

Jim Shrimplin

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Mission and Ministry Plan for 2021

Please note that all questions marked with an asterisk (*) are required fields

Name and Email of person submitting this report on behalf of the Administrative Council/Board

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Church

Montezuma UM Church Montezuma IA

District

Southeast

This report is intended to help your church leadership go through a process to identify where your church is currently, where God would like your church to be, and how you are going to get there.

Describing Current Reality

Local Ministry Setting:

Describe the local community surrounding your church location. (Sample information can include changes in population, economic health, public school conditions, health services.)

Montezuma is the county seat for Poweshiek County. Montezuma is located roughly one hour east of Des Moines and one hour west of Iowa City. To the south of Montezuma is Oskaloosa and to the north and west is Grinnell which are both roughly 30 minutes from Montezuma. Montezuma proper has a population between 1500 and 1800 people.

The main employers in Montezuma are the school district, city and county governments, nursing home, medical clinic, a car dealership, Brownells, Monte Manufacturing, and numerous smaller businesses.

If you come to Montezuma looking for something to do, you will find the local country club golf course. There are also plenty of lake activities with Diamond Lake State Park and Lake Ponderosa within 5 miles of Montezuma. There are also walking trails to enjoy.

Montezuma has 5 churches within its city limits. These churches work together to provide for those that are in need. The services offered range from a large food pantry to financial assistance.

What are the greatest opportunities/needs for transforming ministry in your community?

One of the greatest needs in Montezuma is to touch the hearts and lives of those that do not associate with any church. Most people in our community would identify as spiritual but not religious therefore they don't consider any of the five churches to be their "home church."

What are the resources and potential partners in your community? (including other churches, organizations)

One big resource that we have in Montezuma is the ministerial association. The association hosts "Summer Nights On The Square" the second Tuesday of the month in the summer. The activity is well attended and gives opportunity for the churches of Montezuma as well as the community to come to a safe place for fun summer activities. I would like to dream of a way that summer nights might be offered in the winter as well.

Local Congregation

Share stories of where you have seen God work through your congregation.

COVID caused many changes for us as a congregation but God provided. In December of 2019, a member gave a year end gift we were able to purchase some new video equipment that would make things run smoother in church. One of the things that was purchased was a video streamer so that we could do Facebook Live. The tech was purchased in January and installed. We had about two months to get used to the new equipment before COVID shut down churches. We did not miss a beat nor did we have to scramble to get the things we need to make a live stream happen. God had provided for us. Then in the middle of the months that we were live streaming another member purchased a new video camera that made the production even better. We now have the ability to do a 2 camera livestream while getting audio straight from the soundboard. We can also overlay the song lyrics onto the stream so people at home can sing along.

Describe the greatest strengths of your congregation.

Family atmosphere, generosity, plenty of fellowship opportunities.

What resources (materials, facilities, staff, volunteers, etc) does your congregation have for ministry to the community?

Before COVID "started" we had the following ministries at the church. I hope to see these resources come back to the church when possible.

The church hosts several activities for the community. The Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts both use the church on a weekly basis. A member of the congregation also does piano lessons at the church.

Another resource that the church has is a free lending library which is kept stocked by members of the congregation.

There are many more resources and partnerships that could be explored in the coming year.

Wildly Important Goal (WIG)

The Iowa Annual Conference adopted a Wildly Important Goal (WIG) for every church to develop an intentional process/pathway for making disciples of Jesus Christ by the end of the year 2020. This process is to help fulfill the Great Commission in Matthew 28.

Which best describes where your church is in developing a pathway? (From the Stride by Ken Willard)

Implementation Phase- Means you have a team working on developing a pathway. You know the key elements of a pathway. You are working on how to communicate the pathway, and are preparing to launch your pathway.

If you have a pathway, please describe it.

Our pathway is to Discover God, To be formed by God to connect with God's People and to be sent into the World

What is working well and what are you learning?

The Discovering God portion of our process is going well. This fall children's education time was restarted and a new ministry for the youth (6-12) was also started. The adult education time is also going well. The adult education class is currently discovering God through the Bible and Theology. Pastor Jim teaches this class. Pastor Jim is currently walking us through the highlights of the Bible. We also discuss many theological matters that come from the Bible passages that we look at. The adult education class average 8-10 in person and 5-7 joining with us on Facebook Live.

What is your next step?

The next step is to explore the importance of spiritual formation as part of our pathway to discipleship step which asks us to be formed by God.

What do you need from conference and/or district leaders?

Montezuma will need the help of conference leadership to discern what gifts and grace are needed in its clergy person and the discerning God's vision for the future.

Discerning God's Preferred Future

Based on your current reality, what is God asking of your congregation at this time?

Montezuma United Methodist Church is working on discerning whether to go to a multi-charge or half time appointment format for the 2021-2022 appointment year. This discernment process is the effect that COVID-19 has had on this congregation. The attendance and offering are both down and Montezuma must look to a different way of providing for their clergy person.

Deciding Next Steps

What are your goals for next year to help you accomplish what God is asking of you?

It is our goal to follow the leading of the Lord and change how we support a clergy person. We look to do this through multi-charge or part-time charge for 2021-2022 appointment season.