 people in this area projected grow slowly over the next 5 years. About 1/3 are strongly involved in a religious group, 1/3 lightly involved and 1/3 not involved. The area is 54% white, 32% African American, 8% Hispanic and 6% Asian. Hispanic and Asian populations are expected to grow at the expense of the white population. Generation Z (born 2002 or later) are 20%, Millennials (born 1982 to 2001) are 25%, Survivors (born 1961-1981) are 27% and Boomers (born 1943-1960) are 20%, and silent (born 1925-1942) are 7%. Forty percent are single

(never married), 19% divorced or widows and 42% married. Of the households with children, 34% are headed by single mothers. Forty five percent have college or advanced degrees and the average household income is \$97,000 with 33% making >\$100,000. Concerns that exceed the national average include finding affordable housing, Neighborhood crime and safety, Dealing with racial/ethnic prejudice, dealing with social justice, and finding better quality healthcare.

### C. Links to community information

New Castle Presbytery

<http://www.ncpresbytery.org/>

Brandywine School District

<http://www.bandywineschools.org/site/default.aspx?PageID=1>

Information on Brandywine Hundred area/North Wilmington

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Brandywine-Delaware.html>

The city of Wilmington

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Wilmington-Delaware.html>

New Castle County Relocation and Visitor Bureau Information

<http://www.visitwilmingtonde.com/visitors-and-residents/relocation/>

Friendship House - major local mission/ministry partner

<http://www.friendship-house.org/>

Concord Preschool & Childcare

<http://www.concordpreschoolandchildcare.com/>

## V. Appendices

### A. Bulletin



April 29  
bulletin.docx



May 6  
bulletin.docx

### B. Worship attendance

The average attendance at Sunday morning worship from June 4, 2017 through June 10, 2018 was 75. The highest attendance occurred on Easter Sunday (132), Palm Sunday (105), and arrival of the new interim pastor (100). Lowest attendance occurred in the peak vacation time the first two weeks in August (46 and 47), Labor Day weekend (49) and New Years Eve (49).

Worship attendance has traditionally been lower in the summer months, when the choir does not sing in the service. Generally, this period starts the second Sunday in June and ends on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend.

The average summer attendance in 2013 was 63. The average attendance when the choir was present was 80.

Attendance at seasonal and special services during the period (June 2017 through May 2018) was as follows:

Messiah Concerts (2 performances) – 610  
 Christmas Eve (early service) – 130  
 Christmas Eve (late service) – 68  
 Ash Wednesday – 17  
 Gospel Sunday – 92  
 Maundy Thursday – 45  
 Palm Sunday – 105  
 Easter Sunday – 132

### C. Budget and financial assets



### D. Membership history

Year	Members		Membership
	Added	Members Deleted	
1952	73	0	73
1953	45	6	112
1954	61	7	166
1955	124	21	269
1956	177	8	438
1957	94	13	519
1958	145	21	643
1959	162	38	767
1960	128	46	849
1961	84	44	889
1962	130	65	954
1963	219	106	1067
1964	175	65	1177

1965	165	59	1283
1966	218	83	1418
1967	153	77	1494
1968	186	148	1532
1969	124	143	1513
1970	113	144	1482
1971	100	117	1465
1972	109	90	1484
1973	101	92	1493
1974	100	118	1475
1975	66	108	1433
1976	46	122	1357
1977	56	84	1329
1978	47	79	1297
1979	50	110	1237
1980	49	140	1146
1981	45	205	986
1982	34	60	960
1983	33	61	932
1984	37	83	886
1985	20	79	827

Members

Year	Added	Members Deleted	Membership
1986	26	75	778
1987	16	55	739
1988	29	63	705
1989	20	31	694
1990	30	47	677
1991	11	57	631
1992	6	70	567
1993	6	31	542
1994	56	40	558
1995	16	47	527
1996	17	21	523
1997	8	22	509
1998	16	46	479
1999	18	19	478

2000	9	34	453
2001	10	106	357
2002	16	15	358
2003	2	24	336
2004	10	14	332
2005	15	29	318
2006	7	26	299
2007	11	3	307
2008	15	30	292
2009	7	14	285
2010	0	9	276
2011	0	13	263
2012	17	16	264
2013	7	8	263
2014	10	36	237
2015	1	12	226
2016	6	7	225
2017	3	11	217