Saint Eugene Catholic Church
Asheville, Diocese of Charlotte, North Carolina.

Our Vision/Mission Statement and Action Plans

Our Vision Statement:

We seek to build a welcoming and vibrant community of intentional disciples who love Christ so much that they share Him with others.

Mission Statement:

St. Eugene is a faith community, animated by the love of God and neighbor, that welcomes all, irrespective of their backgrounds, and, through education, spiritual programs, and sacraments, brings them to the fullness of life in Christ and intentional discipleship to serve God in the Church and the wider community.

Action Plans / Strategies:

The Strategic Five-Part Plan to achieve our mission follows:

1. **Action Plan One: Create a welcoming atmosphere, a safe and conducive space for spiritual growth.**

   A. Goal: To welcome all, irrespective of their backgrounds, to a safe and conducive space that fosters spirituality and community.

   B. Current State:
   a. We are a welcoming and growing community.
   b. Our Church attendees are very diverse, with people of various backgrounds and stages of life.
   c. We have both homebound and active parishioners.
   d. We have people with different perspectives on life and unique lifestyles.
   e. Some parishioners are not registered.
   f. Our church has almost exhausted the allowable room for future expansion, construction and parking.
   g. No changes have been made to the sanctuary area since the church was built in 1959.
   h. Current design of the sanctuary has issues for our growing congregation.
      i. The roof needs replacement.
      ii. The current design of the sanctuary creates a bottleneck situation during communion, leading to a longer time of communion. Also, there are too many steps and elevations at the front of the sanctuary.

The placement of the choir stands and the organ limits available space to the point that it is difficult to sit more than one priest in the sanctuary.

C. <u>Actions:</u>

a. Accept people as they are without judging and endeavor to care for them according to their unique situation.
b. Hold a welcome /meet-and-greet dinner twice a year to welcome new members and introduce them to the opportunities in the church.
c. Recognize new members to the Parish at weekend Masses once a month.
d. Organize an event to attract non-churchgoers and introduce ourselves to our community.
e. Make a welcome flyer that gives highlights of St. Eugene parish life available at the foyer for new members and visitors.
f. Look for solo attendees and engage them in conversations and activities and follow up with them to support their integration.
g. Receive warmly and continue to help parishioners that are returning to the faith.
h. Create a welcoming space by maintaining the Parish facilities and structures.
i. Redesign and renovate the Church and the sanctuary area to allow for more capacity, greater functionality and enhanced appearance:
    i. Restructure the sanctuary.
    ii. Install a new ceiling.
    iii. Install new pews.
    iv. Replace the roof.
    v. Improve parking.
j. Increase our green space percentage for future external construction or expansions that best serves the needs of parish by purchasing the available empty lots around us.
k. Reach out to non-attending parishioners.

D. <u>Obstacles:</u>

a. Not knowing the unregistered parishioners.
b. Asheville green space zoning requirements limit additional construction on existing property.
c. Lack of sufficient funds for capital projects.

E. <u>Possible Solutions</u>:

a. Review the Parish parishioner list and encourage people to register.
b. Conduct a Capital Campaign to raise funds.
c. Grow a contact list from event attendees, separate from the formal Parish registration system, to reach out to more people.
d. Offer social opportunities after mass once a month.

2. **Action Plan Two: Bring all people to the Sacraments.**

   A. **Goal**: To cultivate among members the love for the Sacraments and the habit of regular participation in the Sacraments, especially, the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the Anointing of the sick where appropriate.

   B. **Current State:**
      a. Our Parish offers four weekend masses, two in English, one in Spanish, and one bi-lingual as well as daily mass. We hold Reconciliation sessions, provide Anointing of the Sick as requested, and have outreach to homebound parishioners.
      b. We have Faith Formation sessions for youth and adults to prepare them to receive the Sacraments.
      c. Some of our parishioners do not receive the Eucharist at Sunday Masses.
         i. It is unknown how many people attending mass are not Catholic.
         ii. There have been long lines for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Some come from outside the parish. Missing Sacrament of Reconciliation may contribute to parishioners not receiving Communion.
         iii. Some couples are living in irregular marriage.

   C. **Actions:**
      a. Provide adequate information in the Bulletin about Sacramental offerings at the Church and the procedures for receiving them.
      b. Work with the marriage coordinators, Diocesan Annulment Sponsors, and other resources to find ways to support those in irregular marriages.
      c. Identify weekends for the Priest, Deacons, parents and grandparents to initiate conversations about considering vocations to the priesthood and religious life.
      d. Take advantage of Vocation Sunday to engage young people to consider religious vocations.
      e. Encourage our parishioners to be open to talking about receiving the sacraments.
      f. Clergy members, who notice those who do not receive the Eucharist, will engage them in conversation.

   D. **Obstacles**
      a. Reluctance and social awkwardness limiting discussion about receiving the sacraments.

   E. **Possible Solutions:**
      a. Facilitate religious discussion to include Sacramental topics and gatherings.
      b. Develop and publicize a Sacramental resource list.

3. **Action Plan Three: Education, catechizing and re-evangelization**

   A. **Goal:** To bring people to the fullness of life in Christ and form intentional disciples through Christian education, catechizing and re-evangelization.

   B. **Current State**
      a. We have religious classes including Faith Formation, OCIA, and other adult education offerings.
      b. We have a full-time Director of Religious Education.
      c. There have been requests for more adult religious education.
      d. There is not a summer program for elementary school children.
      e. The Diocese requires all volunteers to complete the CMG Program yearly.

   C. **Actions:**
      a. Conduct Faith Formation awareness and enrollment campaign in the summer to boost attendance.
      b. Hire a person (a Young Adult Coordinator) to lead and coordinate education and re-evangelization opportunities.
      c. Request each Ministry develop notices to advertise their ministry and update existing members. Also request they hold an orientation or training session once a year.
      d. Provide education opportunities focused at different categories of adults.
      e. During each summer we will organize and conduct a Vacation Bible School
      f. Organize parish-wide seminars on different themes or subjects at least twice a year.
      g. Expand and maintain the use of social media.
      h. Ensure compliance of CMG requirement for volunteers.
      i. Promote family involvement in activities.

   D. **Obstacles**
      a. We don't have a resource base to expand our current efforts. Some of our families have a busy lifestyle that limits volunteer opportunities.
      b. Difficulty identifying inactive youth.

   E. **Possible Solutions:**
      a. Encourage the use of parishioner-led classes, on-line resources, and external facilitators to augment education.
      b. Encourage parent participation when enrolling children in programs.
      c. Perform audit of compliance of CMG requirement for volunteers.
      d. Promote family involvement in activities.

4. **Action Plan Four: Retreats / Spiritual programs**

   A. **Goal:** To deepen the faith and spiritual life of parishioners and bring them to the fullness of life in Christ and intentional discipleship.

   B. **Current State**
   a. We offer a variety of spiritual programs including Lenten and Advent programs, Rosary sessions, and Eucharistic Adoration opportunities.
   b. We have few parish-wide spiritual programs. We have many groups carrying out different spiritual activities but historically they have been advertised to members of their group.
   c. We have a program during Advent to worship collectively with three other Asheville Christian churches.
   d. During Lent, we have a soup/sustenance/educational program.

   C. **Actions**
   a. Conduct an Advent and Lenten retreat each year.
   b. Encourage ministries to organize a retreat for their members.
   c. Offer a Bible Study program(s).

   D. **Obstacles**
   a. Difficulty in reaching potential participants.

   E. **Possible Solutions**
   a. Reach out with announcements, flyers, signs, and social media to invite all community members to our activities, education offerings, and events.

5. **Action Plan Five: Christian charity and service.**

   A. **Goal:** To promote a faith community that is animated by the love of God and neighbor to serve God and humanity.

   B. **Current state**
      a. We have a tradition of tithing and supporting different charity causes and groups.
      b. St. Eugene parishioners volunteer at a variety of charities.

   C. **Actions** (Spiritual and Corporal works of mercy will be the foundation for our charities and pious practices)
      a. One weekend each month we will use 10 percent of our collection for charitable causes.
      b. Continue to appeal to parishioners for canned food/drink donations for the poor.
      c. Contribute to organizations offering shelters for the homeless.

d. Continue to expand service to those in need with hospital ministry, the Angel Tree program, Mom's in Need, the prison ministry, blood drives, and other efforts.
e. Expand the columbarium to offer families and parishioners the options of burying their loved ones in a catholic sacred ground. Assist them with Christian burial Mass, celebration of life in Christ, and luncheon receptions after the service.
f. At the All-Souls' Day service, continue to inscribe the names of the deceased on the altar cloth in prayerful remembrance.
g. Continue our yearly program to honor our military and veterans.
h. Adopt a foreign mission to support.

D. Obstacles

a. There are many in need in our community.

E. Possible Solutions:

a. Ensure our donated resources are used wisely and focused on the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.