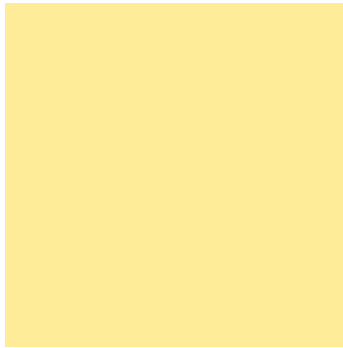


**DRAFT**

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**Strategic Plan**

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**St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish**  
**Holmen, WI**

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*January 2024*



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# I. LETTER FROM PASTOR



## II. INTRODUCTION

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Holmen, Wisconsin, is a parish of over 800 families and approximately 1,900 parishioners. It is one of the largest parishes in the diocese. There are parish staff members who serve the essential ministries of the parish. The facilities are adequate for Masses, but the gathering space/hall is very small, and the parish office space is limited. These are not adequate spaces for meetings, storage, or classrooms. The parish's ability to grow is limited by its lack of space for ministries which could attract and engage new parishioners. In addition to addressing these building needs, the parish looks to the future with the intention of enhancing faith formation ministries for all ages as well as better serving the vulnerable and those in need.

When St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish was established in 1985, only part of the original building plan for the parish was completed. The full plan called for a new church to be constructed, the original church redesigned as a hall, a school built, and a multi-purpose center/gym constructed. Because the parish was growing so rapidly at the time, additional land was purchased on Highway 35 for the parish to be re-located. Building efforts were initiated in 2002, 2004, and 2008 which, for various reasons, were never completed. After nearly 40 years, the parish is on the brink of completing a building plan.

At the request of the parish, Meitler, which is a national Catholic school and parish consulting team based in the Milwaukee area, has been contracted to facilitate a strategic planning process. One consultant and a project coordinator are involved with the project. The proposed schedule projects a final plan to be completed by mid-March of 2024.

The study of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton began in September of 2023. Interviews with parish leaders were conducted. Tours of all the church facilities and properties were arranged. Community demographics and parish data were compiled and analyzed. The highlights of the visits and research were compiled in a document titled **Key Findings and Observations Report**. The **Key Findings** were presented at a parish meeting and posted on the parish website so that all parishioners have an opportunity to participate in or become aware of the study. At the parish meeting, input was received from those in attendance regarding their preferences for future ministry possibilities. The results from that meeting are on the parish website. The preferences of parishioners have played an important role in the development of priorities and recommendations for the future. Additional meetings of parishioners will help to refine the plan. A survey will also be conducted to hear from as many parishioners as possible.

The process is guided by a Planning Committee which is comprised of parish staff as well as leaders in the parish community. This committee works with the consultant to revise and complete a final plan. The process is designed to build consensus for a future that is revealed in population projections and agreed upon by parishioners.

The hope is that the implementation of this strategic plan will bring St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish community closer to being like the early Christian community in the Acts of the Apostles - ***“Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes, praising God, and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”*** (Acts 2:47)

### III. VISION AND PRIORITIES

#### A. Vision for the Future

***“We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace.”*** - Pope Francis

As frequently as Pope Francis has spoken of what the Church should be, these three sentences may be some of his most profound. The vision for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish includes many of these ideals.

A vision for the future typically contains two main elements: **a vision phrase**, which summarizes the priorities and plan into a few words, and **the priorities**, which guide the development of specific goals and outcomes. After several months of discussion, the planning committee suggests these vision phrases to the parish for reflection and discussion:

- Building on the Past, Building for the Future
- Becoming a Growing Sign of Christ’s Presence
- Building to Become Partners in Christ
- Growing as Partners in Christ
- Growing in Faith with Hearts on Fire
- Building in Christ with Hearts on Fire

#### B. Priorities

At the first parish planning meeting, parishioners were invited to review, discuss, and select preferences from a list of ministry possibilities for the future. The possibilities originated from the interviews with parish and school leaders as well as the analysis of community and parish data. By reflecting upon those “future possibilities” which parishioners most preferred at the parish meeting, the following future priorities emerged.

**Enhance and expand faith formation ministries for all ages, e.g., early childhood, elementary, satellite campus for Aquinas Catholic School, junior high and high school, young adults, adults, and seniors.**

The future of the Church relies on all who grow in their love of God and continue to live a life of faith. Parishioners believe that a greater emphasis must be placed on developing a high level of faith formation opportunities and experiences for all parishioners, young and old.

**Increase participation in weekend Masses, involvement in parish ministries and activities, and communications efforts.**

While there will be population growth in the Holmen area, the parish needs to increase its efforts to reach out to, engage, and communicate with more Catholics and those who wish to become members of the Catholic community.

**Expand outreach activities to care for the vulnerable and those in need.**

In the Gospels, the importance of helping others, especially the poor, is a hallmark of Jesus’ ministry and central to his formation of the disciples. The parishioners further realize that poverty and other corporal/spiritual needs do exist in the area which the parish should address to a greater extent.

**Develop a master building plan, financial resources, and staffing to support parish growth.**

The Church is a human institution, needing places to gather, funding, and both professional and volunteer ministers. Parishioners understand that growth will require careful consideration about how best to steward the resources the parish has and will need for the future.



## IV. OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal	Oversight/Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Priority 1: Enhance and Expand Faith Formation for All Ages</b>	<b>Parish Council</b>	
a. Study early childhood program needs		
b. Consider a satellite campus of Aquinas Schools		
c. Introduce Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for preschool and elementary students		
d. Expand middle school and high school ministries		
e. Develop a young adult ministry (ages 20's & 30's)		
f. Reintroduce a Mom's Group		
g. Develop small faith sharing groups for adults and parish-based retreats		
h. Expand the Young at Heart Senior Ministry		
i. Involve other parishes in the RCIA process		

Goal	Oversight/Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Priority 2: Increase Participation in Weekend Masses, Involvement in Parish Ministries and Activities, and Communications Efforts</b>	<b>Parish Council</b>	
a. Increase participation, preparation, and sense of welcome at weekend Masses		
b. Contact every person on the parish roster as well as former members to listen to and invite them to engage in the parish Meet with new and old parishioners to invite them to share their time, talent, and treasure with the parish. Develop a communications strategy for the parish using new and old technologies to reach all generations in the parish and the area.		

Goal	Oversight/Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Priority 3: Expand Outreach Activities to Care for the Vulnerable and Those in Need</b>	Parish Council	
a. Increase activity to care for the vulnerable in the area by first assessing the needs and then determining any new efforts which may be necessary		
b. Start a Stephen ministry for caregivers and for those who have experienced a loss		

Goal	Oversight/Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Priority 4: Develop a Master Building Plan, Financial Resources, and Staffing to Support Parish Growth</b>	Finance Council	
a. Develop a master site plan which emphasizes multi-use space to increase usage, create storage space, and can accommodate an expansion of ministries		
b. Determine any interim changes which may be needed to the current facilities		
c. Create a building committee to guide the development of a master site plan and oversee a construction project		
d. Study the potential of conducting a capital campaign to fund future construction		



## **V. PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. Priority 1: Enhance and Expand Faith Formation for All Ages**

1. Study early childhood program needs, including day care.
  - a. Identify the needs in the community and a sense of how many children may be served.
  - b. Determine what space and license requirements would be necessary.
  - c. Research the number of staff which would be required and a potential annual budget.
  - d. Develop a study report with recommendations to the parish council.
2. Consider St. Elizabeth Ann Seton serving as a satellite campus for Aquinas Catholic Schools.
3. Introduce Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for preschool and elementary students.
4. Expand middle school and high school ministries.
5. Develop a young adult ministry (ages 20's and 30's).
6. Reintroduce a Mom's Group.
7. Develop small faith sharing groups for adults and parish-based retreats.
8. Expand the Young at Heart Senior Ministry.
9. Involve other parishes in the RCIA process

### **B. Priority 2: Increase Participation in Weekend Masses, Involvement in Parish Ministries and Activities, and Communications Efforts**

1. Increase participation, preparation, and sense of welcome at weekend Masses.
2. Contact every person on the parish roster as well as former members to listen to and invite them to engage in the parish.
  - a. Meet with new and old parishioners to invite them to share their time, talent, and treasure with the parish.
  - b. Develop a communications strategy for the parish using new and old technologies to reach all generations in the parish and the area.

### **C. Priority 3: Expand Outreach Activities to Care for the Vulnerable and Those in Need**

1. Increase activity to care for the vulnerable in the area by first assessing the needs and then determining any new efforts which may be necessary.
2. Start a Stephen ministry for caregivers and for those who have experienced a loss.

## **D. Priority 4: Develop a Master Building Plan, Financial Resources, and Staffing to Support Parish Growth**

1. Develop a master site plan which emphasizes multi-use space to increase usage, create storage space, and can accommodate an expansion of ministries.
2. Determine any interim changes which may be needed to the current facilities.
3. Create a building committee to guide the development of a master site plan and oversee a construction project.
4. Study the potential of conducting a capital campaign to fund future construction.



## VI. UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the plan will begin after its approval in March of 2024. The parish staff, parish pastoral council, and finance council will share in the implementation of the recommendations by overseeing the recommendations. The following understandings about the plan's implementation should be reviewed and followed by those implementing the plan.

1. The terms and role of the Planning Committee members who have guided the planning process will end in March of 2024.
2. The specific implementation of each recommended goal in the plan will be passed to the person or group with the designated responsibility. The pastor, parish staff, parish council, and finance council will play key roles. Responsibility and accountability for the implementation of the goals will be essential.
3. The parish council will be responsible for overseeing the overall implementation of the pastoral part of the plan. They will work with parish staff and other parish groups which are directly involved with putting the goals into place.
4. The finance council oversees the budgeting and expenditures involved with the implementation of the plan initiatives as well as the funding campaigns for any facility changes and any increased maintenance costs.
5. Timelines and action steps will be necessary for each recommendation. Parishes usually are not able to implement each goal at the same time. The greatest amount of energy, enthusiasm, and activity is typically evident in the first year of implementation. It is helpful to view the action steps in a sequence where one action step builds on another or where preparation needs to take place before a goal can be fully realized.
6. The implementation itself is an opportunity to build relationships and to invite parishioners to greater involvement and engagement in the parish. There are parishioners who will be inspired to become more active in new or expanded ministries. The implementation process can and should be a time for increased vitality and spirit within the parish community.

# VII. APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A SURVEY RESULTS

