

Cedar Ridge Annual Plan

August 2023

Introduction

Our vision at Cedar Ridge is all about hope and transformation. This is rooted in the incredible hope Jesus has demonstrated for humanity—Jesus believes in us! So our vision is a commitment to the conviction that anyone can change, no matter how difficult that might be, and no matter how dark and desperate the situations we find ourselves in. It's also a commitment to making the world a better place. The world can seem full of pain, injustice, violence, and despair, but there's also so much love, healing, reconciliation, and beauty. Our vision means we choose to celebrate that beauty and refuse to give up hope by doing all we can to bring love, justice, peace, and healing wherever we can.

Hope requires both courage and practical determination, and over the years we have worked together to make this hope a reality. It's a journey that is often slow, and progress is sometimes hard to see, but this hope is incarnated all around us. It's in our community farm that feeds local hungry families, and in our 63-acre property that we ensure safeguards our local wildlife and historic buildings. It's in our work with local schools, our solar farm, our partnership with the people of Ipala in Guatemala, and our struggle for racial justice right here. It's in our efforts to become a more just, inclusive, and equitable community ourselves. It's in the open space we create whenever we gather so that it's safe to bring questions, doubts, and fears, and be our authentic selves no matter what our faith journey. And most of all it's in each one of us as we work at our own personal growth, take care of one another, and serve in the myriad of ways that make our community what it is.

This hope is good news, and we have something worth sharing! So this year the main focus of our plans is to share our vision with others. We want to become more accessible to people who are looking for this kind of hope, and get better at helping people integrate into our community. We want to reach out and let people know we are here, and look for creative ways to engage with them. We want to continue our journey towards greater diversity and inclusion based on the feedback from last year's discernment process. A core part of our vision is to be a welcoming community of radical love and acceptance, and this too is a part of our growth journey together. So this year we will all work together to explore ways we can grow in this way, as we seek to be agents of hope in our homes, neighborhoods, and society at large.

Goal and Objectives

The goal for this coming year is to share our vision and welcome more people into our community.

The objectives that contribute to this goal are as follows:

1. To increase our reach into the community so people are more aware of who we are.
2. To make Sunday gatherings accessible to new people.
3. To foster greater diversity and inclusion within our church community.

Activities

Activities principally contributing to Objective 1:

- We will continue to use seasonal mailers and roadside banners to inform local residents of events and activities. We will also investigate the effectiveness of other forms of communication such as print, radio and online advertising.

- We will continue our community participation in the annual Burtonsville Day festivities, and seek to identify other local events that provide us with exposure to people who are looking for a community like ours.
- We will again host our popular annual events—the Harvest Festival, and Christmas at the Barn—as well as outdoor movie nights, and other events TBD.

Activities principally contributing to Objective 2:

- We will systematically assess potential obstacles to newcomers feeling welcome and integrated, and create more opportunities for connection.
- We will develop our online presence to nurture deeper community for people who are unable to attend in person.

Activities principally contributing to Objective 3:

- We will increase our relational diversity through events at which we intentionally pursue deeper connection.
- We will work to increase the diversity of our worship experience through expansion of the worship team, and integration of new song sources.
- We will continue community dialogue in various formats as part of the justice and healing process.

Upcoming Series

Fall series

In this four-week series, we will explore who we are and who we want to be as a community together, and personally as members of that community. Sunday messages will focus on the vision, values and distinctives of our community, and their place in church history. Sundays will include small group discussions and interactive activities.

Late fall series

Over the course of the year, we will study the Gospel of Mark. In the late fall, we will cover the first half of the book, with the remaining chapters constituting a follow-on series in the spring.

Advent

We will explore the mysteries of the Christmas story through the lens of holiday traditions, including Christmas trees, shopping and gift giving, holly and mistletoe, and nativity scenes. The series will begin with an all-ages service and will include a focus on finding ways to avoid consumerism while giving generously and ethically.

Calendar 2023-24

Date	Event	Notes
Mon Aug 28	Back to school for MCPS, HCPSS & PGCPs	
Sun Sep 3	Stories of Faith 5	Labor Day weekend. Potluck picnic
Tue Sep 5	Evening Prayer Practice	Outdoors (weather permitting)
Sun Sept 10	Why Do We Do That? 1	Invitation to reflect on own commitment
Sun Sep 17	Why Do We Do That? 2	
Sat Sep 23	Burtonsville Day	9:30AM-2:20PM

Sun Sep 24	Why Do We Do That? 3	Ministry Spotlight Quiz and ice cream bars (outdoors)
Sat Sep 30	Farm Work Day 9AM-12 noon	
Sun Oct 1	Why Do We Do That? 4	
Tue Oct 3	Evening Prayer Practice, 7-8PM	
Sun Oct 8	Surprised by Love 1	Journey 1
Sun Oct 15	Surprised by Love 2	Harvest Festival 12-3PM
Fri Oct 20	Wine & Worship, 6:30-8:30PM	
Sun Oct 22	Surprised by Love 3	Journey 2 Harvest Festival rain date
Sun Oct 29	Day of Service	Breakfast outdoors
Sun Nov 5	Surprised by Love 4	Community Sunday, DSL ends Annual Meeting and soup potluck
Mon Nov 6	Evening Prayer Practice, 7-8PM	Election Day is Tue Nov 7
Sun Nov 12	Surprised by Love 5	
Sun Nov 19	Surprised by Love 6	
Sun Nov 26	Thanksgiving Service	Thanksgiving on 11/23 Christmas decorating, pizza lunch
Sat Dec 2	Christmas at the Barn	
Sun Dec 3	The Presence of the Past 1	AAT
Sat Dec 9	Advent Quiet Day	
Sun Dec 10	The Presence of the Past 2	Christmas Eve music rehearsal Fair Trade shopping
Sun Dec 17	The Presence of the Past 3	Fireplace and cookies/hot choc
Sun Dec 24	The Presence of the Past 4 Christmas Eve service 5:30 PM	AAT traditional candlelit service
Sun Dec 31	New Year's Eve Service	