Church of Silver Lake Redevelopment Project Description

1. **Church Life**

The Church in Silver Lake, Ohio, is a progressive and inclusive Christian community known for its commitment to social justice, community outreach, and spiritual growth near Akron. The church embraces a welcoming and affirming approach, often focusing on diversity, inclusivity, and support for LGBTQ+ individuals.

The congregation is involved in various outreach programs addressing local needs, including food security, homelessness, and social equity. Worship services blend traditional and contemporary elements, emphasizing thoughtful reflection, engaging sermons, and community participation.

Additionally, the Church in Silver Lake is recognized for its involvement in the arts, hosting events, and collaborating with local artists to enrich the community’s cultural fabric. This combination of faith, activism, and creativity makes it a vibrant and dynamic place for spiritual exploration and community engagement.

The congregation is involved in various outreach programs addressing local needs, including food security, homelessness, and social equity. Worship services blend traditional and contemporary elements, emphasizing thoughtful reflection, engaging sermons, and community participation.

1. **Vision**

*The Church in Silver Lake aims to be a shining light of hope and compassion, spreading* God’s love and acceptance to everyone. We strive to create a Christ-centered community that embraces everyone, promotes social justice and champions equality for the betterment of *society. We strive to inspire positive change and foster a world where everyone can live in* harmony and unity through our actions and outreach.

1. **Mission**

*The Church in Silver Lake aims to embody the transformative power of love and Christ-*centered community by embracing individuals as an Open and Affirming community. Our mission is to cultivate connection, community, and social justice, working relentlessly

*towards a world where every person is valued, supported and empowered to live* authentically and with dignity.

1. **Plan**

With the settled minister working with the Cabinet, Trustees and volunteers to serve on the Redevelopment Committee, the Church of Silver will use the following plan.

**Year 1: Assessment and Strategic Planning**

1. **Congregational Assessment**

* Surveys and Focus Groups: Conduct surveys and organize focus groups to understand the congregation’s needs, concerns, and aspirations.
* Program Review: Evaluate current programs, ministries, and services to identify strengths and areas needing redevelopment.
* Demographic Study: Analyze local community demographics to ensure the church’s mission aligns with the surrounding area’s needs.

2. **Leadership and Governance**

* + - Leadership Training: Identify potential leaders within the congregation and offer training programs to equip them with the skills needed for redevelopment.
    - Governance Review: Reassess the church’s governance structure to ensure it supports agile decision-making and aligns with its mission and vision.

3. **Financial Review and Planning**

* + - Budget Analysis: detailedly review the church’s finances, focusing on revenue streams, expenses, and reserves.
    - Fundraising Strategy: Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy, including annual giving campaigns, capital campaigns for redevelopment, and potential grant applications.

4. **Vision and Mission Clarification**

* + - Mission Statement Update: Revisit and, if necessary, update the church’s mission and vision statements to reflect the redevelopment goals.
    - Strategic Plan Development: Create a detailed strategic plan outlining specific goals, timelines, and responsibilities for the redevelopment process.

**Year 2: Implementation and Expansion**

1. **Program Redevelopment**

* New Ministry Initiatives: Launch new or revamped ministry programs that cater to different age groups, interests, and community needs, such as youth outreach, adult education, and social justice initiatives.
* Community Outreach Expansion: Develop and implement community outreach programs that address local needs, such as food drives, tutoring services, or support groups, to establish the church as a community hub.

1. **Membership and Engagement Growth**

* Membership Drive: Implement a membership drive to attract new members and re-engage inactive members, focusing on personal invitations and community events.
* Engagement Strategies: Introduce small groups, volunteer opportunities, and social events to deepen member engagement and foster a stronger sense of community.

1. **Communication and Branding**

* Website and Social Media Revamp: Update the church’s website and social media presence to reflect the church’s new vision and attract new visitors.
* Brand Identity: Develop a cohesive brand identity, including updated logos, signage, and promotional materials that reflect the church’s mission and vision.

**Year 3: Growth and Sustainability**

1. Long-Term Vision Casting

* Vision Retreat: Host a church-wide retreat to reflect on progress and cast a long-term vision for continued growth and impact.
* Long-Term Strategic Planning: Develop a five- to ten-year strategic plan that builds on the achievements of the redevelopment process and sets ambitious yet achievable goals for the future.

2. Sustainable Growth Initiatives

* + - Sustainable Financial Planning: Create a sustainable financial plan that includes diversified revenue streams, endowment planning, and continued fundraising efforts.
    - Leadership Succession Planning: Establish a leadership succession plan to ensure continuity and stability in church leadership.

3. Community Integration and Impact

* Partnership Development: Strengthen partnerships with local organizations, schools, and businesses to enhance the church’s impact and visibility in the community.
* Ongoing Outreach and Service: Institutionalize outreach programs as core elements of the church’s identity, ensuring they are sustainable and continuously evolving to meet community needs.

4. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

* Annual Review: Conduct an annual review of all programs, ministries, and initiatives to assess their effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.
* Feedback Mechanisms: Implement regular feedback mechanisms, such as congregational meetings and suggestion boxes, to ensure continuous improvement.

1. **Demographic Research (**[**www.missioninsite.com**](http://www.missioninsite.com/)**)**

**CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS:**

Number of active members: 108 Average church attendance: 70

Percentage of participants who have been in the church taken from a recent church survey: More than 10 years: 15

Less than 10, more than 5. Years: 25 Less than 5 years: 27

Total participants by age:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0-11 | 12-17 | 18-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75+ | Are these numbers of  Estimates? |
| 12 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 11 | 5 | 18 | 11 | no |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Is this number an estimate? |
| Single adults under 35 | 4 | no |
| Households with minors | 19 |  |
| Single adults 35-65 | 5 |  |
| Joint households with no minors | 25 |  |
| Single adults over 65 | 14 |  |

Household types

Education level of adult participants

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Is this number an estimate? |
| High school: | 4 |  |
| College: | 31 |  |
| Graduate school: | 24 |  |
| Specialty training: | 5 |  |
| Other: | 3 | Juris Doctorate. Law school, post-doctoral |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Is this number an estimate? |
| Adults who are employed | 35 |  |
| Adults who are retired: | 27 |  |
| Adults who are not fully employed: | 5 |  |

Adults in various employment types:

Range and occupations of working adults: from blue-collar and part-time employees to PHD professors and a retired judge.

These also include:

* Dean of an art school16
* Principal of an elementary school
* Engineers
* Nurses
* Lawyers
* Professional driver
* Warehouse workers
* HR professionals
* A retired archaeologist
* Mental Health professionals
* Social workers

Overall ethic and racial heritage: Mostly white European, but have a few members who are

people of color. We are mostly mono-cultural but would like to work on this aspect to become more diverse.

Demographic Research has focused on the local community’s age distribution, family composition, income levels, educational backgrounds, and religious affiliations to understand the potential for growth at the Church in Silver Lake. Here’s a general overview of what the Research might show and who the potential members could be:

**Demographic Research Findings**

1. Age Distribution

* Young Families: A significant portion of the local population may consist of young families with children, which aligns with the church’s existing Sunday school program.
* Seniors and Retirees: Another key demographic might include seniors and retirees, who often seek community and spiritual connection.

2. Family Composition:

* Single Parents: The area may have a noticeable percentage of single-parent households who could benefit from family support programs.
* Multi-Generational Households: Some families might live in multi-generational homes, where younger and older adults share responsibilities.

3. Income Levels and Education:

* Middle-income Households: The church may find that many potential members are from middle-income families and are often looking for affordable family and social activities.
* Educated Professionals: A portion of the population could be educated professionals who value intellectual and spiritual growth opportunities.

4. Religious Affiliations and Backgrounds:

* Unchurched Individuals: Many individuals may identify as spiritual but are not affiliated with any religious institution, representing a key outreach opportunity.
* Culturally Christian:\*\* Some potential members might have Christian backgrounds but do not regularly attend church, making them open to re-engagement through welcoming and relevant programs.

**Potential Members**

1. Young Families with Children:

* Families seek a supportive community for raising children, including robust Sunday school and youth programs.
* Parents seek family-oriented events and activities promoting values and community involvement.

2. Seniors and Empty Nesters:

* Older adults who are seeking fellowship, spiritual growth, and opportunities to serve the community.
* Retirees who have time to contribute to church activities, such as volunteering for outreach or joining committees.

3. Social Justice-Oriented Individuals:

* People who are passionate about social justice and community service, aligning with the church’s existing Social Justice Committee.
* Young adults and professionals who are motivated by causes such as environmental sustainability, racial justice, and poverty alleviation.

4. Unchurched and Spiritual Seekers:

* Individuals who are spiritually curious but not formally affiliated with any church seek a welcoming and inclusive community.
* Those interested in exploring faith in a non-traditional setting that values questions, dialogue, and diversity of thought.

5. Local Professionals and Educators:

* Educators, healthcare professionals, and other community leaders who value a church that supports lifelong learning, community engagement, and professional development.

Ways the Church at Silver Lake can address membership growth as part of the redevelopment program. Most of these are things the Church at Silver Lake does. However, focusing on the existing programs with energy from new leadership and sources to support efforts can assist with redevelopment and church growth.

**Actionable Insights:**

* + Family Programs: Expand family life programs to attract and retain young families, offering parenting workshops, family retreats, and child-focused events.
  + Senior Engagement: Develop programs specifically for seniors, such as Bible studies, social groups, and volunteer opportunities tailored to their interests.
  + Outreach to Unchurched: Create outreach initiatives aimed at unchurched individuals, emphasizing the church’s inclusivity, community service, and spiritual exploration.
  + Social Justice Focus: Leverage the existing Social Justice Committee to attract like-minded individuals by hosting events, discussion groups, and advocacy opportunities.

1. **Leadership Team:** Who are the members of your leadership team, and what skill sets do they have to accomplish your goal? Include items such as faith journey, history with the current church, core values and experiences that will help you equip this church to revitalize.

The formal Leadership team includes members of the Cabinet and the Trustees.

These members bring with them both the experience of being members of the church for some years, which carries with them the understanding of the church’s history, and some that are newer and come with a fresh perspective.

Leadership includes professionals from law, education, nursing, science, counseling,  hospitality, and IT, to name a few.  Many of these hold leadership positions in their secular lives and share these gifts with the church.

Some are very familiar with UCC polity, and others bring a wealth of practices from other faith walks that have chosen to join this faith community.  Although leadership at CSL is diverse, they are committed to the ongoing growth and development of this church in terms of both quality and quantity.

1. **Church History:** Attendance, membership, giving, budget and expenses for the last five years.

*In the 1880s, The Silver Lake Amusement Park, a trendy leisure venue, was founded by a* Quaker who posted a sign that said, “No tobacco, no swearing and no lewd *dancing”. The popular park closed 30 years after the government had commandeered the* railroads that ran nearby to ship war material during World War I.

*By 1946, a school had been built, and it was time to build a church. Three congregational* ministers and six couples met, and plans were soon underway to write a constitution for a new area. This indicates New England’s huge influence on the area as new landowners brought their religion and traditions. Several Congregational churches (now called the United Church of Christ) are within spitting distance of each other.

*An interesting phenomenon happened. When rubber companies recruited the best and brightest* scientists from universities and businesses nationwide to help with the World War II *efforts, they were recruiting for the Church in Silver Lake. The men brought their families and looked for an excellent location to settle. The Silver Lake area had a pleasant,* peaceful, leisurely reputation from when the park operated there. These men wanted the best for their families. The second-tier rubber company management began to settle in the area. *They brought new ideas, interests and food. The church had always prioritized education- formal academics or self-education. Most of the church’s children went on to* college or university.

*The women of the church have always been faithful and strong. They have worked to build their* families, community and church. Women’s Fellowship attracted women from the local *communities for lunch and having speakers with a religious theme. These fellowship meetings* actively brought in new members. As the years rolled by, more and more women entered the *workforce, and Women’s fellowship groups became more retiree-centered. Widowers requested to* join so they could talk with the friends of their departed wives. Eventually, men were given the

*right to vote at the fellowship meetings. Unfortunately, this wonderful group did not survive the* Covid pandemic.

*Traditionally, our services have been based on the Bible and are presented in the lecture style of* a teacher rather than a Bible-thumping preacher. They are dynamic, intellectually stimulating and *on point. One leaves the service with a sense of mission and assurance that another such* sermon awaits the following Sunday. Our second minister, John H. Keefe, held the longest tenure of 25 years and is our only minister to have the term Minister Emeritus confirmed on him. He was from New England, as most, but not all our ministers have been. The church used to have five choirs and reached its peak membership in 1985 with 464 members. Membership is around 100 now, and many families have young children.

*In 2014, Brad Jagger answered the call to be our settled minister.* Many of his *sermons were based on Walt Disney characters, which he loved. He was young, had two beautiful* teenage daughters and suddenly, many more teenage boys were attending church. The youth group flourished and even took a mission trip that followed the Civil Rights movement. While the church had never turned anyone away, Brad led us, unanimously, to become an Open and *Affirming church where we could advertise what we were. Attendance was on the rise during* Brad’s tenure, when suddenly, into his ten-year call, Brad announced by mass email that he had accepted a call from a church in Florida. The members were stunned.

*Rev. Dr. Steven Savides accepted the call to be our Interim minister. In addition to his other interim duties and responsibilities, the Cabinet asked Steven* to bring structure and order back to the church, which had become too chaotic. First, Steven had to tend to the palpable grief of the *members. He did this with grace, faith, sermons, and meetings, making us a whole and vibrant church again*. With a gentle but firm hand, Steven has led us to see an alternative, more orderly way of doing things. Membership has continued to increase on Steven’s watch. He has told us that with a church filled with love and capable of caring for one another so beautifully, now is the time to go out into the communities and minister to those who need to *feel God’s love at work. We now await the call for our next settled minister.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Staff Member’s name | Years of Service | UCC Standing Y/N |
| Reverend Dr. Steven Savides | 1 | Y |
| Reverend Brad Jagger | 9 | Y |
| Reverend Diane Shirey | 8 | Y |
| Reverend John Keefe | 25 | Y |

1. **Tell us about your church facility:** When was it built? Is it accessible?

The Church of Silver of Lake was built in 1946. The building is ADA-accessible. The last audit was in 2022.

1. **Timelines and Benchmarks:** Provide goals for redevelopment/revitalization of your congregation. What metrics will you use to measure success?
2. **Budget –** what is the budget for the proposed timeline? Please include a detailed narrative budget for the next five years.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Amount** |
| Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving | $110,264 |
| Endowment Proceeds | NA (Note 1) |
| Endowment Draw | $13,193 (Original forecast) |
| Fundraising Events | $0 |
| Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose | $0 |
| Grants | $0 (Separate from operating budget) |
| Rentals of Church Building | $10,684 |
| Rentals of Church Parsonage | $0 (no Parsonage) |
| Support from Related Organizations | $27,985 (Contribution from CSL Preschool Operations) |
| Transfers from Special Accounts | $0 |
| Other (Fellowship Hall Fees for Events) | $2,000 |
| Other (Interest Income from Banking Accounts) | $2,156 |

Note 1. The CSL Endowment is managed on a total return basis. The endowment can today sustainably provide $12,000 to $13,000 per year (see below)

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for the current fiscal year): $166,282

What is the percentage of total ministerial support of total budgeted expenses? 39.3%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a church minister? No

Is your church 5-5? Does it include each of the following contributions during the church year?

No

$0 Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM-basic support)

$0 One Great Hour of Sharing

$0 Strengthen the Church

$0 Neighbors in Need

$0 Christmas Fund

How is OCWM basic support gathered? What is the percentage is calculated as a percentage of the operating budget? Not gathered

What is the church’s current indebtedness: $0 Total amount of loan debt: $0

Reason of debt: NA

Are capital and other payments current? All accounts are current.

## **BUILDING PROJECTS**

Capital campaigns of last ten years (All part of a planned program to cover deferred maintenance, enhance safety, reduce operating cost & expand ministry reach).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year (s) | Purpose | Goal | Result | Impact |
| 2018 | Additional Sanctuary Wheelchair access | Donated | 100% |  |
| 2019 | Replace Kitchen Steps & Railing | $5,000 | 100% |  |
| 2019 | Sanctuary LED Lights | $2,000 | 100% |  |
| 2019 | New playground fence | Donated | 100% |  |
| 2019 | Parking Lot Repairs | $2,000 | 100% |  |
| 2019 | PS Door Additions & Outside Door Replacement | $16,000 | 100% |  |
| 2021 | New video camera & computer system | $5,000 | 100% |  |
| 2021-  22 | PS & Fellowship Hall Roof Replacement | $42,000 | 100% |  |
| 2022 | Narthex Roof Replacement | $8,000 | 100% |  |
| 2023 | Sanctuary Roof Maintenance | Donated | 100% |  |
| 2022-  23 | New boilers and heating system upgrade | $40,000 | 100% |  |

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: Not at this time.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Purpose | Goal | Result | Impact |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Prominent mission component involved in the most recent capital campaign. Maintain place of worship, increase safety and increase ministry reach.

## **Church Endowment**

Market value of assets? $243,044

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? Funds are withdrawn periodically throughout the year as needed to maintain the operating account balance above a minimum threshold – usually twice a year.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year compared to 5 years ago?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Endowment Draw | Approx % |
| 2024 (Current Est) | $6,500 | 3% |
| 2024 (Orig. Forecast) | $13,200 | 6% |
| 2023 | $6,400 | 3% |
| 2022 | $26,700 | 12% |
| 2021 | $20,100 | 9% |
| 2020 | $17,800 | 8% |
| 2019 | $35,200 | 16% |

Describe the draw on the endowment, if any, to meet operation budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: The endowment draw is largely used to support the operating budget (see table above). Fundraising campaigns largely fund capital projects.

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? At current budget levels, withdrawal rates are around the sustainable $12,000 to $13,000 per year.

Comment on the above calculations/estimates: Over the past seven years, budget management/cost reduction, successful Stewardship Campaigns and expanded non-donation income have brought the budget support within the long-term sustainable draw on the endowment of $12,000 to $13,000 annually.

## **Other assets**

Reserves (checking/savings) $37,150

Investments other than endowments $0

Church does not have a parsonage.

Buildings owned by church: $3,770,000 (debt free)

* Main church complex: Sanctuary, Narthex, Fellowship Hall wing and Education/Administration wing – plus separate lodge/storage building.
* Non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church. None
* Which spaces are wheelchair accessible?
  + Sanctuary/Worship Space
  + Fellowship Hall
  + Narthex including restroom
  + Lodge/storage building

Reflection: After reviewing the church’s finances and assets, what does this information reflect about your congregation’s mission and ministry?

1. **Financial Stability:** How will you utilize grant funds? How will you offset declining grant funding? How will you raise new dollars in the future?

As a church, we are reaching a point of financial sustainability, enabling us to live into our mission of embodying the transformative power of love and Christ-centered community. We hope to work toward a realignment with the wider UCC association.

### Allocation of Grant Funds for the Three-Year Redevelopment Plan

**Year 1: Assessment and Strategic Planning**

1. **Congregational Assessment and Strategic Planning:**
   * **Surveys & Focus Groups:** Funds will hire consultants or facilitators to conduct congregational surveys and focus groups, providing professional insights into the church’s strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Estimated cost: $500.
   * **Demographic Study:** Allocate funds for purchasing detailed demographic data or commissioning a local study to understand community needs and identify potential members. Estimated cost: $300.
2. **Leadership and Governance Development:**
   * **Leadership Training:** Invest in leadership training programs, workshops, and retreats for church leaders and emerging leaders to equip them with the skills needed for effective governance and revitalization. Estimated cost: $400.
   * **Governance Review:** Funds may be used to consult with experts on church governance to streamline decision-making processes. Estimated cost: $200.
3. **Financial Review and Fundraising Planning:**
   * **Financial Assessment:** Hire a financial consultant to review and provide recommendations on the church’s budgeting and financial strategies. Estimated cost: $300
   * **Fundraising Campaign:** Develop and implement a fundraising strategy, including professional materials and events to raise additional funds. Estimated cost: $500.
4. **Vision and Mission Clarification:**
   * **Strategic Plan Development:** Engage a consultant to help refine the church’s mission and vision statements and develop a detailed strategic plan. Estimated cost: $500.

**Year 2: Implementation and Expansion**

1. **Program Redevelopment:**
   * **New Ministry Initiatives:** Launch new programs or expand existing ones that cater to diverse age groups, such as youth ministries, adult education, and family support services. Funds will cover curriculum materials, training for volunteers, and promotional activities. Estimated cost: $2500.
   * **Community Outreach Programs:** Develop and implement outreach programs to serve the community’s needs, such as food drives, tutoring services, or community service projects. Estimated cost: $1000
2. **Membership and Engagement Growth:**
   * **Membership Drive:** Allocate funds for a targeted membership drive, including marketing materials, community events, and hospitality initiatives to welcome new members. Estimated cost: $1000.
   * **Small Group Ministries:** Support the formation and growth of small groups by providing resources, training, and materials to foster deeper connections within the congregation. Estimated cost: $1000.
3. **Communication and Branding:**
   * **Website and Social Media Revamp:** Invest in a professional redesign of the church’s website and an enhanced social media strategy to reach potential members and keep the congregation informed. Estimated cost: $100.
   * **Brand Identity Development:** Develop a cohesive brand identity, including updated logos, signage, and promotional materials that reflect the church’s mission and vision. Estimated cost: $500.

**Year 3: Growth and Sustainability**

1. **Long-Term Vision Casting:**
   * **Vision Retreat:** Organize a church-wide retreat to reflect on progress, celebrate successes, and plan for the future, covering the costs of facilitators, materials, and venue. Estimated cost: $500.
   * **Long-Term Strategic Planning:** Continue consulting with experts to develop a sustainable long-term plan for the church’s growth and impact. Estimated cost: $500.
2. **Sustainable Growth Initiatives:**
   * **Sustainable Financial Planning:** Allocate funds for developing a long-term financial sustainability plan, including endowment creation, diversified revenue streams, and ongoing fundraising efforts. Estimated cost: $500.
   * **Leadership Succession Planning:** Invest in programs that ensure leadership continuity, including training, mentorship, and succession planning. Estimated cost: $400.
3. **Community Integration and Impact:**
   * **Partnership Development:** Funds will be used to build and strengthen partnerships with local organizations, schools, and businesses, potentially including joint projects or events. Estimated cost: $500.
   * **Ongoing Outreach and Service:** Support the continuation and growth of outreach programs, ensuring they remain impactful and aligned with the community’s evolving needs. Estimated cost: $1000.
4. **Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:**
   * **Annual Review:** Set aside funds for annual program evaluations, including surveys, consultant fees, and adjustment of strategies—Estimated Cost: $500.
   * **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement and maintain regular feedback systems, such as surveys, suggestion boxes, and congregational meetings, to guide continuous improvement. Estimated cost: $200

Total is 14,600.

1. **Identify your coach.**

The coach for this project will be the settled minister and Brad Senick, an organizational consultant who works for the Veteran’s Administration.