

Hancock United Church of Christ Statement of Purpose (2006)

“Blessed are those whose strength is in you... They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.” (Psalm 84:5a,7)

Preamble

The goal of this statement is to identify what is most important both spiritually and culturally to the Hancock community as a whole, while affirming the diversity of individuals that make up our church family. It attempts to describe what is unique about our community of faith, why we feel moved to join together to worship God, and how we desire to make our presence felt in the world.

By answering these questions, we gain an important roadmap for our spiritual journey. We can refer to them both for guidance and for refreshment. We can also use them to help give outsiders and newcomers alike a clearer sense of who we are and what we stand for.

Statement of Purpose

We, the Hancock Church family, seek to live joyfully and grow as a people whose strength is in God, in the Holy Spirit, and in the life, teachings, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We embrace the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith. At our spiritual center are the commandments to obey God and love our neighbors. We acknowledge that the Earth and all of our earthly resources are gifts from God and we endeavor to be wise stewards of them in all that we do. Our church's foundations are built on community, worship, study, and service.

In **community** we encourage one another in our journeys of faith. We believe that relationships lie at the core of carrying out God's work in this world and so we seek to build them both inside and outside our walls. Our Covenant of Welcome is based on embracing *all* who desire to know God. We strive to provide warm fellowship in a safe and inviting environment. We recognize our profound obligation for clergy and laity alike to respect and care for each other. We share our joys in times of happiness and our sorrows in times of trial.

In **worship**, we join together to offer praise and thanks to God while seeking to better understand how God shapes our thoughts, our words, and our deeds. We anticipate and foster our Creator's renewing presence in our midst through prayer, through exploring and illuminating Scripture, and through music, which holds a cherished place in the life of Hancock.

In **study**, members of all ages can deepen their connections to God and engage in spiritual development while enhancing community and better equipping one another for service. We encourage all members to explore, discuss, and reflect on the meaning of spiritual teachings while respecting differences in each other's beliefs. We place a strong emphasis on helping our younger members grow in their knowledge of Christian values and apply them to their everyday lives.

In **service**, the Hancock family responds to God's calls for social justice and putting our faith into action. A strong commitment to service has been a defining characteristic of this church throughout its history. We actively participate in a wide range of outreach and mission to help alleviate human suffering and oppression throughout the world.