

Sermon Title: **Looking Forward with Faith 1 - The Mission of the UMC**

Bible: Matthew 22:36-40, Matthew 28:19-20

Where & When: Sunday Worship at Gilroy UMC on January 6th, 2019

Audience: about 44 English-speaking Church Members

Opening Prayer

Emanuel God, thank you so much for giving us this happy new year! Thank you so much for giving us this beautiful church. Thank you so much for giving us these awesome church members. You give us hope and passion. In Jesus' name. Amen!

1. The Mission of the Church in the Book of Discipline

Our Gilroy church has our own mission statement. Do you know what it is? It is in the worship bulletin, and we read it together at the beginning of worship. The mission statement works like a compass, which gives us direction. And the United Methodist Church has a mission as well. Do you know what it is? Based on the scriptures that we read, it is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.



However, I would like to check out the prerequisite. We want to be disciples of Jesus Christ, and we will be. But to make more disciples, we need more people: new people and new members. “You shall love your neighbor AS YOURSELF.”

To love our neighbor, we must first love ourselves. To love ourselves is an advance requirement. One way to love ourselves is to know ourselves.

2. Where We Are

To know ourselves is not easy, and it can be misunderstood. But can you feel my passion, my love, my effort for this Church? I hope that you can feel, and even see and touch my passion and love for our Gilroy Church. Because this is my church, with my love and my passion I would like to share where we are.

According to church size theory, because we are less than 50, we are a small church, or so-called family size church.

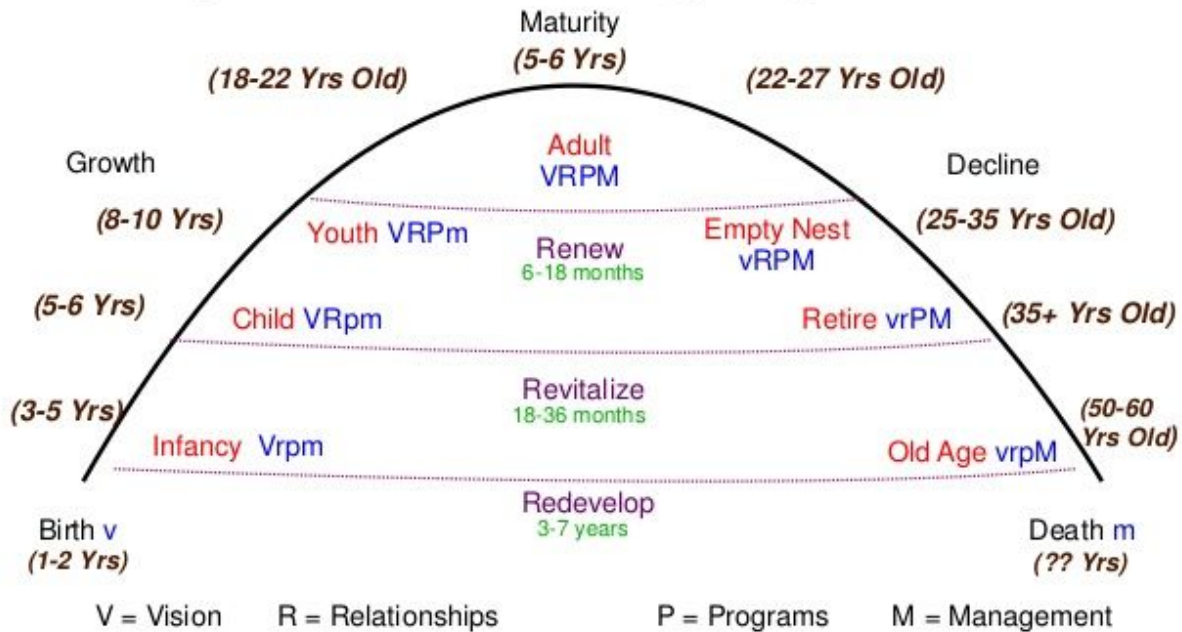
Our current membership is 77. Last year, our average worship

Family Size Church	Up to 50 adults and kids at worship
Pastoral Size Church	51-150
Program Size Church	150-350
Corporate Size Church	More than 350

attendance was 31. I would like to emphasize that any size church is the right size, and any size church can attract and assimilate new members. And today we see a new member. He went from being an associate member to becoming a full member. He will help with serving our Holy Communion today.

I would like to share one graph: Life Cycle in a Congregation. This is almost

Life Cycle in a Congregation



like a lifecycle of a person. Each stage has its own focuses among vision, relationships, programs, and management. For example, the focus of birth is vision. The focus of children is vision and relationship. The focus of old age is management. Do you agree with this graph? Based on this life cycle, where do you think we are? What is our focus? Management? Programs? Relationships? Vision? What focus do you want to see?

3. My Hope - 200th Year Anniversary

Do you remember my first sermon? I shared my hope. I still have that vision! Do you remember what it is? This year, our Gilroy church will be 166 years old. And as a retired pastor, I want to be invited to the 200th year Anniversary of Gilroy United Methodist Church. What makes me still have this hope and vision? Because I am a 6-month-old pastor. If we fold the life cycle graph in half, we are on the same level. But I want to focus on vision rather than management. I want to grow. I do not want just to survive. I want to survive and thrive. Furthermore, I want to grow together, and to thrive together with you.

I do not know yet what to do or how to do it. But I have Jesus Christ as my way and as my hope, because Jesus Christ is the head of our church. So, I LOOK FORWARD WITH FAITH. Do we hope for the 200th year anniversary of this church? Can we look forward with faith together?

Closing Prayer

Emanuel God, you are the light and the way. Please guide us to see your vision and hope on this church. As you lead us, we want to follow you, even though the gate can be narrow, and the road is hard. I know your way leads us to the life. Give us the courage and the faith. In Jesus' name. Amen!