

**Strategic Planning Committee
Meeting Notes
June 14, 2021**

In Attendance: Pr. Chris, Steve Frei, Chair, Tom Golden, Jen Holmer, Stephanie Barth, Sarah Iverson, Angie Rieger, Sara McCormack and Brenda Wilcox. Also attending was Kristin Wiersma from the Joshua Group.

Unable to Attend: Ryan Panzer, Alan Halverson and David Vogt

The meeting opened at 7 p.m. by Chair, Steve Frei. Sarah I. led the group in a devotion that outlined the importance of sharing our faith story. Whether discussing this around a camp fire or during a Zoom call, it's important to talk about how we all are connected to God's message.

Minute Approval: Sara M. made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 18th meeting. The motion was seconded by Angie and approved.

Standing Meeting Time: Based on the results from the poll, this Committee will meet the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. For now, we'll use a hybrid format, with members meeting at the Verona Campus or on-line via Zoom.

Later in the meeting, we discussed the importance of moving this process forward and agreed to meet the 2nd and 4th Monday's of the month, if the agenda topics support this.

Strategic Planning Process Discussion with Kristin Wiersma from the Joshua Group: Kristin led a discussion describing her experience working with churches to develop their strategic plans. Following are key takeaways from the discussion.

Kristin mentioned that different approaches can be used to develop a strategic plan, but every process should start with data collected from the congregation. She commented that this Committee and the Board should decide on what we want the congregation experience to be from this process. It's important to help the congregation realize that the planning process is part of ministry.

She recommended that we start with an Assessment where the work product is data. Results need to be quantitative. Steve asked about the importance of gathering data from beyond the GSLC four-walls. Kristin agreed that we need to understand our broader community – where are they and how can we strengthen their faith.

The Discernment / Holy Struggle phase challenges the team to understand what the data is telling us about our dreams. Why do people give? What are they looking for to strengthen their faith? Relative to the bigger community, what's happening relative to families, changes in economic factors? What are common community connectors?

Kristin follows the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) process in developing the strategic plan. She commented on the importance of establishing timelines for the various actions and to define quantitative goals to measure progress and success.

When asked about the biggest challenge we'll face based on her experience, she mentioned that, coming out of Covid, we have to assess where people are at. She emphasized the importance of clearly crafting and controlling the message of why we're doing this with the Congregation. Be very clear on why we're asking for information. Remind them that the church is the body of Christ. It's o.k. to let people vent. We may want to use this process as a way of celebrating – a way to re-engage the Congregation.

When asked about the timeline for the plan, she suggested two to three years. Things are changing fast. We need to monitor or do a "check-in" every six months.

We discussed the fact that we're also focusing on retiring our mortgage in the next couple of years. While we need to dream about a post-mortgage life, we need to take action now.

Next Steps: After the discussion with Kristin, the Committee agreed to move forward with the Joshua Group to guide the strategic planning process.

The next meeting will be June 28th at 6:30 p.m. If possible, we're asking all Committee members to meet at the Verona Campus.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 8:15 p.m.