

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & OUTCOMES #1 & 2: OPERATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

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1 - Reach out and engage persons along the entire spectrum of faithful relationships.

Operational Definition: We understand “reach out” to mean proactive out reach to people to inform them about who Cedar Lane is, what we do, and the programs we offer. We understand “engage” to mean that we offer programming suited to people in different stages of faith development, different life stages, and different cultural backgrounds. All ages feel like they are engaged in worship and programming, not just attending a worship performance or watching a program. Cedar Lane helps connect people in to these faithful relationships, starting with a robust new member and visitor program, and continuing to different ways to connect with others through small group and affinity group programming. People are guided on a path to develop their own spirituality deeper while deepening relationships with fellow congregants.

1.a - Provide meaningful experiences that engage children, youth and adults: from those in the earliest stage of seeking a spiritual home, to those on the path to membership, to those who will become our next lay leaders as well as those who have long been deeply involved.

Operational Definition: There is spiritual programming and worship for all ages in the lifespan, that is also tailored based on where they are on their own faith development journey. There are different personal development and spiritual development tracks for a wide level of different interests and different life/faith development stages. There is a clear, well-understood membership pipeline, from initial welcoming to signing the book to developing as deeper, more connected members of the community. There is a clear, well-understood program for leadership development that engages people at different stages of leadership to help them move to the next stage of leadership.

1.a.1 - Cedar Lane is touching and transforming lives in the community

Operational Definition: We understand “touching” to mean spiritual companionship and inspirational programming - programming that seeks to give spiritual companionship and support to a world that is increasingly isolating. We understand “transforming” to mean religious education, faith development, and social justice work - programming that seeks to change how people think about their own spirituality, their own values, and/or their own world. Cedar Lane should have programs in both of these areas of congregational life that focus on the internal, Cedar Lane community, and the external, wider community of which we are a part.

1.a.2 - Cedar Lane has vibrant intergenerational programming and worship services

Operational Definition: We understand “vibrant” to mean multi-sensory, multi-cultural, and multi-faith. Understanding that people have different and even contradictory definitions of vibrant, there is a wide range of programming and worship services to meet the spiritual and developmental needs of a wide range of faith stages and identities. There is a consistent increase in the amount of intergenerational, all ages together programming and worship with components that appeal to different ages, generations, and learning styles.

1.a.3 - Cedar Lane has a broad range of members across all ages willing to take on new leadership roles.

Operational Definition: We have a broad range of members, coming to us from different cultural experiences, different generations, and different faith backgrounds. New leadership roles are identified and created. There is a clear leadership development pipeline that is well understood by the congregation and programs to increase leadership skills are offered on a consistent basis for different levels of leadership development. Current leaders understand the importance of making space for new leadership, and there are planned, regular transitions in all stages of leadership.

1.a.4 - Visitors feel welcomed and new members feel engaged

Operational Definition: In order for visitors to feel welcomed, we must first ensure we have regular visitors – through advertising, stronger social media presence, and outreach events tailored for the community. Visitors must feel welcomed into the larger community from the first steps through the door. Regular trainings are offered to both greeters and the wider membership on how to be more welcoming to different identities. New members have clear pathways to become more engaged in the wider Cedar Lane community, and these pathways are well known and well advertised to the Cedar Lane community. Members are mindful about their own communication practices, making sure to avoid using insider language, and wider congregational systems are made more accessible and demystified.

1.a.5 - Membership reflects diversity of the broader community of which we are a part.

Operational Definition: We understand “diversity” to mean a diversity of race, ethnicity, class, socioeconomic status, age, family status, education, abilities, theological background, gender, sexual affinity, and political beliefs. New membership classes add to the diversity of our existing membership. Intentional outreach is done to make our membership increasingly diverse while work is done inside Cedar Lane to make our community more welcoming and appealing to

diverse backgrounds.

1.b - Align all ministry teams around our vision and mission, clarifying paths to deeper spiritual connection and community engagement.

Operational Definition: All ministry teams have clearly defined charters that clearly specific how their work will help Cedar Lane make progress towards our vision/mission. Any ministry team or committee that does not help make progress toward our vision/mission is either retooled or sunsetted. Different paths for spiritual development and leadership development are created, well programmed, and well advertised. A wide range of opportunities to engage both the internal Cedar Lane community and our external community are offered on a consistent basis.

1.b.1 - The work of all ministry teams clearly relates to our vision/mission.

Operational Definition: Every year, ministry teams are asked to set clear goals for their ministry team that fall under the different components of our vision/mission statement. At the end of the year, ministry teams are asked to reflect on the work done and create a report on their work as it relates to the vision/mission of Cedar Lane. The vision/mission is used as the guiding principle for deciding what ministry teams are created and the work that the ministry teams do. Every ministry team can easily explain how their work related to the broader mission, and if ministry teams are not reflective of the vision/mission of Cedar Lane, their work is wound down and the ministry team sunsetted.

Section 2:

2 - Focus our social justice work and increase its impact.

Operational Definition: We need to move from an approach that focuses on saying yes to any social justice project or opportunity that arises, and move towards having a clearly defined focus for our efforts. One congregation can only do so much, and if our social justice efforts are focused on certain areas, we have the ability to make deeper changes and see deeper personal transformation that comes from social justice work. We want to have a narrower yet deeper impact as opposed to a broader yet shallower impact.

2.a - Achieve congregational consensus around a few carefully selected major issues in which we will invest our resources (time and budget). Broaden and deepen congregational engagement in these compelling areas.

Operational Definition: The congregation should have a process by which the stakeholders involved in our social justice efforts are able to choose a set number of social justice issue areas to focus on. Once these issue areas have been decided on by the key stakeholders, the rest of the congregation will be educated about which

areas were chosen and why to build a wider consensus. Social Justice programming that does not fall in to one of the new social justice issue areas will be either be reformed or be transitioned out of our social justice program. Additional social justice programming will be developed for these new social justice areas, and a list of community partners doing work in these areas will be developed as to facilitate deeper relationship building with different community organizations.

2.a.1 – Cedar Lane is making a substantial difference in a few carefully selected social justice issues.

Operational Definition: We understand “substantial difference” to mean that our money and time are spent on causes that will have the largest possible impact in the social justice issue area. This implies being intentional with which causes, projects, and partnerships to support, and for each social justice issue area to spend time researching and discerning how their resources can have the biggest impact in our community. We also understand that aiming for “substantial difference” will mean consistently evaluating and re-evaluating our projects/efforts/partnerships to determine if another project/effort/partnership will bring about a larger impact. This will require a culture shift away from being project-centered - caring most about individual organizations or individual projects – and toward being issue-driven – focused on making the biggest impact on the issue no matter the organization or project. The social justice issue areas should be focused to a small number using a thorough and intentional process involving stakeholders in our social justice programs. These issue areas should be specific enough to have a clear focus, but broad enough to be umbrella issue areas with multiple pathways for engagement.

2.b - Challenge the entire congregation to become stakeholders in our core social justice efforts in meaningful ways as we expand and deepen relationships with the wider community around us.

Operational Definition: We understand “challenge the congregation” to be done through a variety of avenues – from worship experiences that highlight the needs of our social justice efforts, to religious education classes to learn more about the social justice issues at play, to lifting up the social justice needs across all of our communication vehicles. We understand “stakeholders” here to mean that the membership of Cedar Lane feels a vested interest in one or more of the social justice areas, and feels an individual calling to make a difference in these social justice efforts. We understand “meaningful ways” to be a wide range of different levels of justice making efforts through service, education, advocacy, and public witness. Meaningful ways include, but are not limited to, personal commitments to behaviors in relation to the social justice issue areas, personal advocacy efforts in individuals’ local communities, collective advocacy and lobbying, service projects both individual and communal, witness opportunities, learning more about the issue areas, and teaching others about the issue areas. We understand “expand and deepen relationships” to be a calling that we move away from a mindset of doing

service/justice for others and move toward a mindset of doing service/justice with communities most impacted. This mindset shift requires engaging in community partnerships and letting ourselves, both individually and as a congregation, be led by those community partnerships. Cedar Lane needs to expand the number of our community partners in our chosen social justice issue areas, and also needs to go deeper in those relationships – form true, long lasting partnerships in each of our social justice issue areas as opposed to entering relationships with preconceived expectations.

2.b.1 - Children, youth, and adults of Cedar Lane engage broadly, deeply, and personally in social justice activities in partnership with the wider community around us.

Operational Definition: No one way of doing social justice can apply to all ages in the lifespan. Different pathways are needed to engage in the social justice issue areas for where people are in their stages of faith development, justice development, and where they are in the lifespan. Each stage can engage broadly (engaging in a variety of justice issue areas and projects), deeply (learning more about the justice area, developing a stronger personal affinity for one or more of the social justice issue areas), and personally (making social justice a daily spiritual practice and/or daily habit.) All social justice efforts are seen through the lens of partnering with the community around us and partnering with justice organizations already doing work on the ground as opposed to needing to reinvent the wheel so we are seen as being in charge – willingly being led by partners as opposed to feeling the requirement to lead.