

Taking the Next Step: An Incremental Approach to Growth – Planning Sheet

Growth is a result of taking small and large steps to enhance church life over time.

	Actions to Consider	Done Y/N	Timeframe Short / Long	Priority Hi / Med / Lo
1.	Define what “Growth” means			
2.	Set a goal for that growth			
3.	Covenant-Mission-Vision-Goals			
4.	Add staff (office, RE, Membership Coord.)			
5.	Ministerial staff (PT to FT, intern, Assoc., Affiliated)			
6.	Add or enhance physical space (New or remodeled building)			
7.	Add a worship service			
8.	Change governance or committee structure (eg. Policy Gov.)			
9.	A Standing Committee for Planning (eg. Peoria “Long Rangers”)			
10.	Covenant Groups or other small group ministry			
11.	Changes in Worship (Joys & Concerns, Music, Announcements, etc)			
12.	Website development or enhancement			
13.	Advertising Campaigns (radio, TV, newspaper)			
14.	Social media eg. Facebook			
15.	Internal use of internet for Board, committee, and congregational discussion and tasks			
16.	Send people to GA, DA, UU University, Leadership School			

17.	New approaches to stewardship eg. Clark or other consultants	
18.	Enhance quality programming (Kids, Youth, YA, Adult)	
19.	RE Summer Camp,	
20.	Social Action/Community Involvement Projects	
21.	Supporting / Renting space to groups, organizations that fit Mission and Vision criteria	
22.	Bring a Friend or other special events supporting growth	
23.	Retreats for Planning and Goal Setting (Cong., Board, Committee)	
24.	Welcoming Congregation (Become, Review, Maintain)	
25.		
26.		
27.		
28.		
29.		

Notes from the Workshop:

Q: What about Volunteer Coordinator Position?

- Member / Volunteer Coordinator – go to person for committees / activities to find volunteers.
- Makes sure visitors and members have opportunities to connect through activities.
- Impact is reported to be high in several congregations.

Q: Formula for planning at Peoria?

- Retreats and meetings for brainstorming, planning and consensus building,
- Feedback from congregation.
- Set reasonable schedule for accomplishment of goals
- New focus includes Mission, Vision and Goals.

Q: Discernment?

- Church Leadership works to figure out direction.
- Use the idea of Mission to start.
- Invited sharing of all of the voices in the church, and listening to them. Find the plan “for all.”
- Reflect on the possibilities in Covenant.
- Pay attention to Gross Congregational Happiness.

Q: What is enough input? What about process fatigue?

Addressing the fatigue – changing the ways the conversation and feedback happen to allow the discussion to continue.

- “Personal” communication can be useful... Leaders listen and sharing personally. One on one or in small groups.
- Multiple channels of communication:
 - a. Meetings, Dinners, internet forums, newsletter, retreats, announcements, polls, classes, etc.
- Use a Service to “Springboard” topics and discussion.
- Use the “Cottage Meeting” process
- Being careful that there is a good process during and after a meeting to continue the energy into “next steps.”
- Getting something done out of the process right away to show continuity. (accomplish “low hanging fruit”)
- Planned “community” committee meetings with food. Lots of different committees meet on one evening. Dedicated Committee afternoon or evenings.
- Singing! Making meetings fun!

- Use of rituals to remind us that the work has meaning deeper than everyday work... is of the spirit or “holy.”
- Use the “Appreciative Inquiry” process, ask what is meaningful to us and what is working? This technique focuses on what is working well. In small meetings ask “what do you love about what we have or are doing?”
- What is the Mission of the church? Is it being fulfilled?
- Meet when it is needed! Not just because.

Q: Understanding the “size / type” of church.

From “small to large” and “personal to corporate,” describing a church is complex. However there are some ways to recognize what “kind” of church we participate in so there is some understanding of its dynamics. These descriptions are from Alice Mann’s book *Size Transitions in Congregations*

- Family size (0 to 50) – Operates as an extended family
- Pastoral size (50 to 150) – Coalition of families and friends networks unified around a minister
- Program size (150 to 350) – Minister and staff provide leadership for programs, laity shares pastoral care.
- Corporate size (350 to 500+) – Minister(s) plus professional leadership lead multiple worship experiences.

Ref: <http://www.uua.org/documents/congservices/sizetransitions.pdf>

Success Strategies from Workshop:

- Lunch before Congregational meetings – taking care of people within the process
- Creative use of technology – online newsletters, shared documents online (google), online meetings, telephone meetings, online forums, etc.
- Providing forums for listening and sharing... with an underlying process towards resolution
- Using multiple Straw Polls to move a process forward – convergence on the target
- Emphasizing that “The Mission Owns the Church”
- The Mission is “who we are and what we do” and the Vision moves us into the future
- Asking “What is the next step?” so it is articulated and planned for