

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY

A STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BURKBURNETT, TEXAS

2007-20XX

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A PLAN BASED ON A CONSULTATIVE STUDY AND A VISION AND VALUES WORKSHOP CONDUCTED BY CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE ASSOCIATES, DALLAS, TEXAS

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FACTORS AND EVENTS IN LAST FIVE YEARS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL) THAT HAVE BROUGHT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TO ITS CURRENT STATUS.

(Participants were divided into three Table Groups for discussion. Conclusions were then presented to the entire body for discussion and consensus)

TABLE OF MARK:

Youth Ministries-strength

Lack of diversity:

Age, Color, Economic, Involvement

Leadership Make-up

Leadership Council, Margit, Female Pastor, Music Minister

Transitional Congregation

Shepherd AFB, College/young potential members

Building (Infrastructure)

TABLE OF MARY:

Competition for time

Changing Values

Trends Due to Industry/Shepherd AFB and WF Metro

Youth Ministries

Traditional Vs. Contemporary Worship

Age Vs. Youth

TABLE OF MARTHA:

Casualization of Society

Growth of Non-denominational church

Comfort breeds complacency

Redirection of the church toward the younger crowd

CONSENSUS

Youth Ministry

Trends in Worship Service

Changing Society

Competition for Time

Building

THE HEALTHY CHURCH

Research has indicated that successful small churches in America, regardless of denomination, which are designated as successful by the measure of numerical growth, and spiritual development (Ephesians 4), share the following characteristics:

1. **A caring climate**
 - Emphasis on fellowship
 - Individual focus
 - Shepherding mentality, caring for people
2. **Quality Sunday School**
 - Five classes from pre-school through high school
 - Biblically based classes
 - Major emphasis on quality nursery
3. **Inspiring worship hymns:**
 - Equal number of 4 types of hymns:
 - Gospel-composed 1879-1940
 - Classic-composed 1517-1870
 - Early contemporary-composed 1960-1980
 - Late contemporary-composed since 1980

 - Accompaniment is up-beat rather than slow
 - Other instrumental accompaniment is used.
4. **Enthusiastic invitations and hospitality**
 - First time visitors receive 3 friendliness signals:
 - Letter from pastor
 - “Front-porch visit” by laity first 24 hours
 - Welcoming phone call following Saturday (lay)
5. **Adequate facilities**
 - Up-to-date nursery, restrooms, elementary furniture, and clean foyer with welcoming staffing by laity.
6. **Annual stewardship education**
 - Emphasis on need of Christian to give.
 - Focus on “the joy of giving” to ministry, not program
 - Results in increase of \$200-400 per worshipper per year
7. **One or two new events or programs per year.**
 - Emphasis on Biblical, spiritual, musical needs.
 - Offers external communication in behalf of new programs
8. **First-class printed materials**
 - Worship bulletins, brochures, newsletters are prepared with an eye to quality.

9. Strong prayer emphasis

Prayer is central to worship, pastor prays in homes of people, prayer chains or other organization for prayers are emphasized, printed materials highlight prayer.

10. Planning procedures that maneuver through the classic Plateau stages:

Average worship attendance-40: Add more elementary classes and one adult class.

Average worship attendance-70: put resources and emphasis on evening youth ministry.

Average worship attendance 100: organize more adult groups for Sunday School and as “side-port” entries.

CORE VALUES/MISSION STATEMENTS

A consensus Mission Statement is always central to the life of an organization. Based on the Core Values, or basic beliefs, and reflecting those beliefs, a Mission Statement defines the reason for existence of an organization. It says to others “This is who we are, this is why we are here, and this defines our purpose in the world. More importantly, it keeps before an organization its central purpose, and holds that organization accountable to its stated purpose in all its undertakings.

Participants in the **Vision and Values Workshop** expressed the following **Core Values** as central to the identity of **FIRST United Methodist Church**:

The Table of Mark:

- Feed Me!
- We feel the presence of the Lord in our church family
- We love and have faith in the Lord
- Unlimited potential
- Traditional

The Table of Martha:

- **Family**
- **Job/self/possessions/faith**
- **Satisfied to not expect much**
- **We do what it takes to get by**
- **Come to each others needs**

The Table of Mary:

- **Supporting faith membership/staff of our church**
- **Faithfulness**
- **Christ centered service**
- **Youth**
- **Praying, living, loving with the heart of Christ**

No consensus was developed. The congregation is asked to reflect upon and conclude what the motivating core values are for **First United Methodist Church**, using the above ideas as starting points.

MISSION STATEMENTS

Based on the above Core Values, the following statements of the Mission of **First United Methodist Church were presented.**

Mark:

The mission of First United Methodist Church is to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ; sharing the Gospel in Word and Deed.

Mary:

The mission of our church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ by nurturing people of all ages in Christian living by sharing the Gospel in word and deed.

Martha:

The mission of First United Methodist church is to make Disciples of Jesus Christ through relationships, fellowship and mission with others.

CONSENSUS MISSION STATEMENT: No consensus mission statement was selected. The process will require serious consideration of the church's mission by the congregation as a whole.

GOALS:

From the **Core Values**, and the Mission Statements of each table grouping, the following goals were developed, from which a **priority** of goals will need to be derived. Goals are broad-based statements of achievements desired by the congregation and as such are central to the development of the VISION...the desired future of the church. Goals **MUST** be tested against the core values and consistent with the mission statement to be truly a part of the Church's vision.

Table of Mark:

- All pews full with active members
- Active outreach programs
- Financial stability
- Safe and sound structure with a Family Life Center
- Most spiritually uplifting worship services
- More males involved spiritually in leading

Table of Mary:

- Modernize and sustain First United Methodist Church as a core part of Burkburnett
- Grow and strengthen our children and youth ministries
- Open the doors of the church to as many Christ centered opportunities as possible
- Increase church awareness in faith duties

Table of Martha:

We want to be known as:

- Safe gathering base for youth
- Reach out to Survivor Generation (Ages 22-45)
- Building Improvement
- Increase our volunteer base
- Offer a cross-section of worship experiences

CONSENSUS

Great Children/youth program
Building/facilities to support ministries at this point in time
Spiritually Uplifting Options
Active Outreach Programs
Inviting and welcoming Church

IMPEDIMENTS TO ACCOMPLISHING GOALS:

- **Resistance to change**
- **Facilities**
- **Land**
- **Volunteers--Involvement**
- **Need for more prayer**
- **Lack of Faith**
- **Vision for future**
- **No buy-in**
- **Lack of younger members**
- **People being to comfortable**

OBJECTIVES

REACH AND RECEIVE

(Evangelism)

Associate Pastor to help with visitors/new members	100% contact/visitors & shut-ins
Follow-up Program	Transportation and drivers
New-open staff office	Staffing: Kathy, Margit, Jan,
Paid youth minister	youth minister, evangelism/
Purchase property around church for future improve.	education/outreach
Create facility that enables youth to host events	Have 4 full-time greeters.
rather than going elsewhere	Commitment for people to be greeters

RELATE TO GOD

(Congregational Life)

Complete remodeling for education bldg.	Audio/visual systems in worship
Upgrade entire church/rooms	Senior high aver att. In SS-25
Add multi-media capability to sanctuary	Buy a people mover bus
Children/youth materials unlimited	Food facilities
Gut 1 st floor of educa. Wing/remodel as youth	Furniture/facilities up-date
Media center/fellowship hall	Praise music during worship
Add full-time youth director	Repair roof once and for all
All systems (air, heating, plumbing updated/working	Audio/video for youth/FLC
Up-date, remodel, refurbish educational wing	Offer more youth led services
Buy Burk library and convert to youth facility	50 member choir
Instrumental music during worship	Add breakfast coffee bar-“Holy Grounds”
New technology/audio/visual	

NURTURE IN FAITH

(Spiritual Life)

Update children's educational bldg;	House for youth in future
A/C, furniture, appeal to youth	Stewardship/spiritual trng.
Add minister of music	Offer contemporary
Financial support to cover all activities	service w. upbeat music/
Add alternative music experiences;	instruments
Instruments, singers, bell choirs, drama	Add associate pastor
More Staffing, facilities, youth director	

SEND TO SERVE

(Missions)

Sponsor youth mission outside US border	Summer mission trip
(Partner with another church)	(200 people)
Sunday School teachers for all classes	Bowling alley
Newcomer church tours	Continue to serve at
In-house home repair team	Faith Mission regularly
Transportation resources-Expand fleet and types.	

ACTION PLANS

Action plans, updated annually, are prepared from the prioritized list of objectives, showing how objectives are implemented. They include specific implementation tasks, resources and time lines to achieve the stated objectives.

Units (staff, task forces, committees, etc.) prepare the plans to be consistent with the mission, goals, and objective of **ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY**. To facilitate such efforts, **ACTION PLAN** forms are included in the appendix.

Action plans are organized according to the following format. Each assignment will reflect a stated objective or sub-category of that objective. Personnel assignments are then listed in a separate column, with a report date clearly defined. Some examples of how this might work are:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>PERSONNEL</u>	<u>DUE DATE</u>
Reach & Receive	Visitation program	Evang.Task Force	Feb. 1, 2008
Relate to God	Youth led services	Pastor/Youth. Co.	Dec. 15, 08
Nurture in Faith	Volunteer greeters, etc.	Worship Task Force	Dec. 1, 08
Missions	In-house home repair	Task Force/Missions	Jan. 1, 08

(Note: All the above are merely samples chosen at random with arbitrary dates assigned as examples of how an ACTION PLAN might look once priorities are set by the Leadership Council. The Church Council will set priorities after response has been received from general membership meetings.)

Obviously, all of the objectives listed cannot be done at once. That is why **PRIORITIZATION** is essential. After the congregation has reviewed these objectives, and input is sought from every member, a list of priorities should be selected in each area, with the Administrative Council, Board, or other governing body, approving the perfected objectives. When this task is completed, there will be a clearly defined program, which the congregation will support, and this perfected document (plan) will actually be a **SHARED VISION** for the church. There is, then, much work to be done, as the congregation begins to review, add, and delete goals and objectives. Then, the work of the leadership will be to move the perfected vision into action plans, with assignments, evaluation, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of **ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY** occurs at all levels of the church's organization.

Staff members are responsible for ensuring that selecting appropriate strategies and implementing related action plans attains the objectives, by following-up, providing necessary resources, opening avenues by which accountable parties may measure their progress.

Leadership (Board, council, etc.) selects primary leaders of each program or project, and then allows those leaders to select those with whom they will work.

All administrators develop performance review plans that reflect responsibilities related to their position descriptions, action plans, and strategic objectives.

MONITORING

The pastor or responsible staff member, or chairpersons of a committee or task force monitor implementation efforts on a regular basis and take corrective actions to ensure that implementation is proceeding in an appropriate and timely manner.

EVALUATION

A program evaluation measures the success in meeting **ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY** objectives by comparing outcomes to targets. This evaluation provides both leadership and membership with information for assessing progress toward objective attainment.

A process evaluation examines the strategies and their implementation. The evaluation allows the church to adjust strategies, action plans, and resources to attain the objectives.

REPORTING

An **ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY** progress report to the congregation and individual objective progress reports document the attainment of objectives. Reports are prepared quarterly for objectives linked to near term action plans. Reports for long term objectives are prepared, as needed and appropriate.

The pastor, staff, and members of the governing body prepare quarterly performance evaluation reports on the attainment of objectives by status inquiries, time-line comparisons, and percentage of work completed. ***This is a most important step, and these reports should be written and filed, not simply delivered orally. In this way, a tracking method may be used to evaluate how a program is developing.***

BUDGET

In order to attain the objectives of this 2-5 year plan, adequate budget resources must be made available. Therefore, annual budget allocations are linked directly to the attainment of objectives and strategies. That is, budget planning, begins with these objectives and strategies, and their priorities are decided upon in the initial budgeting process.

Budgeting from MISSION rather than need is essential in achieving a strategic plan for ministry. Some strategy implementation will begin immediately with others being phased in on an annual, or other, basis. It is important to select the objective, time line it into the plan, and then move toward securing funds to see it brought to full fruition.

All areas of the church's life are asked to incorporate **ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY** priorities into their budget requests. Thus, all requests support the **SHARED VISION THAT THE CONGREGATION HAS ADOPTED.**

ADDENDUM I

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Improvement Strategies	Person(s) Assigned	Resources Needed	Time Line	Funding Budget	Special Offering
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ADDENDUM II

GUIDELINES FOR FOLLOW-UP TO VISION AND VALUES WORKSHOP

*It is essential for every member of the congregation to have an opportunity to read and reflect on this report. The most effective way to accomplish this task is to organize small groups. These groups will each meet with a facilitator, preferably one of the church leaders who **participated** in the Vision and Values Workshop.*

The small groups may be organized in any way that is suitable to the congregation's customs and structure. Different churches organize in different ways. Some organize by assigning small groups together in neighborhoods for home meetings. Others assign leaders to invite a portion of the church's roll into pre-designated homes of selected families. Still others have a series of larger fellowship groups meeting at the church on consecutive nights. There are any number of ways to do it. Whichever way your church chooses, please remember the following:

Extend a personal invitation to every member, either by telephone or by a personal invitation from the host of the meeting.

Assign members in a cross section of the membership: age, length of membership, gender, etc. Please to not assign groups based on existing social groups in the church, i.e. Sunday School classes, etc.

Assign facilitators to each group who will represent the report, and then listen for feedback. TAKE GOOD NOTES! Do not be defensive or argumentative. Use the report as the springboard for ideas and discussion, but do not defend the report as the only way! Allow people to disagree, and note that disagreement, and other ideas. Try to keep everything on a positive note by reassuring everyone that their ideas are valued and will reported back to the administrative body.

Following the meeting, organize your notes in a clear, reportable format, so that they are easily interpreted and understood.

*Once the process is completed, come together as a leadership team, report the findings of the group meeting, determine the priorities that have emerged from the congregation, and prepare (through an assigned team) a strategic plan that can be presented to the Administrative Council or Board. The last step is the design of the plan that, when completed (priorities and time-lines) will result in a **Strategic Action Plan** for the next 3-5 years. This plan will be revisited at least annually, but it is the **VISION** of the congregation in a useable, functional form.*