



LADUE CHAPEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2023 Mission Study



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*The cover illustration is
from an original watercolor
by Don L. Brandenburger.*



Introduction

Change, even in a church that values tradition and stability, can be an opportunity for growth and renewal. In January 2023, the members of Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church learned of the retirement of their beloved associate pastor, Rev. Dr. Dieter Heinzl, after 22 years of dedicated service. Although his retirement will bring about changes that will impact the entire congregation, Ladue Chapel has chosen to embrace these changes with open hearts and a positive outlook.

In March, the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) began meeting weekly to develop plans for calling a new associate pastor. Right from the start, we were encouraged to listen for God's guidance in this process. Every meeting, decision, and discussion was approached with prayerful consideration, recognizing that we were being led by God in all our actions and words.

The first order of business in this process is to conduct a Mission Study. We were particularly interested in answering the following questions:

- 1. WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?**
- 2. WHERE ARE WE NOW?**
- 3. WHERE DO WE BELIEVE GOD IS CALLING US?**

We offered the membership several opportunities to express their views: by filling out an eight-question survey online or on paper, and by conducting three listening sessions where APNC members and members of the congregation openly discussed ideas and suggestions for how Ladue Chapel could best be prepared to welcome the new associate pastor. We met with groups in the church, including the Deacons and Session, which would have the greatest contact with the new associate pastor.

We sought to answer the following question:

WHAT IS THE WORK OUR CHURCH NEEDS AND WHO IS THE PERSON TO DO IT?

Through the surveys, discussions with the Deacons and Session and listening sessions with members, we received approximately 100 individual responses. The APNC also met with members of the Senior Staff to get their insights

and observations. Results and responses can be found in the section titled "Where Do We Believe God Is Calling Us?". These responses have informed and shaped our understanding of the qualities and gifts we seek in a new associate pastor.

In summary, our members consistently perceive Ladue Chapel as a warm and inviting church, embracing diversity and inclusivity. They recognize its financial stability and commend the wide array of engagement opportunities and activities available for people of all ages. The music program and the recently introduced arts program were specifically highlighted in multiple surveys.

Areas of concern that need our continuing attention include reestablishing the youth program in a meaningful way, including getting young families with children and youth to return to regular attendance. The pandemic was mentioned again and again. Like many other churches, we are still feeling the effects of that period. One benefit that came from the pandemic when the church was closed for in-person attendance was streaming Sunday services online. Many of our ongoing care members and others have found online attendance the best way to be part of the services and feel connected with family and friends.

This has been a year and a time for reflection. Time to think about the rich history of Ladue Chapel, the many contributions from the saints who have come before us, and the traditions that they left for us. It has also been a time to prepare for the future, a time to pray for the future of Ladue Chapel. We look forward with anticipation and excitement to see what God has planned for us. **May it be so.**

ASSOCIATE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE/ MISSION STUDY TEAM:

- Jo Dyroff, Co-Chairperson
- Scott Mullis, Co-Chairperson
- Lily Crabtree
- Amira Fuller
- Vicki Haupt
- Matt Mikula
- Brian Palatnick



Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church Mission Statement

Ladue Chapel is a congregation of God's people, welcoming all, illuminating faith, serving God and neighbor and making a difference on behalf of Christ.

Core Values

We celebrate the following values in our service to God and one another:

COMMUNITY

Working to foster a community of hospitality where all members, friends and visitors feel welcomed, loved and affirmed

CURIOSITY

Striving to use spiritual curiosity to discover God's message for us today and how we reach outside the window of Ladue Chapel

GENEROSITY

Giving freely of time, talent and treasure

COMPASSION

Serving others in our midst and beyond with love and understanding

BEAUTY

Glorifying God and feeling the awe of God's presence in worship through the abundant use of God's gifts of art, music and nature

JOY

Celebrating God's gifts and being inspired in different ways to share God's blessings



Where Have We Been?

HISTORY

Ladue Chapel is a church with a rich history and a strong sense of community. As the church prepares to celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2023, it is worth reflecting on the many ways in which it has grown over the years. One of the most remarkable aspects of Ladue Chapel is the longevity of its membership. Many original members have remained active in the church for decades, creating a sense of continuity and tradition that is rare in today's fast-paced world. Additionally, the church has seen a number of families whose names have appeared on the rolls for generations, a testament to the deep roots that the church has established in the local community.



Another source of stability for the church has been its pastors. Over the course of 80 years, Ladue Chapel has had just four head pastors: Dr. W David McDowell, who served for 33 years; Dr. Donald Howland, who served for 19 years, Dr. Mark Thomas, who retired in 2019 after 14 years and current Pastor, Douglas King. This consistency in leadership has helped to create a strong and unified vision for the church and has allowed the congregation to build on its past successes while continuing to evolve and grow.

The physical space of the church has also undergone many changes over the years. In 1943, the church purchased four acres of land on Clayton Road in Ladue, Missouri. Five years later, the cornerstone for the sanctuary was laid, and in 1949, the church held a dedication service to celebrate the completion of the sanctuary. In the years that followed, the church continued to expand, adding Woods Chapel, the Fireside Room, an education wing and the chancel window.

In 1993, Ladue Chapel embarked on a new capital campaign called Vision 2010, with the goal of creating a Gathering Place and new church offices. The construction was completed in

1996, and in 1998, the St. Andrew's Memorial Garden-East was dedicated. Twenty years later, the Garden-West location was added, providing a peaceful and contemplative space for church members and visitors.

Most recently, in 2014, the church faced a new challenge as the organ began to fail and the sanctuary was in need of renovation. The Giving Thanks Capital Campaign was launched, and with the support of the congregation, the campaign exceeded its goal. The renovation was completed in 2015, with a new Schoenstein organ playing in its first service in October of that year.

As Ladue Chapel looks ahead, it is clear that the church has a strong foundation of community, tradition and leadership. With these strengths, the church is well positioned to continue serving its congregation and the community for many years to come.

As part of our rich history, the majority of our families are drawn to Ladue Chapel for its traditional reformed worship. Young and old delight in an abundance of strong traditions with unique celebrations including:

- Advent Festival
- Three Kings procession on Epiphany Sunday
- Strawberry Festival
- World Communion Bread Fellowship
- Rally Day Picnic
- Blessing of the Animals
- All Saints' Day
- Kirkin' of the Tartans
- Blessing of the Backpacks
- Trunk or Treat
- Arts and Faith Weekend
- Scripture in Bloom



Where Are We Now?

CHURCH IN THE COMMUNITY

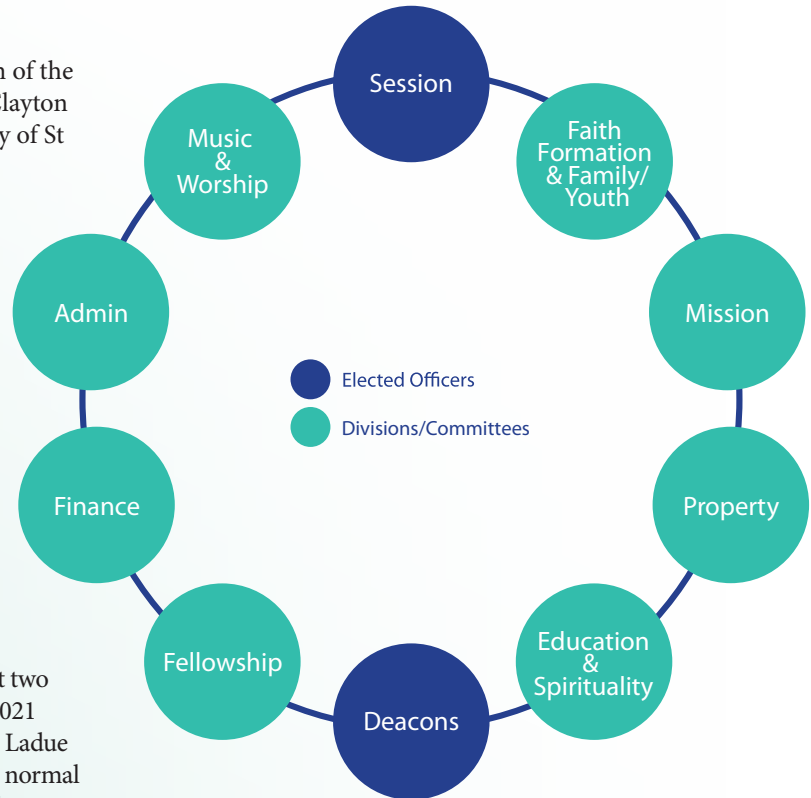
Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), sits prominently on Clayton Road in Ladue, Missouri, an inner-ring community of St Louis County. As part of the Reformed Tradition, our faith is based on the premise that we are “reformed and always being reformed.”

Ladue Chapel opens its doors every day for groups and committee meetings and gatherings, both member and community related. The congregation has had a long tradition of service and mission, both locally and globally, and supports a number of organizations working with those in need of shelter, food and other assistance. Throughout the year, we host many fellowship opportunities, both large and small for people of all ages.

Before 2020, with four pastors on staff, membership stood at slightly over 1,700 with average attendance at two Sunday services of around 400. Since 2020 and into 2021 when the church was closed to in-person attendance, Ladue Chapel has been challenged in every way to return to normal operations. Like many churches across the area and the country, we have had to adapt to changing realities. We now have two pastors and a membership of 1,378. In-person attendance at the one Sunday service has slowly climbed toward pre-pandemic levels. Online streaming has allowed many of our ongoing care members and others to feel they are part of their faith community.

More than three-quarters of member households are located within a 10-mile radius of the church, while many long-time and newer members travel greater distances to enjoy and participate in the strong music, adult education and worship programs. Viewed as a destination church for its multitude of inviting and enriching programs, Ladue Chapel draws members and visitors from surrounding communities like Frontenac, Chesterfield, Creve Coeur, Clayton and Kirkwood, among others.

HOW LADUE CHAPEL IS ORGANIZED



The City of Ladue has the highest income of any Missouri city and is the best educated city proportionately for its size. It is considered a stable and desirable location within the county. Ladue Public Schools are rated in the top five percent of schools in the state. Thirty percent of church members call Ladue home. Our demographics are a close reflection of the city—highly educated, affluent and primarily white. A historic pattern of little racial diversity continues, with a small percentage of Asian-American/ Pacific Islander members. Diversity comes with age, backgrounds, politics and theological roots. Regardless of one’s age or background, supporting missions and engaging in service to others remains an ongoing and integral part of life at Ladue Chapel.



OUR AREAS OF MINISTRY:

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

In the last several years we have moved from two services, one at 8:30 am and one at 11 am, to a single, combined service at 10:30 am. The congregation celebrates communion on the first Sunday of each month, conducts frequent baptisms, and enjoys numerous musical performances, as well as a children's time. Ages three through second grade are encouraged to attend Word and Wonder, a time for learning and activities, until the end of the service.

One of the strongest and most highly acclaimed features of our services is the music. Since September 2005, David Erwin, Minister of Music, has played a vital role at Ladue Chapel. David collaborates closely with our pastors to ensure a deeply fulfilling and exemplary level of musicianship in every service. According to a congregation poll conducted in 2020, 85 percent of members cited the music at our church as one of its three greatest strengths.

Ladue Chapel offers many opportunities to participate in sharing music, with an active adult choir, adult handbell choir, children's choir and a youth choir. Assisting David is Anne Peacock, Director of Spiritual Life, who lends her expertise to lead or participate in each of the church's ensembles.

In 2015, Ladue Chapel underwent a significant sanctuary renovation, which included the installation of our remarkable Schoenstein organ. Since its debut performance, the organ has added a valuable dimension to our services. Throughout the year, Ladue Chapel also welcomes local musicians from the St. Louis area to perform at various services, with members of the St. Louis Symphony, the Carolbeth True Trio, local jazz ensembles, and other talented individuals lending their talent and musicianship to Ladue Chapel.



As we adapt and evolve, Ladue Chapel has embraced the inclusion of online and streaming services following the 2020 pandemic. We now stream every service through Facebook and YouTube, aiming to reach as many congregants and members of the wider community as possible. While we continue to strive for improvement in our online services, this platform enables us to extend the experience of Sunday morning worship to a wider audience.

Ladue Chapel stands as a dedicated church that cherishes reformed worship, music, artistry and unwavering faith, nurtured by a devoted supportive congregation and strong staff.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

The Stephen Ministry program at Ladue Chapel is dedicated to providing high-quality, one-on-one, Christ-centered care to individuals in the congregation and the community who are facing life difficulties. Since its establishment at Ladue Chapel in

1985, over 160 members have been trained as Stephen Ministers to offer lay pastoral care to those undergoing crises or experiencing challenging circumstances within the congregation or the wider community.



MISSION

Mission is at the heart of Ladue Chapel, infusing it with deep meaning and purpose. While the church is known for its generous spirit, our congregation also actively engages in hands-on experiences. With a strong emphasis on making a positive impact in our city and the wider world, Ladue Chapel dedicates 20 percent of current giving to mission work. Half of this contribution is directed toward supporting the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly of our denomination, while the remaining half is allocated by the Mission Committee to local and global agencies with whom we collaborate in ministry.



In addition to financial contributions, members of Ladue Chapel dedicate their time and talents to various organizations throughout the St. Louis area and beyond. Their activities range from tutoring to building houses and establishing community gardens. While the locations and recipients of our

tutoring ministry have changed over time, our commitment to helping children learn and grow remains unwavering. In times of disaster, such as after Hurricane Katrina or the tornado in Joplin, Missouri, we have partnered with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and sent work teams to aid in recovery efforts.

Ladue Chapel proudly identifies as a Matthew 25 Congregation, signifying our commitment to address systemic issues of racism, poverty and hunger.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH	CHURCH WORLDWIDE	HUNGER	HOUSING AND HEALTH	SOCIAL JUSTICE AND JOBS
Cornerstone Center for Early Learning	Costa Rica Mission Worker - Karla Kohl	Isaiah 58	All Among Us, Inc	Freedom Community Center
Firm Foundations Tutor- Restore St. Louis	Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis	Meds and Food for Kids - Haiti	Care and Counseling	Propel Kitchens
Gateway Alliance Against Human Trafficking	International Institute of St. Louis	Seed St. Louis	Casa de Salud	Refuge and Restoration
Presbytery Children's Homes and Services	Presbyterian Disaster Fund		Habitat for Humanity - St. Louis	
Uni-Pres Kindercottage	Theological Education Fund		Light 4 the Darkness	
	Wycliffe Bible Translators		Rebuilding Together - St. Louis	
			STARS - St. Andrews Resources for Seniors	



FELLOWSHIP

Ladue Chapel thrives on fostering a vibrant and inclusive community, where members of all ages can actively participate and connect with one another. From our lively church-wide events that bring the entire congregation together, to our intimate small group gatherings, we offer a diverse range of activities to cater to the interests and needs of our members. These events serve as opportunities for fellowship, celebration, spiritual growth and service, strengthening the bonds within our church family. Whether engaging in large-scale celebrations or fostering deeper connections in small group settings, Ladue Chapel is committed to creating meaningful experiences for everyone.



Our church-wide events are a testament to the strong bond and shared experiences within the Ladue Chapel community. The Rally Day Picnic, hosted by the Ushers, marks the exciting start of a new program year, while the Strawberry

Festival, hosted by the Board of Deacons, signifies the end of the program year and the arrival of summer. The Advent Festival prepares us for the joyous birth of Christ, and events like Trunk or Treat and the Palm Sunday Brunch with Easter Egg Hunt create special moments of fellowship and celebration. These diverse gatherings foster a sense of community and provide cherished memories for all.

In addition to our church-wide events, Ladue Chapel recognizes the significance of fostering intimate



connections and spiritual growth through small group fellowship and study. The Bread Breakers ministry offers the option to gather in homes or explore dining destinations together, while study groups and theology discussions cater to various interests. These small group initiatives enhance community, promote personal growth and encourage meaningful conversations.

The Women's Association at Ladue Chapel is dedicated to providing meaningful opportunities for fellowship, study, and outreach. Through generous contributions and craft item donations, we support a wide range of benevolent causes. Our lively Book Discussion Group invites women with a passion for reading and engaging in discussions. Mary Circle offers monthly fellowship and Bible study experiences and the annual Women's Retreat provides



a special opportunity for spiritual renewal. To foster camaraderie, we also organize a quarterly Ladies Happy Hour and 1/2, where women can unwind and enjoy each other's company.

The Men's Association at Ladue Chapel has experienced increased activity in recent years. Our popular quarterly Grilling Events feature engaging speakers from various fields alongside delicious food. Additionally, the Men's Association sponsors a Lenten Breakfast Series



with speakers from the faith community across the St. Louis region, creating enriching and enjoyable gatherings for all.

At Ladue Chapel, we strive to create a thriving community where individuals can connect, grow spiritually and find meaningful fellowship.



ADULT EDUCATION AND SPIRITUALITY

Adult education has long been an important and keystone part of our church. The Adult Education and Spirituality Committee seeks to educate the congregation of Ladue Chapel in the following areas:

- Bible Study
- The Christian tradition
- Interfaith relations
- Other religions
- Christian living in today's world
- The relationship between art and faith



Our Adult Education programming at Ladue Chapel is designed to be ecumenical and interfaith, encompassing a broad scope of topics that are relevant to our cultural, social, economic, environmental and political landscape. We are proud to feature a distinguished faculty consisting of exceptional professors from local seminaries, colleges and universities, as well as public officials, topical experts and dedicated members of our congregation. Our class settings are intentionally intimate, allowing for meaningful interactions with presenters and fellow members. Whether you prefer active participation or prefer to sit, listen and learn, our Adult Education program offers a valuable opportunity for personal growth and enrichment.

The Arts and Faith workshops, fairs and weekend programs in recent years have significantly heightened the congregation's appreciation for the profound intersection between the arts and faith. We have commissioned a remarkable "Tapestry of Faith" created by the esteemed New York artist Lori Kochanski. This tapestry aims to weave together the people and history of Ladue Chapel, visually encapsulating the unity and devotion of our congregation as a physical embodiment of our church community.



YOUTH

Ladue Chapel is eager and excited to continue growing our youth presence in the church. We are a church that encourages fostering a love of Christ from baptism to high school and in the past have included an elementary program, a middle school program, as well as a high school program. Currently we are working towards revitalizing these programs and making them a key part of our congregational life.

Throughout the year we have opportunities for our children to learn and discuss their faith at Word and Wonder, which takes place during our worship services and led by our Director of Faith Formation and Family Ministry, Courtney Chandler. The program year provides opportunities for our

children at Monday Music and More where children can participate in children's choir and "more." Also offered are confirmation classes, Vacation Bible School, and Mission and Mischief which gives our 6th-12th grade members summer mission opportunities. One of the highlights each year is Youth Sunday, where our youngest members prepare and lead an entire service, allowing them to step into more engaging leadership roles.



FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP

Ladue Chapel successfully re-established financial stability in 2022, overcoming a deficit position that had emerged prior to the pandemic. The challenges faced during the pandemic years further exacerbated the financial situation, making the turnaround even more impressive. Throughout this period, the church maintained its continuing commitment to allocate 20 percent of current giving to mission work.

In addition to regular giving, Ladue Chapel benefits from a significant endowment fund. Recognizing the importance of maintaining the church's operations and making necessary capital investments, the church has determined that a portion of the endowment fund will be utilized annually to cover operating expenses and fund capital expenditures. This strategic decision enables Ladue Chapel to ensure the continued growth and stability of its ministry while wisely managing its resources.

2023 Budget:

Ladue Chapel's 2023 budget was approved by Session, with revenue from contributions, operations and the endowment being sufficient to cover all program, mission and operational expenses.

Source of Funds:

The 2023 budget has operating revenue of \$2,070,107. This amount includes pledged contributions of \$1,300,000 and other income of \$96,350. Other income primarily consists of rental income from Ladue Chapel Nursery School, two cell towers and outside hosted events. Ladue Chapel's endowment policy allows for a 5 percent draw, which is applied to the endowment's 36-month market value, rolling average in accordance with Session policy.

However, due to a robust 2023 stewardship campaign and 2022 year-end cash reserves, LCPC plans to draw only 4.5 percent from the endowment for operations in 2023.

Use of Funds:

Total budgeted expenses are \$2,035,451. Our largest expenses remain mission, personnel and facilities. The budget has inflationary increases which reflect the current economic environment.

Debt Service Payments:

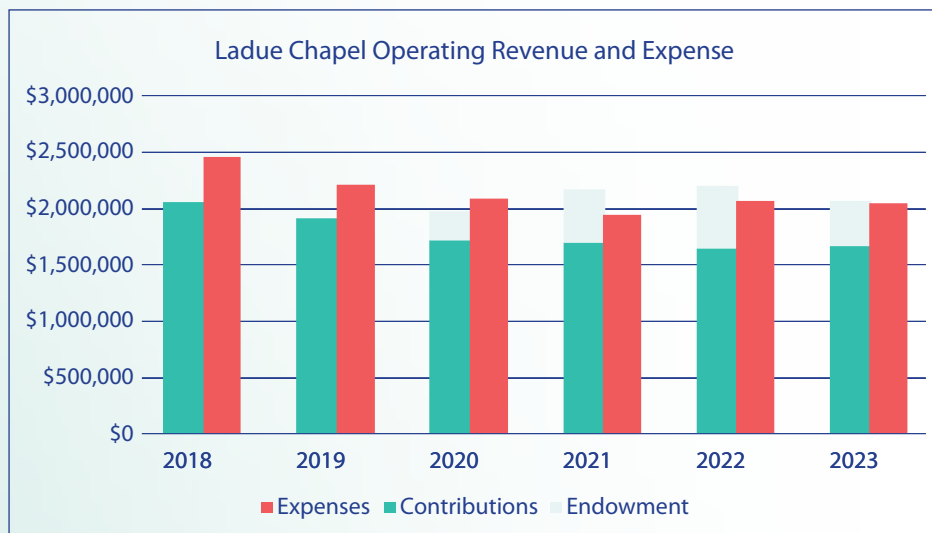
In 2022, LCPC received approval for a \$500,000, 20-year loan at 1.35 percent with the Presbyterian Church USA for mitigation and renovations to the Nursery School following substantial damage from flooding. As of March 1, 2023, Ladue Chapel has borrowed \$330,000. The 2023 debt service (principal and interest payments) on the approved borrowing is \$28,541.

Net Cash Surplus:

With revenue of \$2,070,107 million, expense of (\$2,035,451) and debt payments of (\$28,541), LCPC's 2023 budget has a net cash surplus of \$6,115. Having a net cash surplus signifies Ladue Chapel has identified revenue sources to pay for its 2023 budgeted expenses.

Capital Projects:

In addition to a balanced operating budget, LCPC has allotted \$70,000 from the 4.5 percent draw on the endowment for 2023 capital projects.



PROPERTY

Located in the City of Ladue, the church is one large building which incorporates all our spaces into one. The church purchased four acres on Clayton Road in 1948, with the cornerstone of the sanctuary being laid in October of that year. Ladue Chapel had its "Opening of the Doors" service on November 13th, 1949, in recognition of the completion of the sanctuary.

Our sanctuary features numerous large windows, allowing natural light to stream into the room. The congregation faces the chancel and choir, which are framed by seasonal banners, designed by Danish fiber artist, Marianne Axboe. They are backed by our stained glass window, which was created by Willet Stained Glass Company of Philadelphia in 1960. The new organ was installed in 2015 following the Giving Thanks Capital Campaign, which allowed us to renovate and bring new vision to the sanctuary.

In addition to our main sanctuary, the smaller Woods Chapel serves as a more intimate and private space for our members and visitors. Along with worship spaces, we also enjoy two memorial gardens that are alive with roses, magnolias, hydrangeas and other examples of God's presence in nature.

God is also felt in our many gathering spaces in the church. Ladue Chapel hosts classes and gatherings throughout the year in its numerous classrooms for students and learners of all ages. There are ample adult education rooms, an entire youth floor with many rooms for different ages, as well as the Ladue Chapel Nursery School, which is located on the lower level of the building.

Nestled next to the main building is a quiet, picturesque cottage that resides on our campus and has had many residents over the years including Interfaith Partnership. Together, these spaces create the house of God that is Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church.



ADMINISTRATION

We are blessed with our Pastor and Head of Staff, Rev. Doug King; our retiring Associate Pastor, Rev. Dr. Dieter Heinzl; Director of Faith Formation and Family Ministry, Rev. Courtney Chandler; Minister of Music, David Erwin and Director of Spiritual Life, Anne Peacock. Ladue Chapel takes pride in a strong support staff that handles administrative, financial and communication needs. Though much of the support staff are newer to Ladue Chapel, their dedication to helping the church and its congregation flourish has been greatly appreciated.



Where Do We Believe God is Calling Us?

LCPC CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTION AND INPUT

The APNC has actively engaged in a meaningful dialogue with the congregation of Ladue Chapel, discussing its past, present and future. Through online and paper surveys, as well as congregational listening sessions, eight questions were posed to gather valuable insights. This included meeting with the Deacons, the Session, three congregational listening sessions and individual meetings with the senior staff of Ladue Chapel. In total there were approximately 100 responses provided either through the surveys or the listening sessions. The responses provided by the congregation have been carefully analyzed and summarized, offering guidance for the APNC. Additionally, we are grateful to have an extensive survey conducted by Holy Cow Consulting during the search for our current Head of Staff in 2019/2020.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO LADUE CHAPEL'S MINISTRY PRIORITIES

CHANGES SINCE 2020

The survey input indicates that the church has embraced significant changes since 2020, driven primarily by the pandemic. While facing initial challenges such as declining attendance and loss of families, the church has demonstrated resilience by adjusting its budget and introducing online worship. Although some previously active members are currently unable to attend, the congregation has valued the revival of traditional worship elements and the accessibility of both in-person and online Sunday services.

Additionally, the church has made notable improvements to its Men's and Women's fellowship events. Despite the ongoing obstacles of rebuilding attendance, staff retention and attracting younger members, the church's overall dedication to adapting to new realities is commendable.

WHAT DO WE DO BEST?

Ladue Chapel has accomplished remarkable feats in the past few years. The church has adapted to technology with live-streaming services, maintained a vibrant music program and attracted dedicated staff. Adult education programs thrived, community service efforts flourished and newcomers felt warmly welcomed. The congregation persevered through the pandemic, renovated the church building by installing an elevator and upgrading restroom facilities for ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access and embraced new ideas. Continuing strong preaching, pastoral care, member care provided by the Deacons and Stephen Ministers, a return to fellowship opportunities like the Strawberry Festival and Rally Day, have been highly successful and well attended. Stellar music performances and uplifting services, including live streaming, have kept the congregation connected and inspired. The addition of an Arts and Faith Weekend has been positively received. Overall, the congregation of Ladue Chapel embodies resilience, community and worship.

CHALLENGES

The congregation has faced various challenges in the past three to five years:

- Loss of pastors and staff, leading to a decline in leadership stability and continuity
- Declining attendance, particularly among younger families and youth, indicating a struggle to engage and retain these demographic groups
- Insufficient or inadequate programs for children and youth, resulting in a lack of consistent value and engagement for these age groups

Other challenges mentioned include financial shortfalls, technical issues with online services, limited communication and outreach to members, aging congregation, difficulty attracting younger members, inability to conduct active hands-on missions, limited diversity and understanding of minority populations and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on attendance and outreach efforts.



AREAS FOR GROWTH AND IMPROVEMENT

The congregation has identified several areas for growth and improvement over the next three to five years. These areas include:

- engaging families and young people
- expanding children and youth programs
- fostering engagement through small groups and activities
- caring for vulnerable members
- reaching out to youth and new members
- maintaining music programs and fellowship activities
- adapting to change
- balancing traditional sermon with calls for social justice

Overall, the congregation desires engaging pastoral leadership, programming for our younger generation and a focus on caring for all members.

SUMMARY OF MINISTRY PRIORITIES QUESTIONS

The church has embraced significant changes in response to the pandemic, demonstrating adaptability and resilience. Despite challenges such as declining attendance and reduced youth program participation, the congregation has maintained its strength in various areas, including technology adaptation and a strong music program. Additionally, the church remains open to new ideas and approaches.

While there are challenges to address, the congregation's greatest needs focus on engaging families and young people, growing children and youth programs, providing excellent preaching and pastoral care, building strong leadership, caring for vulnerable members, reaching out to new members and adapting to change. Overall, the church is proactively working toward addressing these needs and continuing to evolve.

acknowledges the challenge of declining attendance, particularly among youth, there is a strong commitment to actively engage younger families and members. Efforts are being made to build membership and create meaningful connections with those who may not be currently active.

Through the Fellowship Committee, the congregation has embraced a more open and welcoming approach. With the advent of the new Adult Education and Spirituality Committee (including a new Spirituality Subcommittee and an Arts Subcommittee), more opportunities to express the beauty and diversity of faith are available. With a mix of conservative and liberal theologies, the church fosters an atmosphere of respect for the wide range of perspectives held by its members. The congregation's greatest strength lies in the unwavering commitment of its members to programs and services. While changes may take time, the church is filled with dedicated members who are eager to bring positive transformations to fruition.

WHAT DO WE WANT OUR NEXT ASSOCIATE PASTOR TO DO AND BE?

CONGREGATIONAL INPUT: RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RELATED TO QUALITIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR NEXT ASSOCIATE PASTOR PROVIDE MEANINGFUL GUIDELINES:

Ladue Chapel is seeking an associate pastor who will bring a wealth of positive contributions to the congregation. We are specifically looking for someone who excels in engaging youth and families, providing exceptional pastoral care and fostering strong connections with individuals of all ages. The ideal candidate will possess leadership qualities, a warm and approachable demeanor and the ability to build meaningful relationships. A commitment to social issues and expertise in utilizing technology for online ministry are also highly desirable qualities.

WHO ARE WE, COLLECTIVELY?

Ladue Chapel is a vibrant and diverse congregation with a rich history and a deep appreciation for various interpretations of faith. The church takes pride in its long-standing support of missions, its outstanding programs and its thriving music program. While the congregation



WE SEEK AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR WITH THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

- Deep commitment to Christ, the church and its members, and the community
- Energetic, kind and skilled in relating to and building relationships with individuals of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs
- Compassionate listener who understands members' life situations, with active listening skills and conveying empathy
- Excellent preaching, teaching and communication abilities; the ability to intertwine current events with faith and with a curiosity for community issues
- Visionary and creative mindset for program improvement
- Collaborative nature and the ability to work effectively with staff and lay leaders
- Open, positive and humorous approach to ministry
- A participant in church life and activities
- Ability to connect with and attract members of all ages, especially youth and young families
- Strong spiritual foundation
- Personal accountability and humility
- Gift of hospitality and ability to create an inclusive environment
- Technological proficiency

WE SEEK AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR WHO HAS:

- Experience in youth programs and engaging younger generations
- Pastoral care expertise, including care for aging congregants
- A solid educational background
- Strong biblical knowledge and a scholarly understanding of scriptures
- Stephen Minister Training or Clinical Pastoral Education
- Experience with larger congregations

In essence, Ladue Chapel seeks an associate pastor who cares for those in need, excels in preaching and builds meaningful relationships within the entire community. Moreover, the ideal pastor should be approachable, possess strong social skills and demonstrate a genuine interest in fostering a community of fellowship and service.

THE NEXT ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S SPECIFIC AREAS OF MINISTRY WOULD INCLUDE:

- **Pastoral Care:** Building meaningful relationships with congregants of all ages as they experience major life events and crises; working directly with the Deacons and Stephen Ministers in providing member care
- **Youth and Family Ministry:** Leading a revitalization of youth and family ministry: Engaging youth and young families in ministry and service, developing programs that create memorable events to integrate youth into the life of the church
- **Adult Education:** Developing and leading educational opportunities for adults; providing leadership to intellectually and spiritually challenge members to grow in biblical knowledge and understanding; working with the Adult Education and Spirituality Committee to help deepen the faith of members and their understanding of broader community and global issues through adult education programs and events; enhancing the spiritual growth of members by consistently delivering effective sermon; leading worship and providing inspiration from the pulpit
- **Mission:** Encouraging a focus on service to the wider community by supporting and promoting mission programs that offer financial assistance and hands-on projects to local, national and international communities; supporting the work of the Mission Committee and assisting it in identifying mission programs and developing hands-on mission projects; participating in interfaith activities and demonstrating concern for broader social justice issues



Final Thoughts

What is the work our church needs and who is the person to do it? That two-part question has been a guiding force for the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee since its inception in March 2023. We have prayed, we have listened and interacted with our Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy representatives. We have prepared surveys, held listening sessions with the congregation, questioned the senior staff for their advice and now we have presented the findings from all of those sessions and surveys.

Your voices have been heard. You told us what we have done as a church in the past that worked and sometimes didn't go so well. You shared openly with us the joy you have experienced of returning to a more normal schedule of worship, programming and activities following the dark days of the pandemic. Most importantly, you have told us how we can best prepare ourselves for the future—the work our church needs to do so we are ready to welcome a new associate pastor.

The second half of that two-part question is Who is the person to do it? The answer to that question will require more time—time to pray, time to “listen to God’s call.” Primarily, that will involve the APNC but also every member of Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church. We are all invested in this process.

Now we wait to find who God has chosen for our new associate pastor, the person who has been preparing to take on this new relationship with our church. This will be a time of continuing reflection, anticipation and hope. We are ready to move forward into our future.

MAY IT BE SO.

