

**Vision/Purpose Statement Fall 2011**  
First United Methodist Church  
Harlingen, Texas



**Biblical Basis -**

- **Great Commandment** - Matthew 22:34-40 and Luke 10:25-29

*"You must love the Lord, your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind."*

- **Great Commission** - Matthew 28:18-20

*"I have been given authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

**\*Purpose -**

To develop a Christian community that helps people move beyond empty religious practice into a vital and deeply committed relationship with Jesus Christ.

**\*Vision -**

Real people discovering a real relationship with Jesus Christ that make a real impact in the world.

**\*Our Journey -**

Learning to love the Lord, our God with:  
Heart (Worship)  
Mind (Growth)  
Strength (Mission and Service)

**Our Priorities -**

- **Worship** - Worship is the only meaningful gift we can give to God. It does not happen only in a sanctuary, it is rather a way of life and thinking. Worship is the primary way we can be made new. Worship should be transformational, inspiring, relevant, and God-centered.

- **Children** - We will make effective children's ministry a priority for our church. As the Body of Christ we have a responsibility to the children of this church, community, and in the world to introduce them to a God who loves them deeply so that they may have a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ both now and in the future.

- **Youth** - We will always strive for effective, relevant ministry to youth - both inside and outside of the church. At a time where culture, peers, and the pressures of maturation are powerful influences, we have a responsibility to encourage, teach, and model the joys and challenges of the deeply committed Christian life. We want to empower our students to make a powerful impact in the world based on their relationship with Jesus Christ.

- **Adults** - Christian maturity is a journey, not a destination. Through teaching, experiences, mission, and service, we want to help our adults move constantly closer to Christ. From whatever the starting point, our goal is to create a culture of vital and deeply committed Christians... one step at a time.

- **Mission/Service** - Faith is not to be just known, but lived. As we strive to love our neighbor as ourselves, the evidence of that journey will be way we serve others. Mission and service is not only an internal goal for the church; but rather, it is primarily the way we share the love of Christ with those outside of our walls. As John Wesley stated it, *"The world is my parish..."* Our mission and service will be local, regional, and worldwide.

**Our Values -**

Because of God's great love for us, it is our desire and honor to work on His behalf. To that end, we will do anything and everything to minister the love of Christ to anyone and everyone, anywhere and everywhere we have the opportunity. The characteristics of our ministry we value the most are: integrity, grace, relevance, authenticity, excellence, passion, humility, faith, inclusivity, commitment, joy, and love.

**Our Limitations -**

We recognize that as imperfect people striving for a relationship with a perfect God, we can get in the way of our own message. Therefore we commit ourselves to the following:

- We will give the Bible authority in all aspects of our life.
- We will seek the Lord's will through prayer at every level of our ministries.
- We will seek to be good stewards of all resources in which we have been given.
- We will evaluate our ministries constantly for effectiveness, cohesion with God's will, and to ensure we are ministering to those outside the church - the lost, broken, and searching.
- We will avoid any program or ministry which does not coincide our purpose or vision for this community.

**Our Goals -** Our primary steps for the next 6 months.

- To adopt and begin to live out our Vision/Purpose/Mission as a church.
- To become more intentional in our invitation and inclusion of people in the community. (Mugging Ministry, Care Corps.)
- Host "Trunk or Treat" on Halloween in 4th Street Parking Lot
- To develop a mission ministry to Bowie Elementary (Backpack/Food & Christmas Angel Tree)
- To serve the poor and needy in our community. (Thanksgiving Dinner at the church)
- To send at least 2 teams to the Wildfire Relief effort in Central Texas
- To hire a Children's Director and a Youth Director for our church.
- To surround our new beginnings in prayer. (40 days - October 12 - November 20).
- Direct Christmas Eve Offering to Missions (Wildfire and Loaves and Fishes)
- Goal of 1500 at 3 Christmas Eve Services - advertise our January Sermon Series, Why?
- 10% Bump in Average Worship attendance for January.
- Streamline Leadership Committees