

Healthy Church Initiative



Do you remember a time when stores were closed on Sundays? A time when there was no email, texting, or Facebook? Do you remember a time when a tweet came from a bird not an electrical device? If so, you will no doubt agree that our world has changed dramatically in the last 50 years.

Given all of the changes in our world, White Bear Lake United Methodist Church (WBLUMC) has accepted an invitation from our conference to participate in a special initiative called the Healthy Church Initiative (HCI). This initiative is designed to assist us in developing a new vision and support for implementing an action plan based on this vision. Following is a quick overview of the HCI.

First, only healthy churches have been invited to participate in this initiative. Members of the Vision and Leadership team which will work on this initiative include: Bryce Johnson, Brooke Heerwald Steiner, Eric Bakke, Wes Erwin, Marcia Faust, Rick Flynn, Lori Hughes, Bette-Jo Johnson, and Brenda Schostag. The initiative consists of some workshops, the development of a self-study about our church, the completion of the Natural Church Development inventory by a sample of members, the development of a vision and an action plan, town hall meetings with the congregation, visits from consultants, and meetings with a congregational coach to implement an action plan. The congregational coach will assist WBLUMC in implementing the action plan and will serve as a consultant and support person for 12-18 months.

Following are some questions and answers about this initiative. Questions are in bold and answers are immediately following the question:

- **Why are we engaging in this initiative?** We want to be clearer about the ways God wishes to use this church to bless our immediate community. WBLUMC needs to continue to be relevant and reach out to people in our community, especially those who do not have a church home.
- **How will we accomplish the goals we develop using this initiative?** We will follow the process that is provided by the HCI to develop an Action Plan that is unique to our church. Then we will use our resources to carry out that Action Plan. The purpose of the action plan is to help us prioritize and focus our passionate energy.
- **Will this result in changes for our church?** Yes, there will likely be changes. What those changes will be is uncertain at this time. The HCI process is designed to find effective ways to focus the passionate energy of a church. For many people change can be scary, however, change can be exciting and bring about positive effects.
- **Is there a cost associated with this initiative?** Yes, WBLUMC will pay about one-fourth (\$1,500.00) of the cost for the initiative and the conference will pay three-fourths (\$4,500.00) of the fee for the program.
- **Will the congregation have an opportunity to provide input regarding what is in the Action Plan?** Yes, there will be a consultation weekend January 27-29, 2012 during which conference consultants will visit WBLUMC and meet with church members/attendees, pastors, church staff, and church leaders. Conference consultants will have meetings and focus groups during which they ask for input about the strengths and weaknesses of WBLUMC. They will also ask for input regarding what types of activities WBLUMC should focus on in their Action Plan. The congregation is strongly encouraged to attend these meetings so that their views and preferences can be considered.
- **How will the congregation be informed about the Action Plan?** Two town halls will be held during which questions about the Action Plan will be answered. The town halls will be open to anyone who wishes to attend them. The Action Plan will be shared with the congregation as soon as it is available.
- **Will the congregation have a say in whether the Action Plan is adopted by WBLUMC?** Yes, the congregation will have the opportunity to vote on the acceptance/rejection of the Action Plan. The vote will determine if the Action Plan will be accepted in its entirety or rejected in its entirety. A simple majority (51% of the votes) is needed to accept/reject the Action Plan.
- **How can I find out more about the HCI initiative?** The HCI Vision and Leadership team will be providing information about the initiative in future bulletins, newsletters, on the WBLUMC website, and during services. In addition, please feel free to talk to any of the team members about this initiative.

*Thank you for your support and prayers!
HCI Leadership Team*