

2014-2015 Statement of Direction

During the 2014-2015 program year, our congregation undertook a journey of discernment, asking together where God might be calling us in the next chapter of our life together. The following are the results of that process, which will guide us as we set priorities and goals in our ongoing ministry.

Who We Are, What We Believe, and How We Live

First Congregational Church of Woodstock is a vibrant Christian community where we gather to worship God, to serve our neighbors, and to grow in our faith through our relationships with one another. We believe that God's love is for everyone—no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. As followers of Jesus, we seek to reach out to neighbors, friends, and strangers, and to share a spirit of welcome with all who cross our threshold. Led by Christ's Spirit, we commit ourselves to caring for one another and for all creation, bringing our curiosity, our spiritual hunger, our sorrows, and our joys, and finding sustenance for the journey together. In all things, we seek to embody God's grace, mercy, forgiveness, compassion, hope, and joy.

The Vision to Which God Calls Us

Relationships. We feel called to continue to deepen our relationships within our congregation. We feel called to create opportunities where we can share our truths and our stories, learning from and with one another what a faithful life means. In so doing, we will grow in our faith and in our relationships with God.

Community Engagement. We feel called to expand the welcome we share so that it reaches further beyond our doors. We feel called to connect with our neighbors in new ways—to learn who they are, to get to know them, to listen to their needs and gifts, to discover opportunities for collaboration, and to be changed and enriched by these encounters. We feel called to find new ways of communicating so that all might know the joy, purpose, and identity we find in the gospel message of God's love.

Faith in Action. We feel called to deepen our engagement with issues of justice by educating ourselves and by taking actions that will build up the realm of God. Following in the way of Jesus, we feel called to broaden our work in the world by seeking out our neighbors—known and unknown, near and far—and by serving our community in new ways.