

# SUMMIT — ON — SUMMIT

HOUSE OF HOPE LEADERSHIP RETREAT

January 23, 2021 | 9:00 a.m.

# Agenda

- Welcome and Overview
- Opening Prayer
- Sharing of Opening Remarks
- Sharing of House of Hope Strengths
- Ten Year Timeline
- Sharing of Financial Statistics and Membership Data
- Sharing of Accomplishments during a Pandemic
- Virtual Coffee Break
- Overview of 7 Objectives Process
- Breakout Zoom Rooms
- Virtual Coffee Break
- Zoom Rooms Reporting
- Next Steps
- Closing Prayer

## Opening Remarks

Biologist and best-selling author Matt Ridley developed the concept of becoming a “Rational Optimist.” He offered this as a lens through which to view and to live in the world.

Everyone loves an optimist. Helen Keller wrote, “Every optimist moves along with progress and hastens it, while every pessimist would keep the world at a standstill.” What Ridley helpfully captures is the insight optimism also requires facts and a modicum of rationality. As Ridley put it, “I am a rational optimist: rational, because I have arrived at optimism not through temperament or instinct, but by looking at the evidence....”

Six months ago, we began to serve alongside you as Co-Pastors. Some have asked, “How could you begin a call in the middle of a pandemic?” Our answer: we are rational optimists. We hold fast to the truth, God works to provide a “future with hope,” but we have also learned over the twenty-five years we have worked in the church it is important to identify facts and challenges, because facts and challenges, while daunting, provide opportunities to re-imagine, re-invent, and re-vitalize.

In this document you find “rational optimism” regarding our future as a congregation.

On pages 4-7 you will find a celebratory list of the strengths of the House of Hope that have been launched, cultivated and sustained over the past 165 years.

On pages 10-13 you will find statistical information regarding membership trends and finances, presented as a means to provide an overview of the challenges and opportunities we will need to face in the coming weeks and months.

Finally, to guide our work and discussion, on page 15 you will find the inspiring results from our 1-7-75-175 Initiative this fall which led to an updated Mission Statement and 7 Objectives that will shape our efforts over the coming 10 years.

At our leadership retreat in September we described how House of Hope has experienced nine chapters in its history: The Formative Years, The Search for Mission, Merger and the Move to St. Anthony Hill, Henry Chapman Swearingen, the Church in Depression and War, Postwar Growth and Expansion, Toward the New Millennium, and the Church in Community and the World. This morning we continue to outline the next chapter, our 10th chapter, a chapter of rational optimism.

Faithfully,

Lynn and Mark Barger Elliott  
Co-Pastors Head of Staff

# HOUSE OF HOPE STRENGTHS



**Adult Enrichment** – From poets to politicians, non-profit leaders to theologians, Sunday morning enrichment classes offer insights into how to live faithfully in our world.

**The Bash** – Launched 17 years ago as a means to support Mission Outreach giving at HOH, “A Party with a Purpose” has supported those in need in our community, country, and world.

**Capital City Grief Coalition** - This coalition of St. Paul churches provides grief support and meets on Thursday evenings at four different churches in a regular rotation.

**Choir School** – Founded in 1982, the Choir School offers excellence in music education to children in our church and community. Choristers sing weekly during the worship service.

**Community Food Shelf Garden** – Our garden on Summit Avenue produces fresh vegetables to help feed the hungry in our community. Each year we donate approximately 2,000 pounds of fresh produce to Neighborhood House food shelf and Hallie Q. Brown.

**Didier Seminar** - Founded in 1993, this seminar is dedicated to nurturing spiritual growth through engaging and nationally known speakers in religion, the arts, letters, and science. Speakers range from Rev. Dr. Marcus Borg and Dr. Imam Seyyed Hossein Nasr, to Diana Butler Bass and Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.







**Earth Care Congregation** – HOH was certified as an Earth Care Congregation in 2020 and seeks to view the work of our congregation, and our facility, as a means to tangibly promote care for our planet.

**Faith Builders: Habitat for Humanity** – A long-standing partner with Habitat for Humanity, HOH volunteers support Saturday work crews and the summer work camp.

**Houses of Hope Fund** – Established in 1999 to honor our 150th anniversary, the Houses of Hope Fund has granted more than 2.5 million to support affordable housing in St. Paul.

**Intercessors' Guild** - Our Intercessors' Guild has been praying for nearly 100 years. Volunteers pray every day for members of our church and its mission, as well as the larger community and the world.

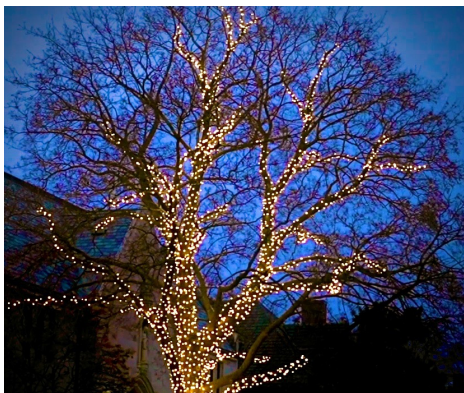
**Loaves and Fishes** - Volunteers meet on the third Monday of even months to provide dinner for those in need.

**Mission Sewing** - The longest running group at HOH, beginning 150 years ago. From making rolled bandages and knit warm woolens for the troops in both world wars, to making 44 fleece blankets for the grand opening of Prior Crossing.

**Music at HOH** – We truly celebrate God's gift of music at HOH. Services include our Fisk, Merklin, and Jaekel organs, The Motet Choir, the Choir School, the Handbell Choir, and Noyes Memorial Carillon.







**Pilgrimages** – Over the years, HOH has offered pilgrimages to countries such as Ireland and Scotland as a means to nurture spiritual growth.

**Prior Crossing** – In 2010, HOH partnered with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative to build a 44-unit housing development that provides supportive, affordable housing for homeless youth in Ramsey County, MN.

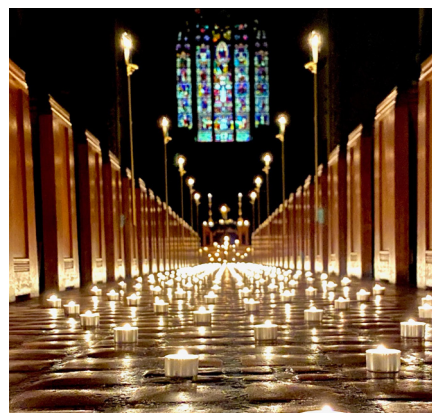
**Project Home** - Each October, House of Hope opens its doors to shelter homeless families from St. Paul and provides shelter, food, security, and hospitality.

**Stephen Ministry** - Our trained volunteer group works with members and those in the community to provide Christ-centered emotional and spiritual care and support.

**Sunday Series** - House of Hope's Sunday Series invites well-known speakers to discuss key issues of our day and artists to share their artistic engagement with life and faith. Speakers range from Doris Kearns Goodwin and Harry Belafonte, to Michael Eric Dyson and Dr. Jill Biden.

**Youth Trips** – Youth Trips have been a focus at HOH. Recent trips include New Orleans (2016), Detroit (2017) and Guatemala (2018).

**Women's Advocates** - Provides shelter for nearly 1,000 women and children each year. A group of volunteers gathers every third Thursday to support this ministry.



# HOUSE OF HOPE TIMELINE



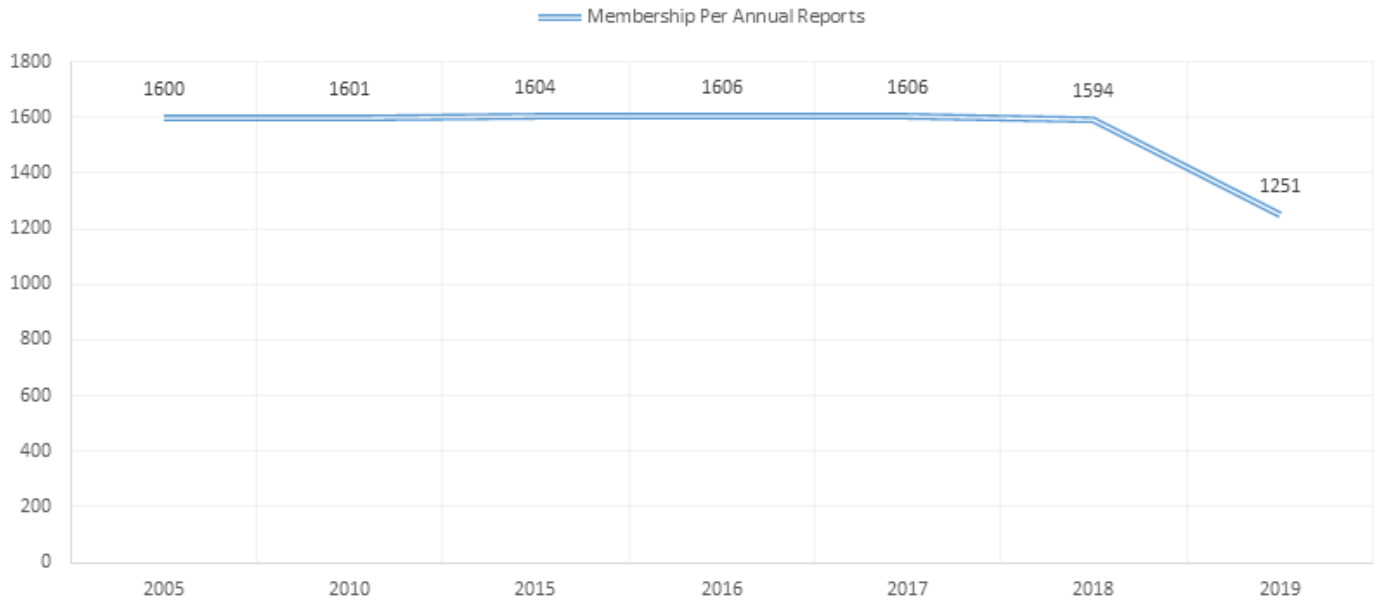
## Ten Year Timeline

2010	<p>An initial \$20 million capital campaign was proposed. After a feasibility study by Benefactor Group, it was reduced to \$8-10 million. \$7 million was raised.</p> <p>Capital Campaign: <i>Our Hope For Years To Come</i> was launched.</p> <p>Major Goals: Bell Tower renovation; exterior tuck pointing, roof replacement on sanctuary and administrative office area; accessibility and education wing upgrades.</p>	
2014	<p>Julia Carlson is hired as Transitional Associate Pastor.</p>	
2015	<p>Campaign ends - Task force reports on unaddressed projects: Great Hall and Kitchen, HVAC, Parish House windows and mullions, sanctuary updates to lighting and sound. Associate Pastor Tom Forster-Smith departs.</p> <p>The HOH Preschool closed in May.</p>	
2016	<p>Julia Carlson is hired as Associate Pastor.</p>	
2018	<p>Pastor David Van Dyke retires; Associate Pastor Jeff Foels departs.</p> <p>Transitional Pastor Andrew McDonald hired.</p> <p>Mission Study Report completed.</p> <p>HVAC and Kitchen task forces re-formed. Architects hired. Campaign discussion begins.</p> <p>Transitional Associate Pastor Zachary Wilson hired.</p> <p>Director of Administration Diane Smith retires.</p>	
2019	<p>Pastor Nominating Committee begins search.</p> <p>Director of Youth Ministry Doug Snaza departs.</p>	
2020	February	HVAC Owners Representative hired.
	March	<p>Pandemic limits in-person worship and activities.</p> <p>Session approves PPP Loan application.</p>
	April	<p>Easter Services recorded and presented online and television.</p> <p>Andrew McDonald departs.</p>
	May	Lynn and Mark Barger Elliott called as Co-Pastors Head of Staff.
	August	Co-Pastors begin.
	September	<p>All-Church Leadership Retreat</p> <p>Rally Sunday Event</p>
	October	Zachary Wilson departs.
	November	<p>Director of Youth Ministry Dan Miglets-Nelson hired.</p> <p>Long Range Planning Report 1-7-75-175 is approved by Session.</p> <p>HVAC report at Session Retreat, estimate for HVAC is 10+ million.</p>
2021	January	Capital Campaign list now includes possible: slate tile replace and repair, asbestos abatement, parish house windows. Total estimate at 13+ million.

# HOUSE OF HOPE STATISTICS

For many years at HOH the church rolls were not updated by Session action. In 2019 this task was undertaken which reduced our membership from approximately 1600 to 1251. There has also been a steady decline in the overall number of people joining HOH while at the same time a steady number of individuals who have joined the Church Triumphant.

## Membership 2005-2019



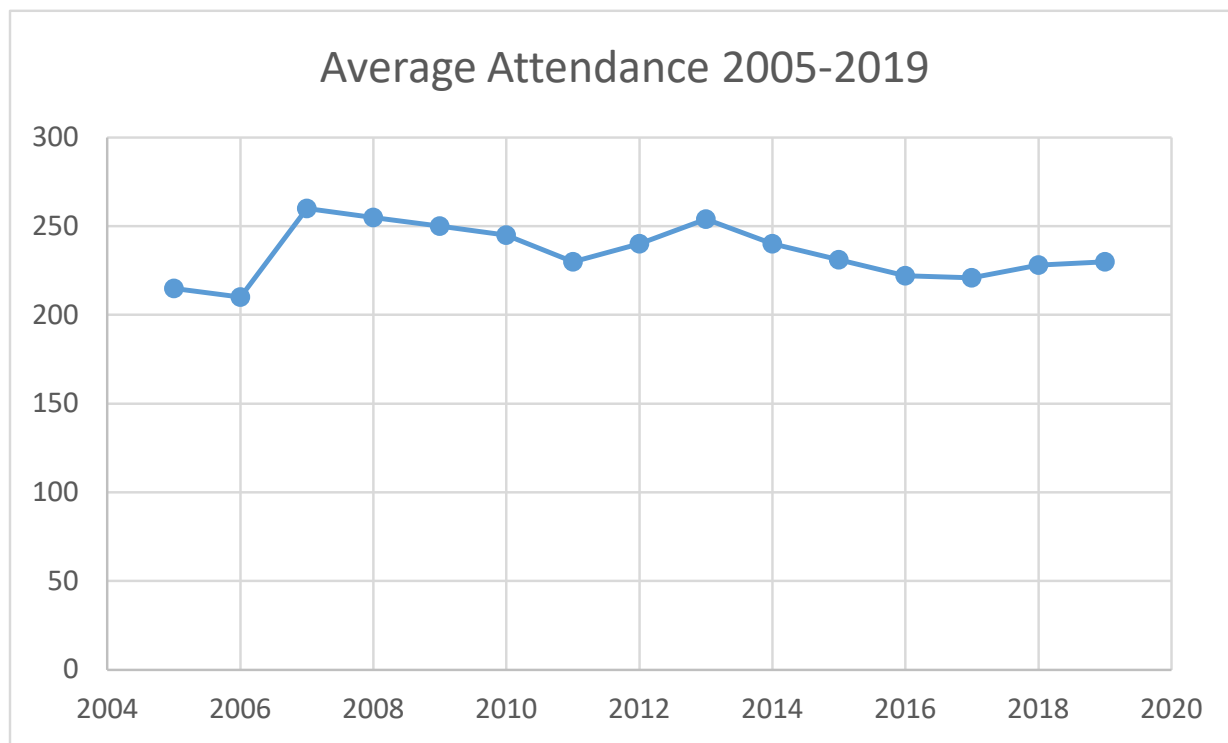
### New Members/Gains

2005: **76**  
 2006: **35**  
 2007: **47**  
 2008: **55**  
 2009: **59**  
 2010: **50**  
 2011: **28**  
 2012: **38**  
 2013: **35**  
 2014: **26**  
 2015: **29**  
 2016: **57**  
 2017: **24**  
 2018: **11**  
 2019: **21**

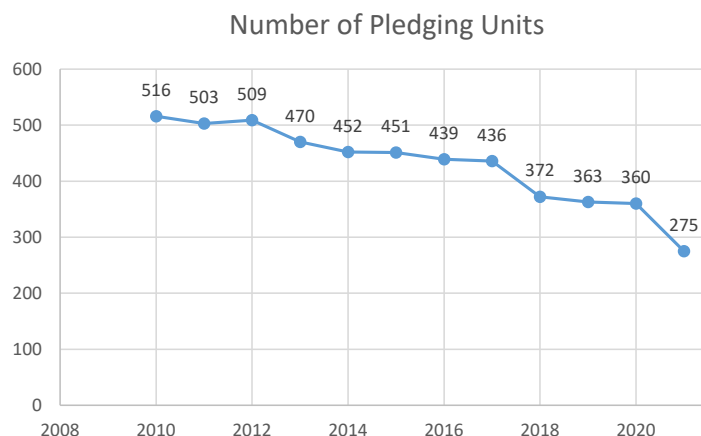
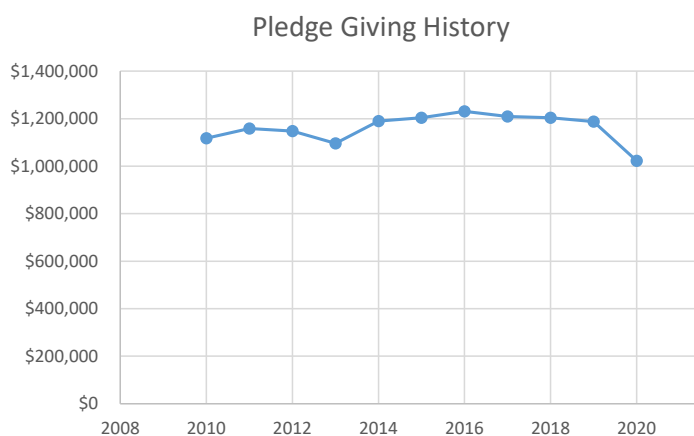
### Removals/Deaths

2005: 46 Removed    9 deaths = **55**  
 2006: 44 Removed    9 deaths = **53**  
 2007: 40 Removed    20 deaths = **60**  
 2008: 113 Removed    10 deaths = **123**  
 2009: 15 Removed    26 deaths = **41**  
 2010: 24 Removed    18 deaths = **42**  
 2011: 14 Removed    16 deaths = **30**  
 2012: 32 Removed    28 deaths = **60**  
 2013: 30 Removed    22 deaths = **53**  
 2014: 18 Removed    17 deaths = **35**  
 2015: 9 Removed    23 deaths = **32**  
 2016: 38 Removed    17 deaths = **55**  
 2017: 18 Removed    25 deaths = **43**  
 2018: 6 Removed    17 deaths = **23**  
 2019: 363 Removed    16 deaths = **379**

Since 2005, House of Hope has maintained a range of worship attendance between 210 - 260. In 2018 we reversed a decline that had begun in 2013. This consistent worship attendance is notable, as many churches are experiencing steady and even precipitous declines in attendance.



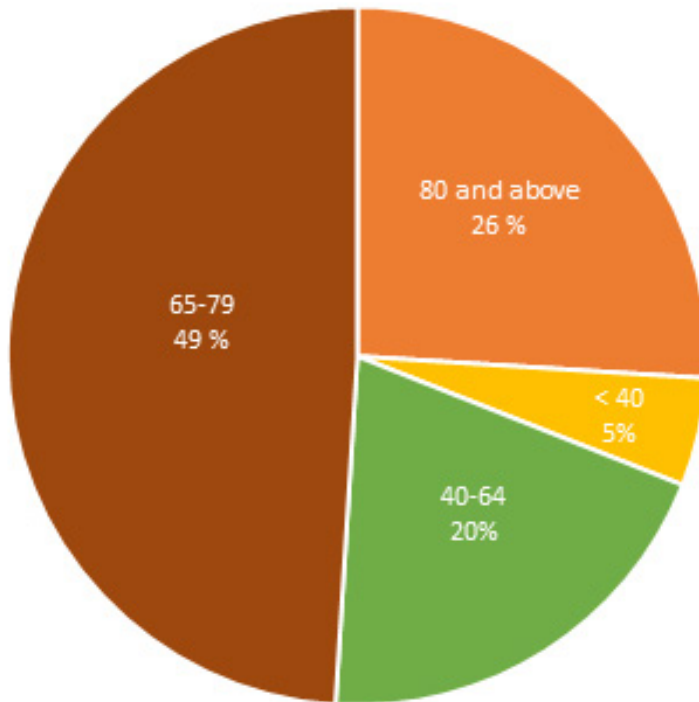
HOH is not unique in facing the challenge of total pledge amount and participants. Of note, there has been relative stability in the total pledging amounts between a high of \$1,230,493 and a low of \$1,095,865. There has, however, been a steep decline in the number of participants pledging from a high of 516 in 2010, to currently 275.



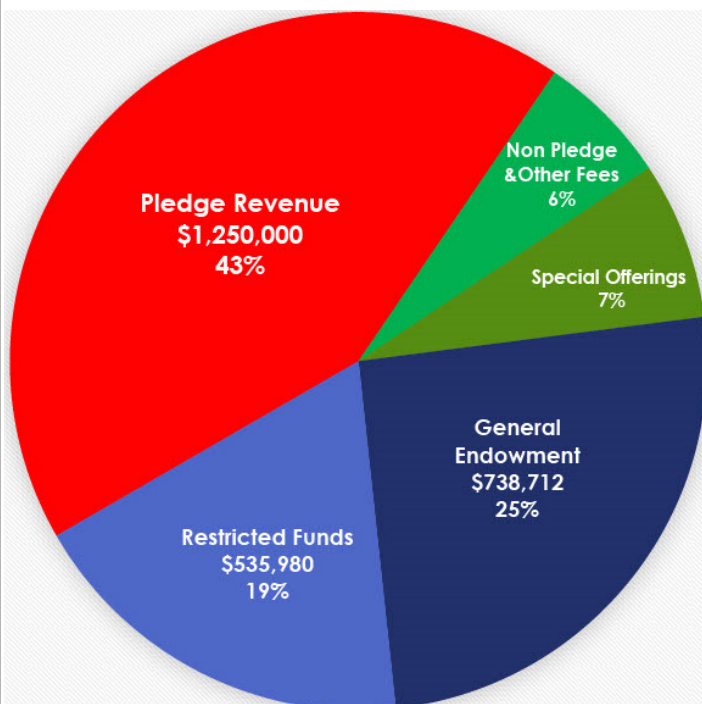


## HOH in a Pandemic

Pledging % by Membership Age



2020 Budget



- Family Worship on Sunday mornings via Zoom, and Elementary Game Time on Zoom on Fridays
- 200+ attended the Rally Sunday Picnic
- 1,000+ people attended The Festival of Hope
- 2020 Bash: over 150 participants raise \$83,000 60% over goal of \$50,000
- Launching "The Hub"- a ministry where children, youth, and families build community and faith through education, service, and the arts.
- Confirmation Class via Zoom, 7 participants
- 7@7 Advent Services averaged 300 views each
- Children's Christmas Pageant and Choir School Christmas Concert on Zoom
- Christmas Eve Services watched by over 768 devices. (For actual viewership, multiply by 1.5)
- Bibles presented to Kindergartners and 3rd graders
- 47+ Activity Kits handed out to families
- Streamed Worship Attendance:  
Sept.-Nov. averages: 357, new visitors: 32;  
Dec. averages: 407, new visitors: 52  
(For actual viewership, multiply by 1.5)
- Hope in Winter Activities, including outside walks along the Mississippi River.

# HOUSE OF HOPE

## 7 OBJECTIVES



On September 15, the Session approved a 1-7-75-175 Initiative to enable us to prayerfully discern where God might be leading our congregation in the coming years. In addition, they set in motion a Long Range Planning Committee to assimilate input from the congregation and discern our mission and 7 major objectives we can tackle in the coming years as we move toward our 175th anniversary.

## House of Hope Mission Statement

Hope is more than a word in our name—it is why we were founded on Christmas Eve in 1855.

Our inclusive and affirming community seeks to live out the word of God in our time. In the Presbyterian tradition we are Reformed, and yet always reforming. In this spirit we:

Glorify God in our worship and seek to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ by proclaiming the Gospel through preaching, prayer, and exceptional music;

Engage in a holy curiosity which seeks through ongoing learning to apply the teachings of the Bible and to follow the example of Jesus in our daily lives;

Offer fellowship to people both inside and outside the church, listening to and respecting perspectives other than our own;

Celebrate the dynamic and perpetual re-creation of God's world by nurturing a faithful expression of the arts from children's programs to hosting established artists and fostering musical gifts;

Create a welcoming spiritual home for people in all stages of life, from young families to singles, empty nesters to senior adults; and

Advocate for the just treatment of all people by offering tangible assistance and striving for structural change in racial equity, housing, and healthcare access, and environmental stewardship.

## Overview of 7 Objectives Process

We are big fans of the Ann Arbor deli Zingermans and are fortunate to count its co-founder Ari Weinzwieg as a friend. Along with making an incredible Reuben sandwich, Ari is a sought after speaker on leadership and organizational re-vitalization.

He once wrote this about the strategic planning process:

“Malcolm Gladwell said, ‘Once you don’t start at the beginning, your life just gets so much easier.’ Why not, then, use the end as the beginning? It’s an oft-used tactic for writers and filmmakers, so why not try it in our lives? When we know how the story winds up, we will most likely alter the way we approach it from the start.... Psychologist Paul Watzlawick is right when he says, ‘In this sense it was the future—not the past—that determined the present.’”

In Ari’s workshops with companies, CEOs, board members, and individuals, he invites participants to begin with the end in mind, but not only in mind, but to engage the imagination without judgment. As you begin to imagine the future, in other words, you allow yourself to consider playfully and joyfully all possibilities and eventualities. The work of developing goals and metrics is set aside for another day.

So, when is our future?

In our 1-7-75-175 Initiative we set the date as 2030.

We invite each task force to imagine it is our annual meeting in 2030, and we are celebrating with balloons and an enormous layer cake our 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The question before us this morning is, “what specific aspects of each objective might we be also celebrating?” **We invite you to imagine a list of ten achievements for each objective.**

For example: “It is the 2030 Annual Meeting and as we have sought to establish and implement an HOH/Site Plan that reflects our desire to be a hospitable and welcoming community”; what ten items might we be celebrating that day?

Each task force has a member of a Long-Range Planning Committee member as a facilitator.

In a moment we will invite you to leave this “Zoom room” and to enter a new “Zoom room” for your discussion.

Each task force has two simple ground rules:

1. Identify a scribe who will write down your ten ideas to share with the larger group when we reconvene.
2. Each member of the task force will be invited to speak by the facilitator, before someone can speak twice.



## 7 Objectives

1. Establish and implement an HOH/Site Plan that reflects our desire to be a hospitable and welcoming community.
2. Create and implement a HOH Master Financial Plan.
3. Develop and expand programs for children, youth, family, and adults.
4. Create dynamic new partnerships and programs to further our spiritual life through music, arts, and adult education.
5. Update our governance system to be relevant to our current and future needs.
6. Take bold and courageous action to advance diversity, religious pluralism, social justice, and environmental stewardship.
7. Capitalize on new technologies to engage prospective and current members.