

# THE VISION

of

## SonRise Lutheran Church

### Pottersville, New York



---

*Mission: To Know Jesus and To Make Him Known*

---

October 20, 2013

As an evangelical congregation of the Lutheran Church, SonRise exists to make known to all the love of Jesus. We engage in this mission through inspiring worship, caring relationships, and compassionate service. We've been blessed by God with people passionate for servant ministry, and a property which just begs to be engaged in God's work. We believe that God has guided us to this time and place and faithfully equipped us for His mission. For the sake of the Gospel we're ready to face any challenges set before us, confidently relying on Jesus' assurance that *"with man it is impossible, but not with God. All things are possible with God"* (Mark 10:27). With childlike trust in God's promises, and in unison with the witnesses in whose footsteps we follow, *we run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith* (Hebrews 12:1).

So that we may chart a true course and serve together in unity, we establish this 5-10 year Vision Statement to describe our dream for a new dawn for SonRise.

~ I ~

Based on Jesus' command in Matthew 19 (*"Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."*), on the need in our community for children to have caring relationships with positive role models, and on the expressed passion of our congregation, **our first Mission Target will be young children and their families.**

We see SonRise becoming a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and happy place for children, particularly those between birth and age 12. We see the blessings of our new property being fully utilized with a partnership with Camp Pioneer in Angola, NY, starting summer 2014. We are currently blessed with active and growing ministries to toddlers, and a congregation who desires children to feel included and welcome at worship services. We intend to strengthen our connection with young children and their families by exploring relationships with the local schools, with the goal of establishing a regular child care ministry within 2 years, including one or more of day care, after school care, or evening care. We see our congregation developing plans for a facility designed to enhance our connections with children and provide a place for children to feel safe and accepted. Within this decade, we envision SonRise investigating the possibility of beginning an early childhood Christian education ministry.

## ~ II ~

For many people, major life events bring times of stress, uncertainty, conflict, and spiritual distress. Christ showed great compassion to people suffering anxiety, like in this account from Matthew 9: *When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."* We want to be laborers for God's harvest. We want to have compassion on people in distress or facing major change. **Therefore, our second Mission Target will be people in our community facing major life events.**

We see the congregation establishing a network to receive information about people and their families facing such life events as birth, death, change of employment, moving, marriage, divorce, or financial crisis. We currently offer several active ministries for this Mission Target, including prayer shawls, Food Pantry support, Financial Peace University, volunteers working for caregiving ministries and in emergency services, and support for Lutherans CARE, Orphan Grain Train, and Disaster Relief.

We see our congregation becoming well known in our community as a caring, compassionate church, renowned for our ability to minister to those facing life events. We envision a ministry where home-cooked meals are frozen and kept on hand in ready-made packages for frequent, personal distribution by volunteers to those in our community who could use a caring touch. We see SonRise reaching out to those facing life events through a combination of mailing cards and personal visitation with meals and prayer shawls. We see the members of our congregation intentionally nurturing caring relationships, unhesitatingly offering the assistance of our congregation when any situation develops. To accomplish this, a Coordinator of Life Ministries staff position will be created, whose responsibility will be to connect congregational members with outreach opportunities, to explore partnerships with local secular & church-based ministries, and to educate the congregation about available resources. This position will begin as volunteer, with the long-term possibility of becoming a part-time paid staff position as it grows.

Our hope, by focusing our ministries around these two specific mission targets, is to reach hurting people with the love of Jesus Christ our Savior, touching them with his compassion and bringing them the pure and holy Gospel message of salvation by grace through faith. We do this to fulfill the great commission, that final command of Jesus before He ascended into heaven:

*"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28).*

To God alone be the glory!