

2021-2022 MINISTRY YEAR PLANNING RETREAT - REPORT

8/21/2021

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PART 1

Stonebrook Community Church - Mission, Vision, Goals

Our Mission:

To love God and people by walking in the gospel.

Our Values:

We aim to be a church characterized by

- Devotion to Christ
- Biblical Mindedness
- Walking in Godliness
- Strengthening Families
- Devotion to the Fellowship
- Serving the City
- Proclaiming Christ

Our Vision:

To see many hundreds become followers of Jesus, and many thousands hear the gospel,

by cultivating a ministry that results in:

600-800 ¹individuals walking in deep fellowship with Jesus and one another ²as kingdom-minded households ³who gather in well-shepherded small groups ⁴which band together as a church for joy-filled worship ⁵and scatter into every area of life with the gospel on their hearts, minds, and lips. ⁶We will do this in partnership with like-minded churches and ministries ⁷and extend this ministry to unreached areas through dozens of Bible studies and church plants.

QUESTION:

Do we want/need to restate these statements in light of the new 10 year vision?

Not a redefinition of mission, but sharpening of focus.

PART 2

Review: the 2020-2021 Playbook

“Stroke of the pen” objectives

-  **Leadership Pipeline/CGL Alignment**
 - Create Discipleship Pathway/Leadership Pipeline
 - Create a list of next-in-line leaders for development (FATSO folks)
 - Install these people as CGL’s and sketch a timeline to ordination (what would stop us from ordaining them? Work on these areas with them)
 - Remove CGLs that are filling seats ineffectively to make room for these new leaders
-  **Affiliate with the SBC**
 - Congregational affirmation (not a vote, but similar process to ordination)
-  **Greenlight Men’s ministry**
 - Release Cliff and Co. to lead it, give them outcomes/vision
-  **Matt and Brad “Switch seats”**
 - Matt raise to 50% time, increase role in leadership/facilitation of meetings (agenda setting and meeting running for Core, Elders, and MET, others?)
-  **Have ChurchMediaSquad create great graphics out of this year’s theme and objectives.**

Standard Operating Objectives

- **ALWAYS DO:** Maintain our emphasis on excellence for Sunday AM (in terms of resources, time, personnel, and focus)
- **ALWAYS DO:** Emphasize “pastoral nodes” - clarity and accountability around each pastor’s nodes.
-  **TO DO:** Implement annual elder reaffirmation
-  **TO DO:** Establish appeal/grievance process for issues related to elders
-  **TO DO:** Conduct pastor job review each year (semester?) for every FTP and BVP

Behavioral Change Objectives

Theme for 2020-2021: We are Ambassadors

Establish a 2 Corinthians 5:20 identity in every member

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1: Establish a 2 Corinthians 5:20 identity in every member

- **The work of the ambassador:** TACTIC: [Who's Your One? Campaign](#)
- **The role of the embassy:** lean in to our Sunday AM and CG/fellowship strength. Instruct on their importance
- Equipping ambassadors: This is our whole ministry. See "[The Plan](#)" "**Stay connected with the king**"
- Over Communicate vision: Be the chief vision repeaters. Find creative ways to remind people every week of the mission. Visually. Graphics. Handouts. Testimonies. Anecdotes.
- LAG METRIC: Increased gospel conversations
- LAG METRIC: People knowing that they are an ambassador for Christ
- LAG METRIC: People owning and acting on "The Plan".
- LEAD METRIC: Every member having a "one" - CGLs discussing this each week, praying for their people and their lists.
- LEAD METRIC: Constant repetition of The Plan, Who's your one?, and the ambassador theme.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2: Develop the discipleship pathway / [leadership pipeline](#)

- 2 Timothy 2:2 / Ephesians 4
- LAG METRIC: Individuals knowing what their next step in the faith is
- LAG METRIC: Individuals knowing how to direct others in their next steps
- LEAD METRIC: Developing the pathway with waypoints (see WCCC's process, GCLI, BILD, etc)
- LEAD METRIC: Identify individuals who are next in line elders, deacons, ministry leaders, cg leaders, etc.
- LEAD METRIC: Initiate with those individuals

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3: Elders focus on "It starts at home"

- Elders special focus on equipping men and women in marriage and parenting within this missional emphasis
- Win at marriage, win the children.
- "Your ministry flows from your home"
- "We see a crisis in our church that we need to give special focus to. Marriages ought to be thriving, and many (?) are not."
- WCCC Marriage Conference 2021
- Possibly use Re-engage (the marriage program from Watermark church that WCCC was working with)
- LAG METRIC: Thriving households
- LEAD METRIC: As many husbands as possible engaged in the leadership pipeline and in discipleship relationships

PART 3

Review: SCC Core Leaders Feedback Summary

Feedback collected 1/18/21 - 2/9/21

25 participants

QUESTION: This year, in light of everything, where have we been pleasantly surprised by our strengths? (What's working - and how can we amplify it?)

- ADAPTABILITY: Virtual services and small groups ++++++
 - Ability to implement a complex tech solution/system quickly +++++++
 - Small groups (CGs and Bible Studies) ++
 - Some of the changes increased participation and effectiveness of the time! ++
 - Increased Outreach potential ++
- GIVING: Faithfulness in finances/giving/renew campaign ++++++
 - Idea: a church-wide campaign like renew, but perhaps with more an external focus, serve and contribute to the community as a whole church, to unify us and bless those we're seeking to reach +
+
- UNITY: In the leaders and congregation's response (with a few exceptions):
 - Unity and level-headedness among the leadership ++++
 - Unity, patience and faithfulness of the congregation to follow the lead of the elders ++++
- COMMUNICATION: Increased communication about the what/how/why in our response ++++
- Sunday AM teaching: consistent focus and quality +++
- Baptisms
- Weekly prayer meetings
- Everything

QUESTION: What has this year revealed about our vulnerabilities and shortcomings? (What's broken, and how can we fix it?)

- Division caused by differing political and medical ideologies. ++++++
 - Matt's commentary from a summary of several strong comments on "both sides" of these issues, rather than repeating the comments here: Dogmatically held political stances were a real threat to unity. Need to promote instruction, dialogue, open handedness, and patience with one another on these secondary issues.
Romans 14:1, Hebrews 13:17
- Need for improved connectedness through multiple channels ++++++
 - Our path into deeper connectedness is only through CG's. "I don't know what CG to invite them to, so I guess I'll do nothing." - More encouragement to individual initiative and smaller bible studies
 - We depend greatly on Sunday AM for accomplishing our discipleship plan
 - Difficult to know if people are engaged or not
 - Inability to connect effectively by virtual means
 - Stonebrook can be very cliquy - those outside the existing cliques felt left out in the cold
- Shortage of available leadership & ministry team members +++++
 - Lack of CG leaders -Need a deeper bench and more effective apprenticeship/training
 - Lack of ministry team members in every area - pray for more laborers
 - Lack of (and decreasing?) pastoral bandwidth to meet all the needs during this time
- Nothing +++
- We continue to have marital & relational conflicts that are difficult to resolve. Could benefit from additional training.
- Multiple break-ins to the building
- Elders were slow to lead out on training CG leaders on how to maintain connection during this time.
- Elders could have moved to resource CG leaders with paid zoom accounts to remove time restrictions, as well as training on using the technology effectively. Turned down help to do so when it was offered.
- Meeting the needs of the poor. They are often left out because of lack of access to the technology we're relying on for meeting
- We lack in love for the needy and broken which makes it difficult to want to invite new people because we have a hard enough time meeting the needs of those already here.
- Quality of the Core meetings make it difficult to want to go, seems that not a lot of effort is put into them.

QUESTION: What are some areas where lack of clarity made operating as a church in ministry more difficult than it otherwise might have been? (What's confusing and how to clarify?)

- Nothing was unclear ++++++
- Succession plan for current pastors and leadership development plan for future pastors. ++
- Staff roles and responsibilities ++
- What is the church's vision, and how do we connect that to our daily life?
- Communication on volunteer needs for construction.
- What happened to the men's ministry that was going to start up?
- Why the elders and deacons take the stance they did. It was confusing and surprising they took such a strong stance.
- Stronger communication about what the church was doing left me wondering what else they were thinking about? Perhaps more communication on a regular basis from one or several pastors with encouragement or devotional thoughts
- Transition from in person to virtual and then back to in person
- Technology issues: glitches with sunday AM stream and Zoom meetings
- What is the role of the CGL in disseminating information to the members? Should we be taking information from the Core leaders meetings and distilling that for our CGs?
- Theological issues:
 - What does it mean for the church to function like a family?
 - How can we exhort each other more in order to protect each other from being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin?
 - Our church lacked clarity on what scripture teaches about submission to governmental authorities while ultimately bowing our knee to Lord Jesus.
- How do I balance maintaining strong, long term, close relationships with seeking out and building relationship with new people (especially a struggle when you have young kids)?
- Where are we supposed to go for theological discussion?

QUESTION: In retrospect, what would have been nice to have in place for more effective ministry this past year? (What is missing and how to add?)

- A video/live-stream/remote ministry +++++
- More leadership & ministry team bandwidth +++++
 - More young leaders & leadership development
 - More ministry team members. (CGLs ask and follow up with each CG member “where are you serving in the church?”)
 - More places for broken people to find help (increased Renew ministry capacity)
- A mechanism for or culture of shifting members between CGs as circumstances and needs shift ++
- Better preparedness to train saints and leaders on how to use technology to greatest effect for community and discipleship ++
- Nothing++
- Deeper individual devotion to Christ. (Encourage individual time in the word.) ++
- More explicit discussion about racial injustice, and how we can live our call to love the widow, orphan, and alien. (ideas: guest preachers of different ethnic backgrounds, pursue more non-white ministry team members, esp singers and musicians)
- Robust alternatives to large-group gatherings (house church groups, something between CGs and whole-congregation)
- More extensive conflict resolution training
- More example from people gifted in outreach
- An already in-place benevolence ministry to help take care of church members and community needs from COVID-19
- A mask-free service at some other time
- Clear procedure for resolving complaints against staff
- Procedures for meeting during emergency situations before they arise (power out, storm damage, limited contact scenarios)
- Cultural acceptance of the Renew ministry within Stonebrook
- Men’s ministry

BONUS QUESTION: What did we learn in our adaptation to the challenges of this year that we should definitely hang onto?

- That God is our Rock who never changes and is abundantly available for whatever the need! ++
- That immersion in God's word is crucial to being ready in-season and out of season.
- Video & live streaming ++++++

 - Can be an effective outreach tool
 - Virtual services and studies, do more!
 - Good option for those who are sick or traveling

- Zoom as a substitute & augmentation for in-person meetings (but not a full replacement long-term) +++++
 - Phone conversations can be an effective touch point. In person isn't always the must-have. (Both are needed)
- Growth in flexibility and grace under pressure ++
- That not all is lost in conflict. ++
 - It can often help church leaders make clear decisions and communicate them clearly, gently, and firmly
 - How to be okay if disagreement can't be overcome, even to those point of someone leaving the church
- I actually liked Sunday at church without Sunday school!
- Reducing ministry busyness is a good thing

PART 4

Elders Planning Retreat Summary

Where we are, 2021

Matt's summary of this past ministry year.

Without question, this has been the hardest ministry year in anyone's memory. Even though we were "in the pandemic" when formulating the 2020-2021 goals, we were still early on in things and no one foresaw the level of division that was a result of the many factors stemming from society's reaction to the pandemic.

Therefore, it should be noted that we, overall, are pleased with the progress made on the vision we did have, and further have identified some core areas of strength and weakness in our congregation that affects our thinking about the future direction we'd like to take.

Strong	Weak
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gathered worship● Bible Teaching● Generosity● Financial Health (organizationally)● Community/Fellowship● Communication and transparency in leadership● Emphasis on Character / "Biblical Eldership"● Campus Fellowship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Congregation is scattered, tired● Some (many?) families in crisis mode● Many are passive toward their spiritual life● Taking initiative in the mission● Titus 2 mentoring● Adoption/assimilation

Where We're Going 2031

A 10-year vision emerged from our conversations and prayer and reflection. Here's what we'd like to, by God's grace, and according to his will and leading, see built into Stonebrook over the course of the next decade. We will evaluate this annually as well.

1. A Thriving Counselling Ministry

- a. Dave, Brad, Luke, Terri, others
- b. Useful for outreach (to the city) and leadership development as well as soul care
- c. Multiple approaches ("biblical counseling" and "renew"-style)
- d. "Discipleship in a focused way." - Brad: "I'm a general practitioner, but being trained in surgery." From: "Oh you need counseling" to "I'm trying to help you grow in Jesus, and your temporary need right now is _____."
- e. Matt's comment: right now there is some divergence of conviction/opinion that exists among the leadership regarding renew ministry. We'll need to pursue that conflict and seek some sort of resolution.

2. A Full and productive "Leadership Pipeline"

- a. Producing 10 new elders (majority under the age of 40? So begin working with the 20-somethings now.)
- b. Aimed not just at producing new elders, but at making disciples
- c. Bolster Community groups:
 - i. Common resources and studies
 - ii. Make sure we have the right people seated as CGLs. Are they hungry to grow and a good example of the culture we want to have as a church?
 1. Our current suspicion is that there are at least several CGs who do not exhibit this culture that we want to see promoted.

3. An Emphasis on Prayer as much as Teaching

- a. Sunday AM integration of more prayer time
- b. Prayer emphasized in CG time.
- c. Concerns with current prayer meeting participation

4. A Culture of Life-on-life, evangelism-driven mentorship

- a. Why this is important: There is power in seeing a changed life! Seeing someone go from death to life.
- b. Teen and Campus Ministry are crucial
 - i. Many life-changing decisions happen when you are young (youth and college)
 - ii. See "Campus Facing" below.
- c. Families / Community Side-specific issues:
 - i. This lifestyle is harder on the community side
 - ii. Parenting can be a tool in evangelism (a well-parented, loving family is a bright light in a neighborhood...)
 - iii. Focus on equipping married couples for a thriving marriage and parenting
 - iv. Increased skill in helping hurting marriages
 - v. "Art of neighboring"
 - vi. Need our families to have a mission focus and lens on their decision making
- d. Counter-culture
 - i. Standing for historic biblical doctrine will be increasingly repugnant to our culture
 - ii. Benedict Option
 - iii. Prepare for persecution and suffering
- e. Increased Mercy/Benevolence ministry to show love to the city
- f. "Figure out" how to be successful in outreach/evangelism to the community
 - i. Thought is that we've been good at outreach to campus, but have never had the same level of success in the community
 - ii. Talking with Dan Rude will help here.
 - iii. WCCC's main plays: attractive public ministry, and healthy/functioning community groups led by mission-minded, healthy leaders.
 - 1. Are our people wildly excited to invite people to join them in the church?
 - 2. Are our CGLs on the mission and setting the example we want to see?
- g. Equipping:
 - i. How to overcome fear of rejection?
 - ii. What do I say? → Competence

5. A Campus Facing Congregation

- a. Younger (“digital native”) staff and stage
- b. Intergenerational, but not exclusive
 - i. Encourage and train older men and women to engage and mentor younger men and women
 - 1. Mutually beneficial relationships
 - 2. Men’s and women’s ministry can be a help here
 - ii. Upstream and downstream cultural influence / cross-pollination
- c. Excellence in communication
 - i. Excellence in graphic design (signage, flyers, etc)
 - ii. Actually have some signs
 - iii. Look, feel, tone.
 - iv. All church communication on mediums that college students are utilizing
 - v. (communications director?)
- d. Ensure that music is appealing to younger ages
- e. Integrated staff and logistics: planning, events, programs
 - i. Weekly meeting with all church and CF staff, and some volunteers, to plan and strategize ministry activity. “The local team.”
 - ii. Include CF and ISM in planning and admin
 - iii. Start having weekly tactical staff meetings. Occasional relational activities for staff to build community and unity
 - iv. As much as practicable, integrate CF, ISM, PTM, and Stonebrook’s annual plans and routines (events, training, etc)
- f. Common tools and materials used

6. A prioritization of church planting

- a. This has been our past history, and our desired future.
- b. Working through Send Network for our “Officially sponsored-by-Stonebrook” church plants.

Part 5

The 2021-2022 Proposed Playbook

In light of the past ministry year, as well as the vision for the next 10 years, our proposed objectives for the 2021-2022 ministry year are:

TO DO: Break this list down into "here's what we (pastors) are doing (and why)" AND "here's what you can / should do - how we are leading you..."

"Stroke of the pen" objectives

- Matt increase from 50% to 80% staff time
- Matt shift focus to lead/executive role
 - Matt Sabbatical, Summer 2022, 6-7 weeks
- Dave decrease from 80% to 50% staff time
 - Dave sabbatical
- Brad shift focus to counseling ministry and discipleship
- Ordain John Shields as an elder
 - First give John a mini sabbatical or something similar?
- Assess Cliff Plymesser and John Burdine for eldership
- Elders attend Simeon Trust Preaching workshop (October)
- Elders and leaders attend FTC Conference in Kansas City (September)
- Elders and leaders attend T4G conference in Louisville (Spring)
- Matt attend SBC 2022 as messenger
- Elders consult with Mitch Majeski re: team and succession plan and overall vision (October)
- Consult with Dan Rude re: ministry strategy / outreach
- Create ½ time Kids Ministry Director position

Standard Objectives (80%)

- WHOLE MINISTRY
 - Continue/increase cooperation with Walnut Creek Church
 - Continue/increase participation in Baptist Convention of Iowa
 - **ALWAYS DO:** Maintain our emphasis on excellence for Sunday AM (in terms of resources, time, personnel, and focus)
 - Examine the C1 Pastors Network & The Gathering
 - Pursue Relational Reconciliation where needed
- LEADERSHIP PIPELINE
 - Re-emphasize pastoral nodes and working closely with CGLs
- EVANGELISM-DRIVEN-LIFE-ON-LIFE MENTORSHIP
 - Continue "Who's Your One" campaign/vision
- EMPHASIS ON PRAYER
 - Reimagine all-church prayer opportunities
- CAMPUS FACING
 - Continue/increase partnership with Campus Fellowship (the organization).
- COUNSELING MINISTRY
 - Engage the questions and concerns around renew ministry
- CHURCH PLANTING

Behavioral Change Objectives (20%)

- WHOLE MINISTRY
 - Create the Operations Team
 - Design/develop outreach coordinator role (volunteer? Intern? ½ time?)
 - Design/develop communications coordinator role (consultant? intern? ½ time?)
- LEADERSHIP PIPELINE
 - Shift emphasis of Core Leaders meeting to leadership development in line with pipeline
- EVANGELISM-DRIVEN-LIFE-ON-LIFE MENTORSHIP
- EMPHASIS ON PRAYER
- CAMPUS FACING
 - Rework mission/vision/values statement in light of "campus facing"
- COUNSELING MINISTRY
- CHURCH PLANTING
 - Guang and Mindy exploring/scouting a church plant in California, possibly moving for a job. With Jim W. and an M28 church as base of operations. Pursuing assessment by Send Network. More of a missionary sending than a church plant.