

Strategic Planning Committee
Meeting Notes
July 12, 2021

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

Unable to Attend: Ryan Panzer

The meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. by Chair, Steve Frei. Pr. Chris led the group in a devotion.

Minute Approval: Tom made a motion which was seconded to approve the minutes from our June 28th meeting with a change to note that the meeting time started at 6:30 p.m.. The motion was approved.

Standing Meeting Time: The Strategic Planning Committee will be meeting the 2nd and 4th Monday's of the month at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is July 26th.

Open Discussion: Steve asked the Committee for input into our priorities as a Committee, i.e., should our focus be on re-engaging people after the pandemic or establishing the strategic plan for the church. This was based on current observations that weekly attendance is down, there are fewer youth engaged in Sunday School and there are fewer youth participating in AMPED.

After a lot of discussion, the Committee agreed that our focus needs to be the creation of a strategic plan, but that as we gather data on GS's direction, we can reach out to members to assess how they are doing and what GS is doing well or could improve to meet their faith needs. As part of this, we can invite people back to the development of their faith.

Good Shepherd Assumptions / Culture: The Committee shared perspectives on underlying assumptions contributing to GS's culture. As we gather data as part of the strategic process, we will listen and learn which of these assumptions are real leading to our culture and defining our "One Big Thing."

- Unexamined assumptions can de-focus the strategic planning process.
- GS is not a single culture / single congregation. Differences exist due to age, location, preference of worship style, etc.
- No ministry is too small. An idea can quickly evolve into a ministry. Once started, we struggle to rejoice in the work done and end it.
- We are a Pastor and Staff led church vs. being led by the congregation.
- It's been hard for us to change. Madison stuck in practices from the '90's. Verona still longing for feel as a start-up congregation.
- It's not a GS event unless a Pastor or Staff member is present. It's difficult to develop lay leaders.
- What does it mean to be a GS member? Worship on Sunday or expected to own and deliver on multiple tasks and assignments.
- Do we focus on development of leadership or delegation?
- We grow through attracting families.
- The older members are more adverse to change.
- Youth are longing for change / technology-driven.

- There's a desire for contemporary or traditional service styles at each service time and location.
- Growth will lead to more outward evangelism. Spiritual growth leads to outward growth.
- Without a strategic plan, any idea develops into a ministry. There's no "One Big Thing."
- Belief that growth will only occur through the Verona campus.

Data Gathering Process: We briefly discussed the following internal groups that we could reach out to as part of our data gathering process.

- Approach people that have left during the pandemic
- Approach those who are on the fence and questioning whether GS is the best place to develop their faith
- Approach those members that are actively engaged
- Learn from Pastors and Staff

Discussion focused on the information we want to gather as we engage groups or individuals. Kristin took the action to forward to the Committee questions she's used from previous processes, in addition to questions we need to answer reflecting work done by the Joshua Group four years ago. She will also share what sub-groups she has typically found in her planning efforts.

The above will be discussed in further detail as the agenda for the July 26th meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Madison Campus and via Zoom.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 7:45 p.m.