April 6, 2017  ***Living into the vision***  Milepost 19

*By mid-2020, Shalom will be a dynamic congregation:*

* *with an organizational STRUCTURE which facilitates responsiveness to the Holy Spirit’s direction, empowers all to use his/her Spirit given gift, and makes decisions effectively and efficiently to increase its missional potential.*
* *which is GROWING as individuals and as a community, in our walk with God, by the power of the Holy Spirit.*
* *which is using our gifts to SHARE God’s love, justice and peace with those in our communities.*

A congregational vision identifies a few goals, which when

accomplished, result in greater health in all areas of congregational life. It’s like a doctor saying: “You have early indications of a disease, but you can reverse those tends by making diet and exercise a priority.” To another patient, she might say, “Stress reduction needs to be your priority.” Both of these patients will have to make some lifestyle changes, but for the most part, they will continue doing what needs to be done in life, just with greater attention to the priorities. This will likely include learning more about diet, or how to reduce stress.

Some congregational visions list all the good things they want to continue doing. Such visions become FF documents: filed and forgotten. Shalom’s vision is the result of a majority of congregants discerning together a few priorities which will bring greater health to all congregational life. By design, many important things Shalom does are *not* In the vision! The three specific priorities (structure, growing, and sharing)will enhance, not compete with or eliminate the many other important areas of congregational life.

Diet, exercise and stress reduction are actually good metaphors for the specific objectives for Goal #2, but I’ll save that for future mileposts. -Gary Martin