



Resource Management

Invest

Why

• It's OUR FUTURE!

Picture of Success

• Heavy involvement among

# Overarching Theme: Investing Within

Action Plan

- Discipleship structure
- Re-structure budget to support inv
- Hire or invest in current staff
- Implement a form of Comm
- Remind
- Social media
- Flocknote??

**CULTIVATING GROWTH**

**STRENGTHENING CONNECTION**

**TEACHING JESUS**

**ENHANCING COMMUNICATION**

# FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

JANUARY 2025

Facilitator:  
Julie Schniers

# Order of Deliverables:

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Yours and I

Discipleship

# A strength we have as a group... 3



## Strengths (from the individual perspective) listed:

- welcoming (8) / friendly
- diversity (7)
- loving (5)
- mission-minded / missions / varied mission
- caring / compassion
- faithful / faith
- commitment / dedicated
- connected / unity
- helpers / helpful
- service
- authentic
- capable
- accepting
- available
- big events
- passion
- positivity
- senior ministry
- church family
- deep history
- established
- financial wellness
- fun
- good location
- great leaders
- kindness
- music
- open
- stable
- support
- traditional

**Top 3:**  
**Welcoming**  
**Diversity**  
**Loving**







**Something each TABLE (after discussion) believes is vital to our church moving forward listed:**

invest / invest within the church / connectedness / increase member involvement  
 2 - youth and young adults

community  
 growth

conquering stigmatism  
 cross ministry involvement  
 resource management  
 intentional  
 purpose



**WHY.... (one priority statement of advocacy from each table):**

If we don't invest within, we die.

Youth and young adults because it is the future of our church

Investing within will increase communication across ministries, members, and volunteers. Growing within will help us grow and impact outwardly.

Make disciples of Jesus Christ for future generations.

Connected members inspire growth and involvement/investment

Young adult and youth ministry is the future of our church



# Strengths

Compiled lists  
from all tables

great pastoral staff, full time children's director, largest GMC in the region, commitment to traditional tenets of the faith even if not current culturally, great location & parking | Friendly, Capable, Dedication, age diversity, financially stable, strong staff | financial stability, welcoming, community outreach | community, children's program improving, mission outreach, pickleball, healthy finances, leadership team with communication within | senior ministry, missions, financially sound, Sunday school classes, combined fellowships (when it happens) | children's ministry, Sunday school classes, financially stable, welcoming, location of facility

# Opportunities

increase unity within/among services, greeting/welcoming visitors without overwhelming them, investing in youth facilities/space, physical locations of Sunday school classes, condense space & interaction among SS classes, large facility could allow for lots of growth | Capable, volunteering, connecting with area schools & goodfellow, outreach, redistribution of budget | do more with new members, ministry fair, dinner club, small groups, suggestion box | finding ways to bring everyone together, better communication about service opportunity, promotion, need help | age gap (no 20 y olds), lack of racial diversity, caring for members, loving on each other, communication of needs, # for children & youth, structure for children & youth programs, special offerings for children & youth programs, biblical literacy | college/singles bibles study/group, be more welcoming to different groups/people/community (homeless & needy), concentrate energy to ministries, etc., renovate youth space



# Weaknesses

7

age of pastoral staff (close to retirement?), lack of full-time youth director, age gaps among membership, divided services/lack of unity among them, no young adult Sunday school classes, aging facility, advertising & marketing | communication, commitment, volunteering, making personal contact, stubborn | listening, communication, lack of volunteer participation, big ideas with no follow-through | no devotions at youth, separate 3 services, promoting our services, marketing/social media/website, communication, college ministry, visitors, support for youth/children/college = need to invest money with our people | age gap (no 20 y olds), lack of racial diversity, caring for members, loving on each other, communication of needs, # for children & youth, structure for children & youth programs | not enough Sunday school involvement, no singles & college kids Sunday school classes, manpower volunteers, lack of overall church support for youth ministry

# Threats

loss of young people in membership, wastefulness/inefficiency with our space (spread out too much – costly & bringing down interaction with other groups), different priorities for where we are investing time and resources, too large of a facility | personal contact, fear of rejection, location, lack of leadership diversity, complacency | tradition, predictability | lack of diversity in curriculum, lack of people that will step up, rules & regulations for volunteers | communication, people who say, "we tried that before...", distractions, lack of biblical literacy, loss of sacred days (Sunday & Wednesday) | foster energy from kids ministry into youth group (future of growth), lack of volunteer/church member commitment for organizations

# Raw Focus Pillar Ideas From Each Table:

## IDEA: Purpose

- Why it's important to the church: Unity, longevity, clear path
- What success looks like: Working together toward a connected purpose & mission
- Ways you believe we could build action: Clearly stated action plan, communication, be on the same page

## IDEA: Intentional

- Why it's important to the church: to promote growth, involvement, volunteering, program success
- What success looks like: to become more than "pew sitters"
- Ways you believe we could build action: Asking others to participate, small groups, supper club

## IDEA: Community

- Why it's important to the church: building relationships among the membership increases involvement, willingness to invest time, energy, resources | a strong community attracts others to the church
- What success looks like: our membership knows each other, the church has better attendance, more churchwide events, people are more willing to step up and take on responsibilities
- Ways you believe we could build action: churchwide activities (often), combining SS classes, supper clubs, breakfast/brunch fellowships (1st place café), bulletin board about SS classes, current activities

## IDEA: Collaboration

- Why it's important to the church: grows community, increase personal investment, common message as church community, increases communication, increases awareness of ministries that need support, gives people/areas a voice, lets more people be involved in decisions, buy-in
- What success looks like: more diverse congregation, GROWTH!, more support for programs, increase weekly attendance, unity, transparency, new ideas
- Ways you believe we could build action: youth council, children council, combined services, social gatherings (ie supper club), Sunday school classes – volunteering, church retreat, year-long planning

## IDEA: Ministries

- Why it's important to the church: growth of the church, meeting needs, personal growth
- What success looks like: young adult ministries | staff & volunteers
- Ways you believe we could build action: new young adult class & activities

## IDEA: Discipleship

- Why it's important to the church: foundation of the church; to create disciples of men
- Allows us to invest in our community
- Invest in the spiritual relationship of our members
- What success looks like: increase young members = college, youth, young families



# Raw Focus Pillar Ideas From Each Table:

## IDEA: Invest

- Why it's important to the church: It's our future
- What success looks like: heavy involvement among members of all ages
- Ways you believe we could build action: discipleship, structure, vertical alignment from nursery to seniors | re-structure budget to support investments | hire or invest in current staff (more time & money) – mostly in youth and kids ministry | implement a form of communication that reaches all ages = hire someone = remind, social media, flocknote??, google forms | proper chain of communication for sensitive topics

## IDEA: Investment

- Why it's important to the church: to keep people engaged with the church, attending beyond the age of high school, we need to help them WANT to be a part of the church | people need church to grow as Christians. The need to BE PRESENT.
- What success looks like: better attendance, collaboration amongst services & Sunday school classes, more communication
- Ways you believe we could build action: reallocation of funds toward children & youth programs | activities / events to develop relationships within the church

## IDEA: FOCUS on Specialized Ministries

- Why it's important to the church: important because we can be the "go to" place or the experts
- What success looks like: people come to your church FOR the ministry
- Ways you believe we could build action: scale down & FOCUS on specific ministries | encourage church members to participate in ways they're able to help & support

## IDEA: Youth & Young Adult

- Why it's important to the church: future of the church
- What success looks like: jr/sr high kids so plentiful we need more space with high attendance | active / consistent / stable participation & leadership
- Ways you believe we could build action: more staff & volunteers | full time youth position & college ministries (2 people full time & maybe more)

## IDEA: Conquer Stigma

- Why it's important to the church: breakdown barriers | build more ministries
- What success looks like: squash rumors | church growth
- Ways you believe we could build action: being active in community in person & on social media

## IDEAS ALSO POSTED AS PRIORITIES from the tables:

Resource management, Unified Congregation Worship, Community, Communication, Volunteerism/Participation, Connectedness, Children & youth ministries

## The theme of the conversation that followed the gallery walk:

Taking care of our church family first, focusing inward, investing inward, building a stronger foundation so we can make a bigger impact in the community



# Focus Pillars

## for continued strategic planning

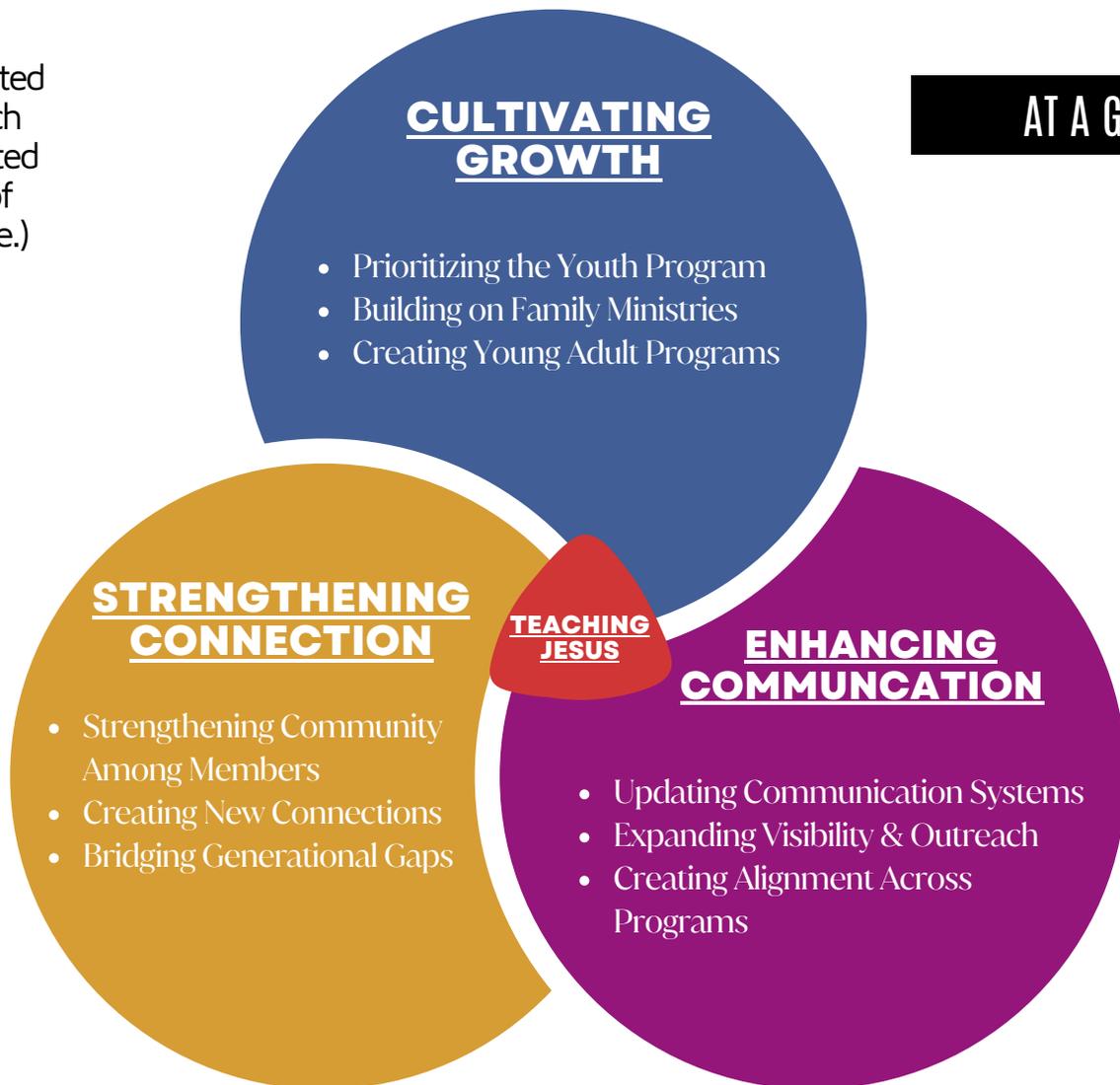
Overarching Theme: Investing Within

F M C

FOCUS PILLARS

(Priorities listed within each pillar are listed in order of importance.)

AT A GLANCE



### What's the point of focus pillars?

These core principles reflect the time, effort, and thoughtful discussions held on January 2nd and 28th. They are intended to serve as a guiding framework for the church as it continues to grow in service to the Lord, aligning with the collective vision of the team.

These pillars provide a lens through which we should prioritize our time, energy, and resources. They form the foundation for strategically planning and taking action in each area moving forward.

## **Why It Matters:**

- Prioritizing internal growth ensures a thriving church family that can support and sustain its mission. By focusing on youth, young adults, families, and facilities, we build a foundation for future generations and foster a welcoming environment.

## **Key Areas of Focus:**

- Prioritizing the Youth Program
- Building on Family Ministries
- Creating Young Adult Programs

## **Why It's Critical:**

Key Data Points from the Group

- Prioritizing Youth Program:
  - The youth program emerged as a key priority for the church. The importance of fostering consistent engagement, offering more structured biblical programming, and well-structured activities to attract and build youth was emphasized. Exploring the potential for enhanced leadership through a full-time youth pastor or additional support, was consistently mentioned.
- Building on Family Ministries:
  - Members expressed the importance of building comprehensive ministries that align across age groups, creating a seamless pathway for spiritual growth from childhood to adulthood. Younger families, in particular, emphasized the need for resources and programs that support their unique challenges, foster connection, and encourage active engagement within the church community.
- Creating Young Adult Programs:
  - There is an overall lack of programming for young adults and college-age members was highlighted as a missed opportunity to engage this pivotal demographic, with members emphasizing the need for development.

## **What Success Might Look Like:**

- Growing youth numbers and young adult programs with consistent leadership and high engagement.
- Developing comprehensive ministry programs that align with church values.
- Growing our church family by focusing on those who will carry the torch in years to come.



## **Why It Matters:**

- Clear and aligned communication ensures that all members feel informed, valued, and connected to the church's mission. Effective outreach not only strengthens internal engagement but also attracts visitors and engages the wider community.

## **Key Areas of Focus:**

- Updating Communication Systems
- Expanding Visibility & Outreach
- Creating Alignment Across Programs

## **Why It's Critical:**

### Key Data Points from the Group

- Updating Communication Systems:
  - Communication was the most frequently cited weakness, with an emphasis on outdated communication tools, such as the church's website, as a significant barrier to connection. Improving digital communication platforms to help ensure that accurate and timely updates are accessible to everyone across all programs was a wish in helping create a more informed and connected congregation.
- Expanding Visibility & Outreach:
  - A need for greater awareness of the church's programs and events was identified. Many expressed that they often miss out on opportunities to connect due to insufficient promotion or lack of clarity about activities. The hope is that a dedicated focus on raising awareness through clear, frequent communication will help bridge this gap, encouraging greater involvement and participation.
  - Updated outreach and attracting visitors were noted as critical areas for improvement. Members identified the lack of targeted marketing efforts as a missed opportunity to grow the congregation and engage the local community. Investing in digital advertising, social media campaigns, and other outreach strategies could significantly enhance the church's visibility and visitor retention.
- Creating Alignment Across Programs:
  - A lack of consistency and variation of style in messaging across ministries was highlighted as a source of confusion and frustration for members. Ministries often operate independently, leading to missed opportunities for collaboration and engagement.

## **What Success Might Look Like:**

- A centralized communication platform regularly updated with current events, ministries, and announcements.
- Increased participation in programs due to effective outreach and clear messaging.
- Enhanced visitor retention and engagement through clear, consistent messaging.



## **Why It Matters:**

- Strong connections within the congregation bridge generational gaps, foster a sense of belonging, and inspire greater participation and growth. Engaging visitors and new members strengthens the church family and its outreach, building a foundation for long-term spiritual and community impact.

## **Key Areas of Focus:**

- Bridging Generational Gaps
- Creating Community Among Members
- Engaging Visitors & Growing Membership
- Building Congregation Engagement & Servanthood

## **Why It's Critical:**

Key Data Points from the Group

- Strengthening Community Among Members:
  - Multiple services and limited opportunities for connection were cited as barriers to engagement. Members consistently emphasized the need for intentional community-building activities to foster belonging and participation.
- Creating New Connections:
  - The group highlighted the importance of creating an engaging and welcoming environment for visitors, with follow-up and outreach systems identified as critical for growth.
  - Members highlighted the importance of increasing participation in volunteer and service opportunities as a way to inspire deeper commitment and foster a stronger sense of community. Cultivating a desire to serve and a culture of engagement within the church was a common need, with many recognizing that stronger connections among members could help achieve this goal.
- Bridging Generational Gaps:
  - Members identified a lack of cohesion across generations as a key weakness, noting that stronger intergenerational relationships would create a more unified and supportive community.

## **What Success Might Look Like:**

- A vibrant, intergenerational community where members actively support one another, and newcomers feel at home.
- Increased membership and participation in church events, ministries, and volunteer opportunities.
- A stronger feel of community that creates engagement, excitement, and satisfaction among members due to intentional efforts to foster connection and belonging from within the church.



## **Why It Matters:**

- Engaged discipleship strengthens spiritual growth and ensures that all age groups are ministered to effectively. By teaching Jesus, increasing participation, empowering members, and fostering intergenerational ministry, the church builds a spiritually sound and unified congregation prepared to lead and serve.

## **Why It's Critical:**

Key Data Points from the Group:

- Teaching Jesus:
  - Members consistently emphasized the need for consistent and biblically sound teaching across all ministries to strengthen the church's spiritual foundation. The goal is in equipping members with the knowledge to grow in faith.
- Ministering to All Ages:
  - A lack of age-specific focus was identified as a gap, with the need to ensure all age groups feel seen and supported. Feedback identified gaps in age-specific ministry, with concerns that certain groups, such as young adults and the youth. Members noted the importance of creating a seamless ministry experience across life stages to foster lifelong engagement.
- Increasing Participation:
  - Low participation rates were cited as a challenge, with members expressing a desire for programs that inspire deeper involvement and commitment to the church's mission. A need for personalized invitations and follow-ups to engage members more effectively was highlighted.
- Empowering All Members:
  - The group repeatedly emphasized the importance of empowering congregants to step into leadership and service roles. This could help with unity, engagement, and personal spiritual growth. Many saw this as a key strategy for addressing burnout among existing leaders and ensuring the church remains vibrant and active.

## **What Success Might Look Like:**

- Consistent Jesus-centered teaching across all ministries.
- Programs that serve and connect all age groups effectively.
- Empowered members stepping into leadership roles and serving in meaningful ways.
- Increased participation in discipleship activities, inspiring a culture of spiritual growth.



## Actionable Goals & Next Steps

- in order to accomplish success within each priority -

### Prioritizing the Youth Program

1. **Hire a full-time youth director** – Develop a detailed job description with clear expectations, performance goals, and accountability measures. Offer competitive pay to attract and retain quality leadership. (Target Recommendation: Post job listing within 3 months, hire within 6 months.)
2. **Form a Youth Council** – Form a leadership team of youth, parents, and church members to provide input on hiring, programming, and youth needs. (Target Recommendation: Identify and form council within 1-2 months, first meeting within 2 months.)
3. **Evaluate and enhance youth spaces** – Assess both physical (meeting space, safety, accessibility) and emotional (support, discipleship) needs to create an engaging environment. (Target Recommendation: Complete evaluation in 3 months, implement improvements in phases.)
4. **Make youth engagement a mission** – Actively recruit volunteers to support youth programs and mentorship, ensuring consistent adult involvement. (Target Recommendation: Develop a structured plan for youth discipleship and volunteer involvement to ensure a steady and committed adult presence in all youth activities within 6 months.)

### Building on Family Ministries

1. **Form a Children's Council** – Establish a team to support and guide children's ministry programming. (Target Recommendation: Identify and form council within 1-2 months, first meeting within 2 months.)
2. **Plan combined worship experiences** and intergenerational gatherings to strengthen family involvement. (Target Recommendation: Schedule combined services - possibly 1/month)
3. **Host monthly fellowship meals** – Implement regular potlucks and community meals to foster stronger family connections. (Target Recommendation: Launch monthly meal initiative within 2 months.)
4. **Follow up on outreach efforts** – Create a system for tracking and engaging with families who visit or express interest in church activities. (Target Recommendation: Implement a follow-up process within 3 months.)

### Creating Young Adult Programs

1. **Hire a part-time young adult coordinator** – Develop a detailed job description with clear expectations, performance goals, and accountability measures for creating young adult programming and engagement. (Target Recommendation: Job description finalized in 3 months, hire within 6 months.)
2. **Develop community partnerships** – Establish connections with Howard College and ASU to create opportunities for young adult involvement. (Target Recommendation: Initiate outreach to college leadership and student groups within 3 months.)
3. **Identify and equip volunteers for young adult ministry** – Identify mentors and volunteers to actively connect with this age group. (Target Recommendation: Recruit and train at least 5 volunteers within 4 months.)
4. **Provide meals for college students** – Establish a consistent meal program for college students to create a welcoming church presence. (Target Recommendation: Launch pilot program within 3 months, evaluate impact, and expand as needed.)



## Actionable Goals & Next Steps

- in order to accomplish success within each priority -

### Updating Communication Systems

- 1. Upgrade Website for Accessibility & Consistency** – Redesign the church website for better navigation, up-to-date content, accessibility, and uniformity across ministries. Implement a system for ministries to manage their sections while maintaining consistency. (Target Recommendation: Assess website, identify a solution, complete redesign within 6 months.)
- 2. Standardize Communication Across Ministries** – Establish a unified system for announcements, events, and updates, ensuring consistent, accessible information across all programs (children, youth, small groups, adults, etc.). This will also improve clarity for external visitors. (Target Recommendation: Develop framework within 3 months, train ministry leaders, implement within 6 months.)
- 3. Develop a Church App for Centralized Information** – Contract with an app developer to create an easy-to-use mobile app that centralizes church information, updates, event notifications, and volunteer opportunities. (Target Recommendation: Research developers within 3 months, begin asap.)

### Expanding Visibility & Outreach

- 1. Hire a Communications & Marketing Coordinator** – Bring on a dedicated professional to oversee all church communication, outreach efforts, website updates, social media, advertising, and signage. (Target Recommendation: Define job scope within 4 months, hire within 8 months.)
- 2. Improve Signage for Better Navigation** – Enhance indoor and outdoor signage to help members and visitors navigate the church easily. (Target Recommendation: Conduct an assessment and implement improvements within 9 months.)
- 3. Expand Marketing & Advertising Efforts** – Develop a structured advertising strategy to promote the church and programs that includes: (Target Recommendation: Depends on hire.)
  - a. Electronic signage outside the building to promote events and outreach initiatives.
  - b. Boosted social media campaigns to increase visibility.
  - c. TV ad campaign to highlighting ministries & programs to reach a broader audience.
- 4. Offer Hard Copy Communications for Accessibility** – Ensure members who prefer printed materials, such as the church bulletin or newsletter, have access to physical copies.

### Creating Alignment Across Programs

- 1. Improve Uniformity in Teaching & Ministry Focus** – Establish core faith principles and expectations to ensure consistent alignment in discipleship efforts (example: prayer practices, a scripture focus, and possibly service opportunities across all programs). (Target Recommendation: Finalize discipleship principles within 3 months, shared with leaders within 6 months.)
- 2. Enhance Ministry Collaboration & Alignment** – Hold quarterly ministry meetings to ensure consistency, foster collaboration, and maintain accountability. These solution-focused gatherings will:
  - a. Share successes and challenges across programs.
  - b. Align discipleship efforts in teaching, prayer, and service across all age groups.
  - c. Identify overlapping needs and opportunities for cross-ministry collaboration.
  - d. Set measurable action steps and track progress to prevent siloed efforts.(Target Recommendation: Schedule first alignment meeting within 3 months, implement structured check-ins and shared goals to prevent siloed ministry efforts.)
- 3. Utilize App & Website to Centralize Ministry Updates & Opportunities** – Highlight all ministries and volunteer opportunities so members can easily engage. Ensure the app provides real-time updates and allows members to subscribe to specific notifications. (Target Recommendation: Implement asap.)



## Actionable Goals & Next Steps

- in order to accomplish success within each priority -

### Strengthening Community Among Members

1. **Host Quarterly Combined Worship & Fellowship** – Host a once-a-quarter combined worship service followed by a church-wide potluck to build community. (Target Recommendation: Host first combined worship & potluck and set yearly dates within 4 months.)
2. **Encourage Common Gathering Spaces** – Create intentional spaces for members to connect:
  - a. First Place Café: Dedicated coffee & conversation area with overlapping service times to encourage connection.
3. **Sunday School Engagement & Visibility Push** – Increase participation by:
  - a. Hosting Sunday School Booth Sundays where each class showcases its offerings.
  - b. Modernizing Sunday School spaces to be more welcoming and inviting. (Target Recommendation: Booth event within 4 months, assess space upgrades within 8 months.)

### Creating New Connections

1. **Expand Community Outreach** – Strengthen connections with key community groups:
  - a. SAISD: Is PeachJar advertising to all SAISD staff and families an option? (Target Recommendation: Establish connection and dig into information within 3 months.)
  - b. Angelo State University & Goodfellow Air Force Base: Host dinner events, sports nights (pickleball), and social gatherings to engage young singles and families. (Target Recommendation: Launch first event within 6 months.)
2. **Summer Programming for Families** – Provide engaging summer options for children to meet the needs of parents. (Target Recommendation: Develop program plan within 4 months in order to launch first summer program.)
3. **Singles Ministry Hub** – Position the church as a welcoming hub for singles' community-building events and activities. (Target Recommendation: Launch first singles gathering within 6 months.)

### Bridging Generational Gaps

These are Ideas worth presenting to the leaders who would be involved.

1. **Connection Sunday** – Host a quarterly church-wide event designed to foster multi-generational connections to help build opportunities for all ages to gather and mix. Idea to drive connection:
  - a. Breakfast Buddies: Pair children's Sunday School classes, youth, and adult Sunday school classes for a shared breakfast time. Possibly builds mentorship opportunities.
2. **Supper Club Small Group** – Organize cross-generational dinner groups with built-in childcare to encourage deeper relationships.
3. **Youth-Served Wednesday Night Dinner** – Provide opportunities for youth to serve dinner to adults, fostering relationships & service while also functioning as a fundraiser.  
(Target Recommendation: depends on leaders heading up initiatives, but within 6 months.)



The success of any strategic plan depends on building strong systems, clearly assigning responsibility, securing leadership support, enforcing timelines, and empowering committees to execute. Without intentional accountability, even the best ideas will remain just hopes and ideas.

## 1. Build Committees for Each Pillar or Assign Priorities to Standing Committees

- Every pillar must have a team responsible for execution and oversight.
- Each committee should:
  - Have a designated leader accountable for execution.
  - Provide regular progress updates to leadership and the congregation.
  - Be empowered to move initiatives forward.
- Utilize existing committees where possible instead of creating unnecessary new teams.

## 2. Build Strong Systems & Processes for Execution

- Assess current church operations – Identify gaps in leadership structures, communication, and processes to understand the starting point.
- Establish clear, structured systems – Implement standardized expectations, reporting, and communication to improve efficiency.
- Create checks and balances – Set up regular reporting structures to ensure projects stay on track and leadership remains accountable.
- Define committee effectiveness – Each committee should have structured agendas, clear objectives, and decision-making authority.

## 3. Establish Clear Accountability & Leadership Distribution

- Clearly assign leadership – Every major initiative should have an identified owner.
- Expand decision-making beyond top leadership – The church must function through committees, ensuring broad participation and reducing decision bottlenecks.
- Appoint a Connection Task Force – This group ensures execution, alignment, and timely action steps.

## 4. Implement Enforceable Timelines & Milestones

- Set clear deadlines for each goal – Define who is responsible for what and by when.
- Use rolling progress reviews – Conduct quarterly check-ins to track progress and adjust as needed.
- Hold leadership accountable – Leadership must publicly track progress to maintain transparency and commitment.

### First Steps: To Get Moving from Plan to Action

To move forward, leadership should identify committee and leads, assess current processes, and schedule the first check-ins. Taking these steps now will ensure this plan becomes action rather than intention.



- We must prioritize what we are going to spend on so that we can adjust the budget elsewhere. Caring for Church Facilities was in the original proposal, but our finances are wrapped up in our building and our facilities. There was a discussion about running a campaign to raise funds. Dr. Rallo talked about the endowment fund and how they spend their money. How much money do we have? How much do we give away each year? Do we need a phased plan for spending? Right now less than 5% goes to programs, around 40% for facilities/Global, and 60% goes to salaries. All these need a financial plan for us to prioritize these areas. We need a joint planning committee between trustees and endowment. We need to get on the same page. Scott has recommended this as well. This is a huge barrier to the way we spend our money. We need to plan. We need to be more efficient with our funds. There are too many moving parts. Your budget is a numerical representative of your plan. Focus on what we do and spend accordingly. What is important? That is where the budget comes from. Do less ministries that we do GREAT at instead of spreading us too thin. There is NO structure to our plan and budgets. Rolling three year plan for capital and , inventory of programs.
- We pay for college students to sing in the choir but we don't have a class for them to go to. We don't have the congregation to pull from for volunteers.
- Change is HARD.

- The group feels that there needs to be a dedicated and skilled person to coordinate all communication and advertising, which would include website management and Social media.
- Contract with an app developer to work on developing an app specifically for our membership and visitors. It would provide a centralized location for concise and timely communication. It would need to include notification options from specific ministry areas to keep members aware of the issues.
- Allow members to receive a hard copy of communication such as the Messenger because some still prefer a hard copy rather than simply being available online. It might improve connectivity because some people may prefer this to electronic communication.

- These are all great ideas. Where we often fall short as a church is leadership doesn't make moves or doesn't want to take initiative to actually make them happen. We need more accountability and less decisions being made by one or a few people. We can come up with ideas until we're blue in the face, but leadership needs to take steps to make it happen, or appoint a group of people to make it happen. Many of us on these committees are happy to take more of a leadership role in the church.

- After lots of lengthy discussion, it was decided among our group, that the action items in this pillar are really integral to the other three pillars. At closer examination, we decided our recommendation was to remove Engaging Discipleship and incorporate "teaching Jesus" among the other pillars. "Teaching Jesus" should be central to all things we are doing at the church. We should have a reinvigorated focus on making sure that all our church missions and activities incorporate prayer or bible study components (prayer circle at pickleball, joys and concerns at MahJong, opening and closing prayers at all official meetings, etc).
- There was discussion about whether this should adjust the overarching theme of 'investing within' which came back to "making disciples" which does tie to the initial mission of our church which made a really nice circle back show that we are headed in the right direction, but there was also an opinion that while connected this is also a separate 'project' from the overall mission.



## **External Data Insights:**

### **1. Prioritizing Youth Program:**

- "Churches with active, well-funded youth ministries report an average attendance growth of 18-25% annually. Youth programs that include leadership development, service opportunities, and spiritual education are the most effective in fostering both retention and growth."
  - Source: "Youth Ministry in the American Church: A 2024 Perspective" (January 2024) - <https://effectivelyouthministry.com/strategies-for-growth/>
- "Investing in dynamic and engaging youth and children's ministries is vital for long-term church attendance growth. Providing age-appropriate programs and activities that cater to the spiritual needs of young generations fosters their sense of belonging and encourages families to stay committed to the church."
  - Source: "Church Attendance by Age: Insights for Ministry Growth" (January 2025) - <https://jesusleadershiptraining.com/church-attendance-by-age/>

### **2. Creating Young Adult Programs:**

- "Two-thirds (66%) of young people stop regularly attending church for at least a year between the ages of 18 and 22, indicating a critical period for engagement."
  - Source: "Youth Retention: Factors that Influence Intent to Remain" (March 2022) - <https://www.cye.org/app/uploads/2022/03/CYE-Youth-Rentention-Blog.pdf>
- "A significant trend we're observing is the departure of young people from Christian churches. Statistics reveal that nearly 59% of youth raised in Christian environments are choosing to walk away."
  - Source: "Youth Ministry in the American Church: A 2024 Perspective" (January 2024) - <https://christian1057.com/youth-ministry-in-the-american-church-a-2024-perspective/>

### **3. Building on Family Ministries:**

- "Churches with intentional structures that prioritize children's and family ministries experience significant growth, as young families are more likely to stay engaged in congregations that support their spiritual and relational needs. This alignment of ministry efforts fosters a sense of belonging and long-term commitment among families."
  - Source: "Do Church Structures Enable Children's and Family Ministry to Grow?" (October 2022) - <https://childrensministrybasics.com/2022/10/20/do-church-structures-enable-childrens-and-family-ministry-to-grow/>

### **4. Church Facilities:**

- "Preventive maintenance plays an important role in ensuring that churches maintain safe, welcoming, and functional spaces for congregants, staff, and visitors."
  - Source: "A quick guide to church maintenance and facility management" (December 2024) - (<https://limblecmms.com/blog/church-maintenance-and-facility-management/>)



### External Data Insights:

#### 1. Updating Communication Reach:

- "Seventeen million people who aren't regular churchgoers visit church websites each year, underscoring the critical importance of an effective online presence in engaging both current members and potential visitors."
  - Source: "7 Statistics Every Church Communications Leader Needs to Know" (January 2025) - <https://hello.ekkleisia360.com/blog/7-statistics-every-church-communications-leader-needs-to-know>
- "80% of people visit a church's website before attending in-person."
  - Source: "Church Website Statistics for Pastors" (January 2025) - <https://theleadpastor.com/article/church-website-statistics/>

#### 2. Dedicating to Creating Awareness:

- "Churches with clear and updated communication strategies report a 30% increase in engagement across programs and ministries. Social media platforms, email newsletters, and targeted messaging are particularly effective at building connections within the congregation and attracting new visitors."
  - Source: "Faith Communications: Bridging the Digital Gap" (April 2023) - <https://faithcommunications.org/digital-strategies-for-church-growth>

#### 3. Alignment Across Programs:

- "Organizations that maintain aligned messaging across departments experience a 15% higher participation rate in programs, as clear communication fosters trust and engagement among members."
  - Source: "The Alignment Effect: Enhancing Church Communication" (September 2022) - <https://churchleaders.com/aligned-messaging>
- "Without alignment, churches often become fragmented, with each ministry operating as its own silo. True alignment ensures that all ministries are working from a unified blueprint, creating cohesion and clarity for the entire congregation."
  - Source: "Practicing Ministry Alignment in Your Church" (Published: 2013) - <https://www.visionroom.com/practicing-ministry-alignment-in-your-church>

#### 4. Reaching Out with Marketing & Advertising:

- "Effective marketing campaigns, including targeted social media ads and email outreach, can increase visitor retention rates by up to 20%, providing churches with vital tools to grow their congregation."
  - Source: "Marketing Strategies for Growing Faith Communities" (January 2024) - <https://outreachstrategies.com/church-marketing>



### External Data Insights:

#### 1. Bridging Generational Gaps:

- "Congregations with intentional intergenerational programming often report higher engagement across all age groups, as relationships built across generational lines create a stronger, unified community."
  - Source: - (October 2020) - <https://faithcommunitiestoday.org/reports/>

#### 2. Creating Community Among Members:

- "Churches that actively build community report a 20-30% higher retention rate among members, highlighting the power of connection in sustaining growth."
  - Source: "Building Authentic Community Among Gen Z: Discipleship & Connection at Church" (March 2023) - <https://www.barna.com/research/authentic-community-gen-z/>
- "Nearly half of Christians (48%) prioritize relationships as the most important aspect of their church experience, with Gen Z placing an even greater emphasis on authentic community. This highlights the critical role of fostering connections in building engagement and satisfaction within the congregation."
  - Source: Barna Group, December 2024 - <https://www.barna.com/research/authentic-community-gen-z/>

#### 3. Engaging Visitors & Growing Membership:

- "Churches that implement follow-up systems for visitors see a 60% increase in visitor retention, emphasizing the importance of engagement and outreach."
  - Source: "Faith Communities Today Study" (October 2023) - <https://faithcommunitiestoday.org/>

#### 4. Building Congregation Engagement & Servanthood:

- "Volunteer engagement increases by as much as 40% when organizations implement personalized outreach and support systems tailored to the volunteers' interests and skills."
  - Source: RGK Center for Philanthropy & Community Service, The University of Texas at Austin (June 2022) - <https://lbj.utexas.edu/publications/4517>
- "Strong relationships within the church are foundational for cultivating resilient faith, especially among younger generations. Research shows that members who feel deeply connected to their church community are significantly more likely to remain engaged in their faith journey."
  - Source: "Strong Relationships Within Church Add to Resilient Faith" (March 2019) - <https://www.barna.com/research/relationships-build-resilient-faith/>



### External Data Insights:

#### 1. Teaching Jesus:

- "Only 5% of churches are reproducing disciples—which leaves each of us asking one question... is my church one of the 5%?"
  - Source: "National Study on the State of Disciple Making in US Churches" (March 2020) - <https://discipleship.org/blog/national-study-on-the-state-of-disciple-making-in-us-churches/>
- "The church thrives when its members are well-educated in biblical truths, as they can then uphold, defend, and communicate the gospel more effectively."
  - Source: "The Importance of Biblical Education for Effective Ministry" (June 2023) - <https://mcscollge.com/resources/what-makes-biblical-education-essential-for-ministry>

#### 2. Ministering to All Ages:

- "Develop multi-generational small groups. A church needs small groups that intentionally bring together the generations. These groups might be ongoing home-based groups, short-term study groups, or leadership teams."
  - Source: "10 Ways to Bring the Generations Together at Your Church" (April 2020) - <https://outreachmagazine.com/features/leadership/53356-10-ways-to-bring-the-generations-together-at-your-church.html>
- "Start a mentoring program. Jesus invested in others, and Paul did the same. Indeed, the Apostle expected older believers to teach and train younger believers (Titus 2)."
  - Source: 10 Ways to Bridge Generation Gaps in Churches (June 2023) - <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/bptoolbox/10-ways-to-bridge-generation-gaps-in-churches/>

#### 3. Increasing Participation:

- "Churches that prioritize discipleship report 85% retention rates among attendees, compared to only 50% in churches without structured programs."
  - Source: "Why Discipleship Matters in Church Growth" (March 2023) - <https://www.barna.com/research/why-discipleship-matters/>

#### 4. Empowering All Members:

- "Churches with strong discipleship programs report a 25% increase in congregational engagement and retention, with members feeling equipped and supported to serve in leadership roles."
  - Source: "Faith Communities Today Study" (October 2022) - <https://faithcommunitiestoday.org/reports/>



# Those in attendance to one or both of the nights

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40 People

Everyone from the church was invited to be a part.

