

Living Into Our Values: ASCC Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan for 2026 to 2031, All Souls Community Church of West Michigan (ASCC)

Report prepared by the Strategic Planning Committee in 2026:

Dana Donnell, Cathy Odom, Amy Preston, Lauren Woolsey, and Sarah Woolsey

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Mission Statement

Celebrating and Cultivating Community by Liberating and Inspiring the Human Spirit.

See it on our website at <https://www.allsoulscommunity.org/about-us/our-story/>

Strategic Goals

*Our strategic plan is centered around five **strategic goals** and accompanying vision statements. The order presented below is not a hierarchy nor a chronology; all of these will be happening in tandem. Later in this plan, we provide more detail on each, including strategic priorities that provide more concrete actions.*

1. **Finding our Path:** We have clear and navigable internal systems so that each person can discover their role in nurturing our congregation.
2. **Sharing our Lives:** We cultivate a culture of care that helps members and visitors feel connected and interdependent.
3. **Extending our Reach:** We partner with area institutions to deepen our impact on the community and broaden our network for action.
4. **Tending the Flame:** We are visible as Unitarian Universalists who celebrate theological diversity and spiritual growth.
5. **Siding With Love:** We organize toward a vision of a just world where all human and nonhuman communities thrive.

Our Congregation

Purpose

This Church is dedicated to religion, but not to a creed. It is a liberal religious community of free individuals of all ages walking together in relationship to one another, to our larger community and to the transcending mystery of the universe. Our community is based on open communication, democratic process, and a belief in the capacity for goodness in all people. Our spiritual health and our growth as a church community are intimately connected with the spiritual growth and development of our children. We pledge to develop our church community with this always in mind. This Church aims at celebrating and cultivating community, a sense of inquiry, moral character and insight, religious freedom, and helpfulness to humanity - that is, it aims at liberating and cultivating the human spirit.

Congregational Covenant

We pledge to be together in the ways of truth and affection, as best we know them now, or may learn them in days to come; That we and our children may be fulfilled, and that we may speak to the world in words and actions of peace and goodwill.

Values

The Unitarian Universalist Association has six shared values: Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence, and Generosity. These are all centered around Love, which is part of all that we do in UUA.

Read more at <https://www.uua.org/beliefs/shared-values>

Strategic Planning Engagement and Timeline

The Strategic Planning Committee was launched by the ASCC Board of Trustees on November 19th, 2025. We established a process and a timeline to complete the strategic plan by the Fall of 2026. We shared this timeline and process with the Congregation in December 2025. By the end of the process, our committee will have met for 15 meetings, with a cadence of 1-2 meetings per month. To ensure we connected with all the perspectives of our congregation in this work, we led a Sunday service in March to help explain our plan and invite members and visitors to share their thoughts about where ASCC has been and where they would like to see us go over the next few years.

Congregation members and guests were able to attend one of two virtual Town Halls or five Focus Groups or Small Group Discussion. We also scheduled one-on-one conversations with key members of the congregation who fulfill unique roles or had institutional knowledge. Further feedback was available to provide in a physical comment box that was available throughout March and April, and an Online Survey that ran for two weeks in April. We presented initial feedback from the online survey at the May 2026 Congregational Meeting. The committee presented this strategic plan to the Board of Trustees in August 2026.

Our engagement resulted in:

- 11 one-on-one conversations completed
- 30 attendees of Focus Groups, who provided 190 unique responses to a shared SWOT analysis
- 87 responses to the online survey

Exploring the Strategic Goals in Depth

1. Finding our Path

Vision Statement:

We have clear and navigable internal systems so that each person can discover their role in nurturing our congregation.

Strategic Priorities:

- A. Establish administrative processes and space usage that fit our congregation's growing size.
- B. Improve on-ramps for one-time volunteering opportunities and ongoing committee work for a wider range of time commitment options.
- C. Introduce stewardship models to bolster the congregation's sustainability and growth.

How does this connect to our mission?

This connects most with cultivating community, and it connects also with celebrating community and liberating the human spirit.

How does this connect to our UU values?

This connects most with the value of generosity, and other highlighted values this connects to are equity and transformation.

2. Sharing our Lives

Vision Statement:

We cultivate a culture of care that helps members and visitors feel connected and interdependent.

Strategic Priorities:

- A. Expand events and connection opportunities for visitors and new members.
- B. Deepen belonging through long-term opportunities for group fellowship.
- C. Reinforce existing methods to welcome, support, and help each other.

How does this connect to our mission?

This connects most with celebrating community, and it connects also with cultivating community and inspiring the human spirit.

How does this connect to our UUA values?

This connects most with the value of interdependence, and other highlighted values this connects to are pluralism and generosity.

3. Extending our Reach

Vision Statement:

We partner with area institutions to deepen our impact on the community and broaden our network for action.

Strategic Priorities:

- A. Collaborate with other faith institutions for expanded programming.
- B. Foster ongoing community partnerships with organizations that have aligned values.
- C. Participate in community events that are aligned with our mission and purpose.

How does this connect to our mission?

This connects most with cultivating community, and it connects also with liberating and inspiring the human spirit.

How does this connect to our UUA values?

This connects most with the value of interdependence, and other highlighted values this connects to are justice and pluralism.

4. Tending the Flame

Vision Statement:

We are visible as Unitarian Universalists who celebrate theological diversity and spiritual growth.

Strategic Priorities:

- A. Work to intentionally and authentically welcome diverse communities.
- B. Integrate spiritual learning and development into congregational life beyond worship services.
- C. Share who we are with the broader community.

How does this connect to our mission?

This connects most with inspiring the human spirit, and it connects also with celebrating community and liberating the human spirit.

How does this connect to our UUA values?

This connects most with the value of transformation, and other highlighted values this connects to are pluralism and equity.

5. Siding With Love

Vision Statement:

We organize toward a vision of a just world where all human and nonhuman communities thrive.

Strategic Priorities:

- A. Engage members of our congregation in expanded justice work.
- B. Utilize resources available through the UUA to join in faith-based justice programs.
- C. Renew our ongoing commitment to justice through sustainable organizing efforts.

How does this connect to our mission?

This connects most with liberating the human spirit, and it connects also with celebrating community and inspiring the human spirit.

How does this connect to our UUA values?

This connects most with the value of justice, and other highlighted values this connects to are equity and transformation.

Closing Reflections

Throughout this process, the Strategic Planning Committee prioritized congregational input through a variety of channels, while centering the ASCC mission and purpose. Maintaining this focus as we engaged in the process ensured the plan remained in alignment with our shared values. This plan was drafted during a period of congregational transition. It is intended to meet our current moment and, perhaps more importantly, to grow with our congregation as we continue to evolve. The thoughtful and passionate feedback from the congregation was vital, and the Committee is grateful to all who participated in imagining who we will become together.

This document is designed to be a guidebook and a map for the congregation over the next 5 years. It does not prescribe what trails must be taken, but rather gives the priorities and vision shared by the congregation as we continue to grow and evolve in community with one another.

This plan is intended to be referred to consistently to guide day-to-day operations, inspire our members, and showcase our values in action to the broader community. More detailed projects, activities, and programs will be developed by the Board of Trustees through implementation plans and collaboration with staff.

Together, we will focus on finding our path, sharing our lives, extending our reach, tending the flame, and siding with love.