



A Blueprint for Ministry

2020-2025 Strategic Plan

Rejuvenating Our Church Community - Readyng Ourselves for Outreach

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Letter from the PCB Presbytery

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are very pleased to present the ***A Blueprint for Ministry***—the Presbyterian Churches of Belize 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

This Plan is a five year snapshot of how we, with our Lord's guidance, see the future of our churches unfolding throughout Belize. It captures the revised mission of our churches, our vision for the future and how we hope to achieve each component of that vision. The Plan summarizes some innovative ideas in the form of goals and strategies. These ideas and commitments will ensure our churches continue to be a growing and vibrant Christian community who love God and are ready to serve others.

I thank all of you, but especially the group of very passionate church members who came together in Patchakan in January, 2020 and contributed to this document. This Plan is dedicated to all of you who strive for a flourishing church community.

The goals and strategies presented in this document respond to the emerging issues facing the Presbyterian Churches of Belize(PCB). It is evident we have to address these issues if we are to continue to provide Christian communities of grace. Many of the concerns, ideas and strategies discussed in this Plan reflect the concerns and comments expressed by many over the last number of years.

An important part of the Plan will be in its implementation—where the Presbytery and each of the local churches take action to ensure we meet the stated goals. As a Presbytery, we are committed to working with all of you in implementing these targets over the next five years. In fact, we are so committed to realizing this plan that you can expect us to report on our progress and results each year until it is completed. The Presbytery will continually evaluate the success of this plan and regularly update it to ensure relevancy. This document is intended to be a dynamic 'rolling' short-term and long-term plan. Where necessary, it will be refreshed with new strategies and initiatives. This will be done with your input. Although the document is an excellent start, we will be looking to improve it over time.

This document stems from the conviction that fostering loving Christian congregations is an obedient response to God's call to us to equip church members to be effective and faithful servants of God in building His Kingdom. The Presbytery acknowledges the goals of our church as described in our core values are different from the culture we see developing in the society around us. For that reason and many others, providing loving Christian congregations of grace is not always easy, but given our local churches' faithfulness, the Lord will continue to bless our denomination.

We hope and pray you will participate as an integrated church community in making this Plan a success. If you have any suggestions, please don't hesitate to talk to one of us or one of the representatives in the Presbytery.

On behalf of the Presbytery,

Your servant in Christ,

Reverend Juan Patt,
Chair of the PCB

Introduction

Our History

The story of the *Presbyterian Church of Belize* (PCB) spans the last seven decades. In broad strokes, it is the story of determined outreach, the acceptance of the Good News, church conflict, defeated fatigue and rejuvenation.

The Presbyterian story in Belize began way back in the 1850's when Scottish settlers came to British Honduras with a dream to build a church in *Belize City*. In the 1950's, the Presbyterian Church in Mexico also came with a dream - to create a missionary outreach to the Mayan people in northern British Honduras. Together the Presbyterian Church put down its first roots in what is known as Belize today.

In January of 1958, the Presbyterian church of Mexico through the Presbytery of Mayab authorized a venture that would give rise to the Mayan Presbyterian churches in the northern districts of Belize.

The man chosen for this task was Don Manuel Beltran - already 65 years of age. He was a man with no formal education. He taught himself to read and write after coming to Christ. Many of the Bible passages he knew by heart. The secret of Don Manuel's success was his firm conviction that there was no barrier that could not be breached by prayer. Don Manuel had a great missionary heart!

In those early years he would cross the *Rio Hondo*, the border with Mexico by boat, near *Patchakan*, because there was no bridge. It was around this time that God opened the door for contacts with the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Belize City. The session of St. Andrew's gave their full support to this ministry, and at least one man, the clerk of the session, Mr. J. Wilson McMillan, became personally involved in the work. Mr. "Mac" was a member of the colonial government, and as a result it was possible for him to arrange for Don Manuel to obtain a permanent visa, authorizing him to live and work in the colony, even though Belize had officially closed its doors to further missionary work a year earlier. He maintained his residence in *Chetumal*, a city on the Mexican side, and would cross the border to continue his ministry work. In his first year of working in Belize, Don Manuel visited over thirty villages – mostly on foot.

The next two decades of the 60's and 70's saw seedlings grow into saplings and beyond. The Good News had found a nurturing place in people's hearts. It was time to build places of worship.

The believers of *Cristo Rey* were organized into a church in May of 1970 with three elders and two deacons. A small Mayan style building was constructed for worship. It wasn't until October, 1970 that a missionary couple from the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA), Tom and Helen Lacey, moved to the area to assist in the spreading of the gospel and the development of church plants. By this time the work in the *Orange Walk District* was growing and Rev. David Legters of *Merida*, who was coordinating this work (under the Mayab Presbytery of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico), saw the need for someone to bring organization and to preserve the work begun by Don Manuel.

In 1975, another church begun in the village of *Patchakan* with help from Trinity (PCA) Church in Jackson, Mississippi, U.S.A.

With the continued financial support of Presbyterian churches in the USA, the 1980's and 90's were an exciting time of church expansion. Congregations grew and they reached out to their neighboring villages and in Belize City. Planting missionary outposts soon became church buildings and

dedicated congregants. The harvest field was golden and ripe. It seemed that the rich blessings of God's favor flowed full.

By 1987, the phenomenal growth of church plantings gave rise to the creation of the *Presbyterian Church in Belize* (PCB). Don Manuel had gathered another group of believers in the village of *San Jose*. In those years, Tom Lacey went to preach in the afternoons while Helen Lacey worked to establish Sunday schools in the various villages where churches were being established. Near the village of *San Jose* and *San Pablo*, there were another group of believers.

Joined by representatives of the Presbyterian Church of Mexico, 17 Presbyterian churches or churches plants spread across the country. It was also during this time, that a dream to create schools alongside the churches started to blossom. In the mid-70s, Tom and Helen Lacey opened the first Presbyterian Day School (PDS) in the village of *Cristo Rey* - the oldest of the Presbyterian schools. It also served children from *Patchakan*. The intent was to teach a different world and life view, acknowledging the God of the Bible as the Creator and Maker of all things.

In the period between 1984 and 1987 two leaders, Rafael Ku and Moises Chan, received scholarships to attend Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan and Jackson Mississippi (U.S.A).

As the Presbyterian work continued to grow, the need of forming a Presbytery in Belize arose. The churches in the northern part of the country had been members of the Presbyterio del Caribe of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico for seventeen years. Those ties were broken in 1986, as work progressed towards a national church. The established churches at the time included *Betel*, *Santa Trinidad*, *St. Andrews*, *San Pablo*, and *San Narciso*. On June 7, 1987 the Presbyterian Church in Belize was formed.

This backdrop provided the structure for the encouragement and training of future leadership, whether in a church or an educational setting. In 2004, the *Belize Presbyterian Theological Seminary* was established to train local pastors for leadership in its churches.

There were four pastors after the National church was organized but only one of them, Rafael Ku was Belizean. This situation continued for several years and in 2011 an evaluation of the Church vision was undertaken leading to a change in leadership - local leaders stepped up to take responsibility. A year later a National Executive Committee of Presbytery was formed.

Today, there are four ordained Belizean Pastors - Ernest Betson, Alvaro Pott, Juan Patt, Leogardo Catzim and two Mexican Pastors - Pastor Eliseo de la Cruz and Pastor Ismael Puente. There was also one licensee - Mr. Mario Ku. Missionaries from North America have continued to arrive to assist.

Presently, there are many Presbyterian elementary schools, a high school, a health clinic and a seminary.

There are six organized churches namely 'Bethel' from *Cristo Rey*, 'Santa Trinidad' of *Patchakan*, 'Divino Redentor' of *San Narciso*, 'Ebenezer' of *San Jose*, and 'St. Andrew's' of *Belize City*. There are also several congregations and missions around the country (Appendix 2).

The church is a national church in the full sense of the word, reaching out to all areas of the society and ministering to the people of Belize in partnership with other organizations such as *Mission to the World (MTW)*, *World at Work*, *The Caribe Presbytery of Mexico*, *EduDeo* (Canada) and others which work hand-in-hand in educational, medical, and spiritual projects. Although the church population is diverse, serving English, Scottish, Creole, Mayan, Hispanic, and Chinese parishioners, God has made the church one in Him.

The turn of the century brought upheaval. Several major church conflicts interrupted the good work of outreach, decimated church membership, and severely reduced the number of available pastors. Outside financial support began to wane. The rich blessings of the previous decades became blurred by these issues.

Despite the setbacks, the church now find itself at a critical crossroad; one that requires careful exploration, change and commitment to help its leaders and congregants to better understand the direction the Lord would like the church to pursue.

Resiliency and determination of the remaining congregants began the slow repair. They slowly realized they would need to consider some intentional and planning so that their church communities could be rejuvenated, ready once again to be places of grace for the villages, towns and cities of Belize.

In early 2019, the Presbytery in concert with EduDeo (Canada) undertook a discussion to develop a Strategic Plan that would guide the Church for the next 5 years. After discussion with Peter Meerveld (Strategem Consulting Group / EduDeo), Bill DeJager (EduDeo), Diane Stronks (EduDeo) Rev. Juan Patt (Chair, Presbyterian Church) and Rev. Alvaro Potts (General Manager of the Presbyterian Christian Schools of Belize), it was decided to bring together a diverse group of members of over 30 women, men, young people and church leaders to participate in a strategic planning conference.

On January 8, 2020, the group gathered together, planning new goals for their denomination. The objective was to develop goals and strategies that would be implemented over the next five years.

By the grace of God and the working of the Holy Spirit, it is their hope that 2025 brings good news about how the Presbyterian Church in Belize can again bring the Good News to everyone. To Him be the Glory!

Purpose of the Plan

This document summarizes the conference's discussions and its ideas for change. This Plan for the church was intended to not only continue the vision of the original settlers and missionaries in Belize but the work and dedication of the many leaders that will come after. Most of all, it serves the Lord's purpose to further His Kingdom.

In summary, the purpose of the Plan is to:

- better understand who we are as community of believers;
- understand our relevance and importance in local communities and across Belize;
- re-examine the mission and vision;
- examine our strengths, weaknesses and the threats we face;
- effectively manage the most challenging issues;
- build on opportunities;
- articulate where we want to be as a Church over the next five years
- inform us of the actions local churches, leaders and the Presbytery will take to make the new mission and vision a reality;
- recommend ideas on how to better include congregants and the surrounding communities in building and growing the church; and,

- provide us with an accountability framework whereby we can monitor progress – what does success look like?

A Healthy Church

To guide our discussions, we examined the *Five Smooth Stones** of a healthy church. Each stone represents one pillar or priority mandated by the New Testament as described by our Savior through His teachings and the Apostles that followed Him in establishing the early Christian Church. They are as follows:

1. Faith Formation
2. Servant Leadership
3. Missions
4. Love Mercy and Do Justice
5. Gospel Proclamation and Worship

See following page for additional detail of the Smooth Stones.

The participants also discussed what constitutes a healthy organization. The conference leaders used the Metaphor of a Tree (Appendix 3) to describe how key components of an organization or church is impacted by its *culture, leadership, structure* and the *environment* it lives within.

Culture (the leaves and branches) is the DNA of the church and includes its beliefs, values expressed in actual behavior and its rituals. They are largely invisible to onlookers or the world outside of the church.

Leadership (trunk) is neither rigid nor overly flexible and is a critical link between the structure and the branches and leaves.

Structure (roots) is important because it offers stability in the form of its physical and social organization. (BOTTOM OF LIST BECAUSE IT DOES NOT GUARANTEE GROWTH)

Environment (soil, air, nutrients, etc.) impacts the tree's ability to adapt and grow – it may include society, its members and even the communities it tries to thrive within. In some case, it can negatively impact it and bring about its demise.

All the components are interrelated and all contribute to its health. It is to be understood the current system in any church is designed to get results, but when the desired results are no longer visible or apparent, it starts to falter. Without *change, innovation* and a *church passionate* about its mission, the results remain the same.

The ideas of the *Smooth Stones* and the *Metaphor of a Tree* provided the group with an insight into PCB's health, but it also allowed participants to better understand its strengths and allowed them to purposely examine the challenges and the threats it faces as a church (See the *Environmental Scan*).

Armed with these stones conference participants were asked how the PCB could better:

- encourage faithful growth
- encourage and create strong congregations
- create fellowship – being loving and relational
- develop and encourage innovative, relational, strong 'servant' leaders (SERVANT IS KEY, NOT PERSONS ON PEDISTALS)
- make and deepen disciples
- strengthen missional values – love, mercy, justice and service across Belize

*Five Smooth Stones (or 5 Streams) are the five priorities or pillars of a healthy Church – developed by the *Task Force on Structure, Leadership and Culture of the Christian Reformed Church in North America*, 2012

Five Smooth Stones

Faith Formation	Servant Leadership	Missions	Love Mercy Do Justice	Gospel Proclamation & Worship
<p>As a community of believers we seek to introduce and nurture faith in Jesus Christ.</p> <p>We believe we must work together to challenge and equip every believer to grow in their faith as they seek to be faithful disciples in the Kingdom of God.</p>	<p>We seek to identify, recruit, and train leaders in our congregation to be servants in the Kingdom of God.</p> <p>We believe the lifelong equipping of all leaders is essential for the flourishing of our church and its ministries.</p>	<p>We are a 'missional' community with a Kingdom vision.</p> <p>Therefore we seek to be witnesses and agents of the Kingdom "to the ends of the earth."</p> <p>Our primary objective is to start and strengthen God's church and His children both in our community and around the world.</p>	<p>We hear the cries of the oppressed, forsaken, and disadvantaged.</p> <p>Our hearts are broken by the things that break the heart of God.</p> <p>Therefore we seek "to act justly and love mercy" as we walk humbly with our God.</p>	<p>Faith comes through the hearing of God's Word.</p> <p>We seek to proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ and worship Him in all that we do.</p>

...to know, see and be Jesus...

Developing and Nurturing God's Children

Transforming Lives and Communities

Our Foundation

Participants reviewed PCB's current *Mission* statement with a view to developing a statement that captured 1) the church's top priority in the near term to meet the challenges; and to 2) encourage managed change and allow it to prosper and grow again.

Based on the recurring themes, priorities and values used by conference participants, a *Vision* for the church along with its *Core Values* was also developed.

The new mission, vision and core values for PCB are as follows:

Our MISSION

Rejuvenating Our Church Community - Readyng Ourselves for Outreach

Our VISION

***All Belizeans as Christ's Disciples
(EXCELLENT, SHORT AND CERTAINLY DESIRED)***

Our CORE VALUES

Because we believe that:

- Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life;
- The Bible is the inspired Word of God and our guide for life and living; and
- The holy life of Christ is lived out through our relationship and covenant with God, praising Him, showing love towards each other and obeying Him in all things...

...we value:

- Bible-Centered Preaching/Teaching
- Lordship of Christ
- Trusting God and Seeking His Will
- Stewardship (Talent, Time, Treasure)
- Praise, Worship, and Glory to God
- Proclamation of the Gospel
- Children and Youth
- Loving Relationships with God and One Another
- Compassion, Caring and Justice

Environmental Scan

The scan presents the key issues and challenges facing the Presbyterian Churches of Belize (PSB) and forms the basis upon which the goals, strategies, performance measures and expected outcomes were developed. It also touches on its strengths.

Throughout its history in Belize, the Presbyterian Church grew and flourished. But not unlike other Christian denominations, PCB started experiencing challenges. Stagnating growth, lack of commitment from parishioners (tithing, trust, etc.), leadership capacity, vision, divisions within the church, cultural issues and the impact of society on young minds were changing the face of the denomination and the growth it had historically enjoyed. Applying 'yesterday's' solutions were not going to have the same impact on needed change required in a denomination or a congregation.

We have only to look to the United States where 4000 churches are lost annually. Research of denominations experiencing challenges since the mid '90s cite seven reasons:

- an increasing inward focus
- lack of discipleship' and mission focus
- over programming – extended beyond resources available and engagement in Ministry
- declining 'relational atmosphere or congruence' in and among congregations – rise of individualism and eroding trust (INDIVIDUALISM IS TERRIBLE)
- inflexibility and nimbleness to embrace all of God's children and their talents (including those from diverse walks of life)
- influence of society brought on by technology especially among young congregants
- inability to adapt to change

Some of the same challenges in Belize are the result of internal factors, resulting from developments within the church (local or otherwise) – or from the community and leadership that traditionally supported them. Others are the result of external factors, primarily resulting from changes in attitudes toward organized or institutionalized religion and the increasing influence of secular society. As experienced by others, the latter is becoming increasingly difficult to change.

As a community, it has become difficult to discuss the issues and find ways of resolving and effectively managing them – now and for the future. This strategic planning conference is but the beginning to instigate a transformation or rejuvenation.

The following pages describe the churches strengths and the challenges it faces – both internal and external.

Strengths:

Amid the issues and challenges, PCB has been blessed with many strengths. While these strengths are not always consistent or practiced across all congregations in the denomination, they provide opportunities for others:

Values

- While there has been the urge to preserve the past, there is strong urge to adapt and explore options for change in the denomination and among congregations (BUT DO WE WANT TO CHANGE?)
- Some churches provide a nurturing, safe and positive environment for new comers
- Preaching of the gospel and administration of the sacraments – enabled by a reformed liturgy, doctrine and worship
- Strong fellowship in some churches
- Urge to find restoration and healing in congregations experiencing conflict
- Generally a healthy connection to the history and the denomination – but community interest is waning

Governance and Oversight

- A well-structured governance model that meets regularly - with the potential capacity to allow the church to flourish and sustain growth
- In some cases, annual operating or structured ministry plans including a budget and quarterly financial reports by church and its ministries

Leadership

- Pastors and most leaders are very committed to their roles and take them seriously
- Pastors take on a very significant role in the church largely because of the lack of leaders, number of church/mission plants and sheer number of responsibilities leaders are expected to fill within the current organizational culture, framework and church order.
- High standard of theological training for its pastors with once a well-functioning seminary
- Leadership of women in many key areas (e.g. principals of its schools)
- Remnants of committed visionary congregants and leaders
- Periodic training of leaders

Worship

- In some churches a worship ministry supported by a music director, a worship team and the use of new songs
- Thanksgiving for all blessings through faithful prayer
- Established church buildings in many villages across northern Belize
- In the past, well attended *Prayer Services*
- Reformed liturgy
- Some house-to-house services
- Community children attending Sunday school
- Denominational gatherings for Easter and Reformation Day
- In some cases, a well-structured annual plan for worship services by theme

Missions, Programs and Faith Formation

- Weekly or bi-weekly gatherings (bible study and fellowship) for women – predominately in the schools.
- Youth supported by weekly or bi-weekly gatherings in some congregations
- A strong education ministry dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus Christ and understanding of the gospel - illustrated by its many schools and children ministries (SO APPLY THIS STRENGTH TO CHURCH EDUCATION)
- Congregant who send their children to Presbyterian Schools
- Provision of 'community service' by youth and for youth (e.g. VBS, sports, etc.)
- Active justice and mercy missions supported by some churches (e.g. Belize City – meals to homeless and disadvantaged persons; Patchakan – Jacob's Farm, Dorcas House) (THIS IS WHERE THE TASK FORCE COMES IN)
- Presbyterian youth (e.g. millennials) are global in their thinking accepting of the diversity they see in the world around them
- Participation in service through hospitality, Christmas programs and piñatas
- Partnerships with global groups to assist in mission work, building of church and school facilities, leadership training and financing (i.e. *Mission to the World*, *EduDeo*, *World at Work*, *The Caribe Presbytery of Mexico*,
- Strong church fellowship in some congregations
- In the past, dedicated mission outreach to establish new plants and congregations
- Functioning church ministries in some churches
- Church collection for widows and orphans
- Provision of meals for homeless in some congregations

Issues and Challenges

Amid their strengths, the conference participants discussed the issues and challenges facing the denomination and its congregations.

Note: The **bolded** issues were identified by the participants as top priorities requiring action, strategies or resolution

Values and Culture

- We are becoming consumerists living in a post-Christian society, one which advocates *individualism*, *free choice* and *affordability* - *commitment*, *obligation*, *tradition* and *ministry*. Some Christian families in the denomination are affected by these changing values and see the Presbyterian church as one option to meet their spiritual and social needs (HOW MANY PEOPLE MAKE CHURCH THEIR NUMBER 1 CHOICE)
- As with the rest of the world, the PCB is not immune to the growing and significant influence of the secular world in the areas of social media, lifestyle, music, fashion, sexual identity, and 'fake' or alternative religious ideologies

- Similarly, the family unit is changing including its commitment to devotions, faith and church attendance
- The church's relationship with its surrounding community appears to be narrowing -bordering on reclusion. Public and community activities (e.g. sports events, cultural events, etc.) do not normally involve the attendance or participation of church members. This compromises their profile in the community
- Little contact with potential partners (e.g. other local churches) limiting its reach to the community
- **In Belizean culture – individualism versus shared understanding, empathy and forgiveness - is compromising the unity and values normally expected between congregants, leaders and pastors within a Christian church. This appears to be more prevalent among men and the leadership than among women in the church**
- The lack of commitment (or recommitment) is impacting church attendance, participation in Ministries and tithing. Although there are many contributing factors for this, some may be attributed to outstanding conflicts
- **Lack of follow-through on projects**
- **Lack of unity, communication and sharing at four levels:**
 - *between sister churches* – most churches appear 'inward focused'
 - *between leaders*
 - *between church members* unable to easily share concerns and respond with empathy and love outside of church walls
 - in some cases, *between a congregation and its pastor* (e.g. – trust, compromised confidentiality, cultural barriers, and in some cases lack of attention)
- Men with non-ruling status in the church generally translates into a diminished role and value of men in the household. This has also lead to fewer committed men to assist in the church but also translates into a diminished role in the spiritual development of the family. Women have stepped in to take a greater leadership role in the family.
- A mix of Belizean and Presbyterian values more inclined to sober and serious living is unintentionally suppressing expressions of Christian joy and passion - in worship, fellowship, giving, sharing and community
- **Historical conflicts, hurt, enmity, lack of forgiveness, gossip and lack of humility at all levels is compromising the church's desire to fulfil its mission. Continued pride and lack of reconciliation through intentional restoration is threatening the future sustainability of the church**
- **Disagreement – constructive or not - is frowned upon in the church and in Belizean culture pulling members apart. This is particularly prevalent among men and is making it difficult for congregants to discuss innovative ideas, implement change, effectively manage an issue, deal with a conflict or help others in love**
- Those churches with modern music, a less restrictive culture and less government are an attractive option for parishioners (e.g. community churches not attached to a denomination)
- Parishioners are becoming increasingly sensitive to the increasing 'politics' inside its church government
- The church population is diverse – comprised of English, Scottish, Creole, Mayan, Hispanic, Chinese and North Americans. From time to time, this cultural diversity can lead to differing views of what it means to be 'church'
- Political affiliations sometimes divide members and the community of the church
- Growing concern the PCB may be lacking the optimism and confidence to make the needed changes in the church

Governance and Oversight

- Congregants historically have placed a **heavy emphasis on the role of church leadership** within the church community. With the diminishing number of leaders across the denomination, this has placed an undue burden on existing leaders
- Similarly, the number of pastors responsible for a number of mission plants, congregations and churches is 'spreading them too thin' to effectively function as leaders
- Whereas the Presbytery/Session meets quarterly and the Executive monthly, there appears to be a reluctance to tackle the larger issues requiring national attention – **meaningful direction, conflicts, leadership, vision and overall planning**
- **Lack of regular communication, reporting and follow-up between the Presbytery and local congregations.** Agreements made between the two are for the most part not enforced or complied with
- Where leaders do acknowledge the need for action (both at the national and local level) there is regrettably a lack of follow-through
- 'Legalism' appears to stifle needed innovation and change. It appears to frustrate church members who would like to see the church brought into the 21st century
- Given the constraints the status the role of leadership imbues through the Church order, delegation of leadership responsibilities to others is not being reviewed or discussed at either the local or national level
- Except in a few churches, there is a general lack of financial accountability at all levels – including the Financial Commission's responsibility to train, enforce, follow through or audit. One church is known to develop, post and communicate the annual budget to the congregants to assist them in making their tithing commitments
- The churches are starting to experience a lack of trained elders. This may partially be attributed to a seminary that is not fully functioning and a lack of committed men
- Increasing lack of submission and enforcement of the church order, use of churches for civil marriages or funerals is contributing to concern by some leaders

Servant Leadership and Leadership Development

- As the current cadre of pastors ages, there does not appear to be potential younger recruits available to the church for Ministry – leadership gap
- Over time the intense focus on the *Great Commission* to bring people into the Church may be compromising the health, balance and future of the church - including other programs, initiatives and the nurturing of members
- **Nourishing leaders is essential to a growing and flourishing church. Nourishment and care of pastors and elders is currently being questioned**
- A pastor's growing lack of energy to the role is largely attributable to **'work overload'** and is translating into a lack of vision, setting priorities, giving direction and general leadership in teaching. In one case, overload lead to a resignation

- **Pastors are generally lacking in relational aptitude compromising their role as servant leaders and their ability to shepherd the flock. This may be attributable to a lack of training and conflicts that have arisen**
- Seminary is not preparing pastors (and other leaders) in what it means to be a servant leader – **to wash the disciples' feet**
- The seminary last operated in 2019 - graduating 4 elder leaders
- Regular assessment and evaluation of pastors is not generally undertaken by elders, congregants or a third party
- Aging leaders may not well equipped in leading the next generation of leaders and young people
- Pastor involvement (through counselling and encouragement) in the church's largest ministry (schools) has been waning
- Training resources are not available or being developed for Spanish and Creole speaking leaders (and congregants)
- Church lacks an inventory of God-given talents or gifts of its members

Missions, Ministries, Evangelism and Other Programs

- Except in Belize City, churches generally lack an association with their local communities. The relationship with the outside world is considered too narrow by some compromising the church's efforts to flourish and fulfil its mission in the world. This includes very little or contact with potential partners (e.g. charitable organizations, other local churches) limiting reach to community through justice and mercy ministries, community events and sports activities
- **Growing lack of interest in church ministries and a decreasing role of the congregation in the overall planning of the church**
- **Standard and structured curriculum for most ministries including Sunday school, youth programs and other teaching ministries is not available, developed or been investigated (SUPPLY RESOURCES SO THAT PEOPLE WILL CONSIDER BEING TEACHERS/LEADERS)**
- The church does not normally work with other Christian faiths in providing mercy and justice programs in local communities – where a critical mass of volunteers or finances may benefit in the delivery of such ministries
- Lack of churches to embrace and promote their largest ministry – their schools - including whether they enroll their children
- Ministries dedicated to men appears lacking in churches
- **Although different ministries exist within local churches, there a general lack of ministries geared towards youth and music. This includes outreach, activities including sports, youth camps/retreats, music camp etc.**
- Where church ministries or mission plants exist, regular formal assessments are not carried out to determine their viability or sustainability in the overall delivery of the church's vision
- Participation by church youth and other congregants with incoming mission teams (e.g. HANDS, MTW) does not normally occur
- Growing need for Presbyterian or *reformed* teachers in church schools
- The growth of evangelical outreach and development of new mission plants and congregations is directly related or proportional to the assistance of foreign aid from the *Presbyterian's Missions to the World* (MTW) ministry and congregations from North America. Funding experienced in the 80's and 90's has significantly dropped in the 2000s

- Historically churches were built in each village as the number of congregants increased. This practice, although laudable, may be placing a strain on some mission plants and congregations as they deal with fewer finances and pastors to service them. An insufficient critical mass of members in these churches also limits the number of ministries it can deliver on
- The *Great Commission* is the backbone of the church, but is not always clearly visible in members' actions or in evangelical programs. 'Evangelical' events within and outside the church (e.g. community) are generally not held
- Desire to regenerate church plantings has been fading
- No current denominational strategy for outreach or how to effectively disciple using a project-based approach

Gospel Proclamation, Worship and Faith Formation

- **Growing lack of attendance at worship services and church functions**
- **Traditional liturgy, legalism and ritual appears to dominate church services rather than one that allows for unrehearsed or spontaneous expressions of faith, joy and unity (HOW DO WE DO TRADITIONAL LITURGY THAT APPEALS TO PEOPLE)**
- The music ministry in congregations and churches appears to be challenged by a lack of musicians, worship teams, new songs and hymns and a thematic connection to preaching
- Punctuality at church services is an issue
- Women dominate worship service attendance
- **As a church, it is believed working as a community is key to challenging and equipping every believer to grow in their faith through the Holy Spirit while seeking to introduce and nurture faith in Jesus Christ to others. While the gospel is preached in church worship services, there does not appear to be meaningful heartfelt discipleship and faith formation across ministries**
- Denominational gatherings normally don't consider intergenerational needs specifically children, youth and the marginalized
- Often preaching provides for 'knowledge of the gospel', but does not necessarily edify church members or provide the 'formative faith-building blocks' of what it means to be Christ-like in a Kingdom-centered community.
- **Internal disagreements and conflicts appear to detract from the church's mission to make and develop disciples and build community**
- **Curriculum for most ministries' are not available, been developed or investigated from other churches for use by the denomination**
- **Men's Bible Study needs focus and development**

Mercy and Justice

- **Models for justice and mercy ministries that exist in some churches (e.g. provision of meals, sick, meeting the needs of the disadvantaged or marginalized, etc.) are not duplicated or planned in most congregations or churches**
- The church does not normally work with other Christian faiths in providing mercy and justice programs in local communities – where a critical mass of volunteers or finances may benefit the delivery of such ministries

Youth

- Youth are demonstrating a general lack of participation and interest in the church compromising future membership numbers and leadership in the church. The factors contributing to declining interest is multi-faceted. This is seen by decreasing church attendance, interest in the church ministries / community and the impact of societal influences
- No mentorship programs exist to assist youth in developing their faith or managing the growing number of issues they face in today's society
- **Youth programs and ministries generally appear to be lacking.** Shortages of youth leaders, training of young leaders and the lack of a leadership group responsible for youth programming across the denomination may be contributing to the issue
- Currently, **no youth strategy or plan** for the denomination or local congregations exist
- **Familial teaching, community and influence in a teenagers' faith life is waning (e.g. attendance at church). There is a growing concern that a lack of discipline and parenting issues is a large contributing factor**
- An increase of youth experiencing dysfunction and challenges in church schools is an area of concern

Financial / Infrastructure / Communication

- **Tithing from members to their local church and from the church to the Presbytery continues to be issue and may be limiting the Presbytery's mandate to deliver in the effective management and oversight of its churches and congregations. Lack of church member commitment, financial accountability within the church and in some cases, conflict, is contributing to a decrease in tithing**
- **A lack of budgets, budgeting and annual operational planning by local churches using standard accounting practices and planning principles puts the churches at risk for abuse and income loss** - one church is known to develop, post and communicate the annual budget to the congregants to assist them in making their tithing commitments
- Associated with this is the lack of transparency around finances at both the local and national levels – contributing to a congregants' lack in joy of giving
- Financing and labour for church and school ministry infrastructure (building, maintenance, etc.) is largely provided by partner organizations in North America (i.e. churches, MTW and EduDeo) without substantial contributions by local churches and congregations
- Historically churches were built in each village as the number of congregants increased. This practice, although laudable may be placing a strain on some mission plants and congregations as they deal with fewer finances and pastors to service them. An insufficient critical mass of members in some of these churches also limits the number of ministries it can deliver
- Similarly, the building of mission churches in local villages within a reasonable traveling distance from existing churches consumes considerable financial and human resources
- Diminishing financial resources available to a pastor's salary may push pastors to look for additional work outside of the church - decreasing time available to their parishioners and the needs of the church
- Finances is limiting the church's ability to staff a denominational office dedicated to congregational needs, ministries and direction-setting
- The *Seminary* and the *Financial Commission* is not functioning well

- Lack of a denominational and congregational websites with resources, training material, contact information, gospel message, etc. is limiting the churches exposure in Belize
- The lack of current technology use (web, social media, podcasting) is compromising how the church will stay 'in touch' with parishioners (particularly the young) in a modern setting

Getting to our Goals

Based on the identified strengths, issues and challenges, some of the following key questions arose:

- How do we live out the mission and vision that captures and demonstrates the value and importance of Presbyterian Church in Belize?
- How do we clearly articulate who we are as church and what that means to us as children of God and the communities we live in?
- What communication and key messages do we need to establish to assist us in promoting and growing our churches?
- How do we encourage the importance of our Church among our children, young people, families and the communities we live in?
- Similarly how do we engage the same groups to become active participants and ambassadors to effectively share their conviction with others?
- How do we adapt in a changing world while holding on to our conviction as Christians in a broken world?
- How do we ensure the spiritual environment within PCB provides for continual growth in our faith while growing the church and God's kingdom?
- What do we need to do to develop a truly spiritual heart within our congregants? What does success look like?
- How do we achieve a culture of collaboration, team work and sharing within the ranks of our leaders, church members and community that increases
 - overall accountability; financial or otherwise
 - planning
 - effective governance and decision-making
 - communication
 - faith formation
- How do we build a culture among members of sharing, empathy, confidentiality and prayer for each other that mimics our Lord's care for each one of us?
- What does healing and reconciliation look like?
- How do we demonstrate Christian partnership with other Christian institutions and churches in Belize that builds His Kingdom?
- How do we attract funding that begins to reduce our traditional reliance on foreign aid to grow our church? What would a financial plan for long-term sustainability look like?
- How do we further motivate our men, families and young people and students to become more involved in church activities and related events? What does that community look like?
- How do we use the innovation and technology our society is experiencing to our advantage?

Recurring Themes

Throughout the discussions, a number of themes developed:

1. Recruit, develop and nurture leaders.
2. Build (and rebuild) a stronger relationship between our churches, leaders, members and local communities.
3. Reconcile our differences and disagreements.
4. Revisit our priorities to ensure we are first advancing the foundations of a healthy church - continually exploring culture, leadership and structure while building on the *Five Smooth Stones*.
5. Intentionally build youth, justice/mercy and outreach ministries.
6. Significantly improve on the priority to first develop a spiritual heart within our members – foster discipleship by caring for one and other and showing love to those outside of our homes and church walls.
7. Improve our skills to constantly plan to advance the church and the denomination.
8. Significantly improve our communications among members - right up to the Presbytery.
9. Significantly advance financial stewardship across the church.
10. Articulate our mission and vision and promote the same across our communities.

Goals and Strategies

Our Six Goals

Based on these questions and the recurring themes, six high level goals were developed under which more than 60 strategies and actions were discussed:

1. **Nurture our local churches** using the gifts of our members with a view to developing a stronger sense of spirituality and fellowship, advancing targeted church programming and encouraging meaningful sharing and reconciliation among members and leaders.
2. **Identify and develop leaders** through training and skills development ensuring effective church governance while growing the leadership capacity for the future.

3. **Improve and increase communications** throughout the denomination - both nationally, locally and internationally.
4. **Intentional discipleship** by developing ministries focused on children, young people, women, men and families and parents.
5. **Identify, plan and promote mercy and justice ministries** as a priority for the foreseeable future.
6. **Develop financial stewardship and church infrastructure** across the denomination with a view increasing accountability, planning and sustainability.

Development of Strategies

Most of the strategies under the various goals were explored as ideas at a relatively high level by the various table and discussion groups. Specificity of each strategy as noted in this Plan was necessary to further develop the ideas into realistic actions with the objective to manage a particular challenge(s) identified in the environmental scan.

The **(Bracketed bold text)** after each strategy denotes the leader(s), church, work group, Commission or title responsible for the planning and implementation of each strategy. The date refers to the approximate time when the strategy for investigation, exploration or implementation is to be completed. Strategies may begin earlier where interest and resources are available.

It's expected the strategies form the actions the church will take over a five year period. It should be noted that many are to be accomplished in the first two to three years. This is done to accommodate delays that arise in getting a strategy 'off the ground' or to allow time to fine tune a strategy over the remaining years left in the Plan.

The sequential order of the goals or strategies does not suggest one carries more weight than another. All are interwoven to best prepare the church for the future.

In some cases, a strategy is repeated several times since it helped realize more than one goal.

Where the terms 'mission plant', 'missionary center', 'congregation' or 'church' is used in a specific strategy, they are considered the same for the purpose of implementation of the strategy.

New Organizational Structures (THESE ARE NOT MOST IMPORTANT BUT THEY ARE NECESSARY. REGULAR MEETING. REGULAR VISION MAKING.)

There are number of goals and strategies that speak to the creation of new structures to assist in the implementation of the Plan. In many cases, these structures are responsible for one or more strategies. They have been created to foster collaborative thinking, exploration, provide resources and recommendations for implementation. Their mandate is to provide ideas and suggestions for change – not to manage specific ministries or training at the congregational level.

These working structures are comprised of church members and volunteers from across the denomination who have an interest in the subject matter, are innovative and prepared to make a difference – whether they be women, young people or leaders. By providing an opportunity to as many as possible, the Plan will begin to realize ownership by everyone.

1. **Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission** is a permanent, collaborative group responsible to the Presbytery to provide leadership in a wide variety of existing and new

ministries or programs. It is comprised of at least 10 church members - 1 leader, 3 women, 3 men and 3 young adults (and may include a representative from each congregation as appropriate). It will explore opportunities for programs, ministries, activities and events at both the local and denominational level with a view to providing congregations with recommendations, direction and resources to:

- assist local congregations in what it means to be a nurturing community
- better understand the needs of the denomination and congregations in the areas of youth, men and women's Bible study, family and evangelism
- determine the benefits (specifically faith formation, discipleship and community building) of strengthening congregations, existing ministries / programs or developing new ones
- discuss the underlying issues that create barriers to improving, expanding or developing new ministries/programs and recommend actions to manage the barriers
- provide or suggest resources, guidelines, curriculum and a process to implement new ministries or programs.
- examine how to increase interest and energy in local congregations for ministries and programs
- communicate activities of Commission to congregations every two months

The Commission is not meant to replace the responsibility of local congregations or their leadership in implementing such initiatives, but rather to complement them in providing broad leadership, planning and collaboration. The Commission will communicate their activities to congregations every two to three months. The initial meetings of the Commission will be to further develop the Commission's mandate and terms of reference.

2. The ***Presbyterian Leadership Institute*** replaces and builds on the existing Seminary. Reporting to the Presbytery, the *Institute* is responsible for the training and ongoing development of all leaders across the denomination including deacons, elders, pastors, commission chairs, leaders of ministries, church teachers, youth leaders and lay persons interested in pastoring, worship and ministry. They are responsible for determining the short and long-term training and skills requirements needs across the denomination. See Strategy 2.2 for additional detail about the Institute.
3. ***Justice and Mercy Task Force*** (ad hoc group), reports to the Presbytery and comprised of four to five congregants, to examine and explore the needs of the disadvantaged across Belize (e.g. homeless, needy, single parents, drug users, hospitalized, inmates, etc.) making recommendations to local churches on how they may contribute or assist through volunteer opportunities, collections, fundraising events, etc. The Task Force will also examine how partnering with existing charitable organizations and other denominations can benefit the ministry. It will also examine funding options fund specific justice and mercy projects including fundraising events, crowd funding, on-line donations or collections. The Task Force is intended to complement the work undertaken by congregations in developing local justice and mercy ministries.

Goal # 1

Nurture our local churches using the gifts of members with a view to developing a stronger sense of spirituality and fellowship, advancing targeted church ministries and encouraging sharing among members and leaders.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Conduct a *gifts survey* across the denomination to identify God-given talents of professing and non-professing congregants. This will also include the gift of leadership and aspirations to become a pastor (See Strategy 2.5)

Compile survey into a master list for use in identifying potential candidates to become involved in projects, programs, ministries, church commissions and other church opportunities.

To include a request for email address and telephone numbers for each survey participant.

Provide master list to congregation leadership to use to in recruiting for their ministries and activities. Provide names and email address list to all church members to increase communications between congregants across the denomination.

(Presbytery to coordinate in conjunction with each congregation – December, 2020).

- 1.2 **Reconcile ongoing areas of conflict or stresses** within local congregations, churches and within the leadership with a view to:

- identifying an issue(s) creating tension through open and honest exploration and discussion
- discussing options for reconciliation
- identifying opportunities for healing and forgiveness

Identification of issues can be achieved through one on one discussions, group 'self-identification' or with the assistance of a third party. In all cases, it is to be done in love, confidentially, prayer and an understanding of the healing power of Jesus.

Where issue reconciliation requires intervention, consider the use of *restorative practices*. Training in restorative healing is recommended for a number of congregants across the denominations to assist congregations as required (***Local congregations, Presbytery, Pastors and Leaders – April, 2021***).

- 1.3 Identify and follow-up with inactive members in each church probing for the rationale for inactivity and taking the necessary steps to re-introduce them to God's flock. Consider assigning one mentor for every inactive member or family (***Leaders in each congregation – April, 2021***),

- 1.4 Institute and convene a ***Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission*** of at least 10 church members comprised of 1 leader, 3 women, 3 men and 3 young adults (and may include a representative from each congregation when appropriate) to explore opportunities for programs, ministries, activities and events at both the local and denominational level with a view to providing the Presbytery and local congregations with an action plan, recommendations, guidelines and resources considering the following:

- determine the benefits of strengthening congregations by further developing existing ministries and programs and initiating new ones - specifically in the area of faith formation, discipleship and community building
- discuss the underlying issues that create barriers to improving, expanding or developing new ministries and programs
- better understand the needs of the denomination and congregations in the areas of youth, men, women and family
- assist local congregations to understand what it means to be a nurturing community through a variety of ministries including.
 - men and women ministries
 - youth ministry - young people clubs, Bible study, sports ministry, VBS, Sunday school
 - music ministry
 - small groups
 - evangelism
 - justice and mercy
 - parenting

- prayer
 - explore how a mentorship program might work with inactive youth
 - better understand what measures need to be taken to increase bible study at home and in the church community
 - provide or suggest resources, guidelines, communication and a process to 'implement' new ministries or programs.
 - where curriculum and/or associated resources are assets to the success of a ministry, investigate where such resources can be obtained or developed and pursue gathering resources (e.g. North American and National Presbyterian Church in Mexico)
 - examine how to increase interest and energy in local congregations for such ministry and programs
 - examine how to significantly increase communication between the Presbytery and congregation on improved or new ministry and programs
 - where necessary, develop policy on how ministry and programs are to be managed or administered
 - where necessary work with *Presbyterian Leadership Institute* to develop or deliver training for ministry or program leaders/teachers
 - along with local congregations develop a clear mandate and terms of reference for each ministry
 - communicate activities of Commission to congregations (through a local Ministry Coordinator) at least every two months
 - explore how congregants can assist or become involved in the Commission or local Ministries (e.g. ministry leaders, councilors, etc.)
- (Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission - commencement of first meeting no later November, 2020).***

- 1.5 Assign one *Ministry Coordinator* per congregation to act as a liaison between the *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission* and local churches. Their mandate is to
- communicate new ministry initiatives
 - encourage congregants to participate in the establishment, leadership and ongoing management of individual ministries
 - communicate regularly with each ministry's or program's leader
 - participate in annual review of each ministry
 - participate in *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission* meeting when called upon ***(Local church leadership to assign – March, 2021)***
- 1.6 Each congregation to explore, and where appropriate, develop and institute a ***Music Ministry*** which may include:
- a worship team(s)
 - promotion and use of a variety of musical instruments
 - new and teachable songs and hymns – appropriate to the worship theme
 - recruit potential musicians and singers in congregation
 - encourage congregants in joyful, artful, and expressive participation ***(Each congregation - April, 2020).***
- 1.7 In concert with the *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission*, each congregation to explore, develop and institute one *Men's Bible Study Group* to initially meet monthly ***(Each Congregation and the Commission – June, 2021).***

1.8 In concert with the *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission* and the *Education Commission*, explore *Parenting Classes* for newly married couples and other parents wishing to better understand and discuss parenting issues. Topics may include:

- faith formation in the family
- the power of devotions, prayer and scripture reading
- the parents' role in their children's education
- resolving conflict
- Christian education
- supporting their child(ren) through active participation in extra-curricular activities and school work at home
- encouragement and proper use of discipline
- bullying and social media

(Each Congregation and the Commissions – September, 2021).

1.9 The Presbytery to establish an annual date that allows for a denominational gathering of each of the following:

- Young People
- Children's Camp
- Men's Retreat
- Women's Retreat
- Leadership Planning Retreat
- See also Strategies 1.18 and 1.20

(Presbytery – January, 2023)

1.10 Intentionally use **one** Sunday service per month as a **teaching – discipleship - fellowship** service allowing for congregational involvement through congregational or group discussions, music, prayer and real life testimonials.

Consideration should be given to activities or topics:

- disciplining – what is means to be Christ's disciple in our community?
- internal conflict – what does humility, disagreement, reconciliation and forgiveness look like?
- power of prayer, devotions and fasting
- the administration of the Lord's Supper
- parenting and family
- community involvement – what does that look like?
- fellowship hour after the service – to include a potluck meal and/or activities
- how to assist and participate in Church ministries - creating opportunities of service in the church and the community (e.g. Presbyterian schools, justice and mercy ministries)
- how to develop and implement evangelical campaigns

(Congregations – Begin in January, 2021).

1.11 Where member numbers allow, develop and institute a *small group ministry* in each congregation – to meet once a month. The *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission* will provide guidelines on the development of such a ministry to local congregations **(Congregations and Commission – November, 2021)**

1.13 To further develop a culture of fellowship and community among congregants consider a meal or snacks (e.g. potlucks) at all special congregational or ministry events **(All Congregations - September, 2021).**

- 1.14 Where not currently practiced, Pastors and/or Teaching Elders in each congregation to hold 'Profession of Faith' classes for candidates seeking full membership into the body of Christ **(Each congregation – January, 2020)**.
- 1.15 Work with the *Education Commission* in determining how congregants can better assist and serve the PCB's largest Ministry – its schools **(Local congregations and the Education Commission – June, 2022)**
- 1.16 Create a functional Presbyterian Church *Facebook Page* and *PCB website* (with links to local church Facebook pages or websites) that:
- promotes the church to non-Church goers – mission and vision, messages of the gospel, events, how to join, worship times and locations, ministries, local church contacts, etc.
 - increases communication among churches, parishioners, leaders, and youth
 - uses current technology to communicate monthly with all church members around local and denominational church activities, events, building community and faith, gospel messages, and administrative matters of interest. This includes email bulletins, What's App messages, Facebook, chat groups, webinars and podcasts and perhaps streaming of sermons on the website
 - provides training to local churches on use and development of these technologies
(Presbytery, each local congregation and Ministry Leaders – September, 2022)
- 1.17 Every two months, challenge each family to bring one un-churched family or individual to a church service or participate in a local church ministry **(Local church leaders – January, 2023)**.
- 1.18 The denomination to co-ordinate and 'host' one inter-church picnic, sports and games competition day for church families and local community members to participate in. Depending on its success, consider holding once every one or two years.
(Presbytery to assign a group to coordinate this effort – July, 2024).
- 1.19 Meet with other local denominational churches and collaborate on how churches can work together in ministries to have the most impact in their community
(Local church leaders – January, 2023).
- 1.20 Create a sense of Christian community among young people by holding a national revival event or service that introduces an opportunity for them to express their faith through music, word, and recommitment. Held annually. **(Presbytery and local youth organizers – June, 2023)**
- 1.21 Conduct at least one *family visit* of each professing member, young member and family in each congregation annually **(Pastors and/or Elders – December, 2021)**

Goal # 2

Identify and develop leaders through training and skills development ensuring effective church governance while growing leadership capacity.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Pastors and church leaders to discuss opportunities to significantly increase their communications and sharing between themselves and between churches – also see Strategy 3.1) (***Presbytery/Sessions - December, 2020***)
- 2.2 Develop and implement a **Presbyterian Leadership Institute** that replaces and builds on the existing Seminary. Reporting to the Presbytery, the *Institute* is responsible for the training and ongoing development of all leaders across the denomination including deacons, elders, pastors, commission chairs, leaders of ministries, church teachers, youth leaders and lay persons interested leading worship and preaching.

Determine short and long-term training and skills requirements needs across the denomination.

Based on the above, develop a training and skills training roster annually and provide to congregations including names of trainers for each workshop, seminar or conference. Develop a list of potential trainers from within the church, the Presbyterian Church in North America and others.

In addition to seminary training for developing or upgrading pastors, consider workshops, seminars that may include, but are not limited to:

- building community and nurturing a congregation
 - in conjunction with the *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission* develop or deliver training for ministry or program leaders
 - effective administrative management of a congregation and its ministries (e.g. reporting requirements, budgeting, etc.)
 - use of technology in a modern church
 - pastoring the flock
 - what is means to be a servant leader' – washing each other's feet
 - conducting family and youth visits
 - managing conflict
 - understanding and working with young people – bridging the generational gap
 - assessing church members and congregational needs
 - responsibilities of an office bearer
 - 'leadership' skills and knowledge (e.g. conducting a meeting, managing conflict, etc.)
 - being an ambassador for ministries
 - develop and using resources and study material for ministries
 - developing leaders in your congregation
- (Presbytery – January, 2022)***

- 2.3 Conduct at least one 'family visit' of each professing member, young member and family in each congregation (***Local Pastors and/or Elders – January, 2021***)
- 2.4 Develop strategies to accommodate non-English speaking pastors and leaders in development and training opportunities (***Presbyterian Leadership Institute – June, 2022***)
- 2.5 As per Strategy 1.1, conduct a *gifts survey* across the denomination to 'identify' God-given talents of congregants. Follow up with congregants with interest in potential leadership as pastors including young people that show talent in leadership to the call of

pastoring, church commissions, projects, programs and ministries (**Presbytery to coordinate survey for all congregations / Pastors of local congregations – Ongoing after December, 2020.**)

- 2.7 Undertake an annual review of established ministries (e.g. effectiveness in meeting ministry mandate and church objectives, # of participants, recommendation for improvement etc.) (**Local church leaders and Presbyterian Ministries and Youth Commission – September, 2023**).
- 2.8 Develop and conduct an annual written formal **Performance Development and Learning Plan** for each PCB pastor with the objective of further developing their talents, spiritual growth and the nurture of a congregation – while managing deficiencies and areas in need of improvement. The plan will incorporate individual' annual 'targets' or areas that address the development of ministry in their local congregations, nurture, annual family and member visits, preaching, etc. It will also address professional training or learning needs in areas that require improvement. This is to be followed-up by a year-end appraisal. (**Presbytery and local congregational leaders – December, 2021 for following calendar year**)
- 2.9 Each pastor to act as mentor to a least 'two' potential leaders in their congregation (**Pastors – January, 2022**)
- 2.10 Congregational leaders to develop a 'mini' strategic implementation plan for their congregation on how they can most effectively implement this strategic plan – *A Blue Print for Ministry* (**Local congregational leaders – November, 2021**).
- 2.11 Re-evaluate and report on the role of the pastor in the church with a view to significantly reducing their work in leading or participating in Commissions and other Ministries - focusing instead on the overall nurture of congregations through preaching, visiting and 'championing' of ministries and their development. Consider how 'lay pastors' under the mentorship of an ordained pastor can teach, preach and nurture (or assist in) mission plants and congregations and churches (**Presbytery – June, 2020**).
- 2.12 Assign one pastor as *ambassador* or *champion* to each of the major Ministries. Their mandate is not to manage ministries, but to encourage congregations and leaders of the different ministries in their work. This may include assisting in managing issues that arise as needed. The ministries include:
- men and women ministries
 - youth ministry
 - small groups
 - evangelism
 - justice and mercy (**Presbytery to assign 1 pastor to each – January, 2020**)
- 2.13 In conjunction with the Presbyterian Churches of America and Canada, develop a 'twinning' or **Fostering a Church in Belize** program for implementation with churches in North America that pair congregations to:
- can assist in providing a leadership role or teaching in the new *Leadership Institute*
 - to help and assist in the development of ministries
 - to assist in or donate to specific projects
 - sponsor a Spanish speaking pastor (**Presbytery – June, 2024**)

2.14 The Presbytery to review existing policies, the *Book of Church Order*, and current cultural rituals with a view to making recommendations to better assist in the delivery of the priorities of the church (i.e. *Five Smooth Stones*) and the goals/strategies of this Plan. This includes, but is not limited to:

- flexibility in the church governance model
- delegation of authority (e.g. decision-making at the local level to support new or improved ministries)
- leadership emphasizing servanthood
- the use of *lay preachers or pastors*
- the role of women in the leadership in ministries
(Presbytery – June, 2021)

2.15 Train and graduate three (3) pastors from the Institute and explore the training of 4 *lay pastors* **(Presbyterian Leadership Institute – December, 2025)**.

Goal # 3

Improve and increase communications throughout the denomination - nationally, locally and internationally.

Strategies

3.1 The Presbytery and a representative from each congregation to discuss and develop a **written *Marketing and Communication Plan*** for the church that aims to **significantly increase:**

- the profile of the church and its ministries to local communities
- communication and dialogue between congregants
- between pastors
- between other church leaders (elders, deacons and ministry leaders)
- between churches
- between denominations

This plan is to include increased use of technology, events, regular meetings of ministry leaders, etc. Some of the strategies are described in this Strategic Plan **(Presbytery/Sessions– September, 2021)**.

3.2 Develop clear reporting requirements and expectations between the Presbytery and local congregations. Presbytery to clearly re-communicate expectations of local church in all areas where existing agreements, financial reporting requirements and church order dictate (e.g. ecclesiastical discipline). Follow-up with non-compliant churches **(Presbytery – June, 2021 - Ongoing)**.

3.3 Create a **functional Presbyterian Church Facebook Page** and *PCB website* (with links to local church Facebook pages or websites) that:

- promotes the church to non-Church goers – mission and vision, messages of the gospel, events, how to join, worship times and locations, ministries, local church contacts, etc.
- increases communication among churches, parishioners, leaders, and youth

- use current technology to communicate monthly with all church members around local and denominational church activities, events, building community and faith, gospel messages, and administrative matters of interest. This includes email bulletins, What's App messages, Facebook, chat groups, webinars and podcasts and perhaps streaming of sermons on the website
- provides training to local churches on use and development of these technologies
(Presbytery, each local congregation and Ministry Leaders – September, 2022)

3.4 Develop a leaflet about the denomination, reasons to belong, church locations, contact information, etc. for each church. Distribute to all local businesses and other venues – re-stock as required *(Presbytery to coordinate – January, 2023)*.

3.5 Develop a comprehensive strategy to profile the PCB with sister churches across the United States and Canada to further increase the involvement of North American churches in the development of the denomination in Belize (e.g. leadership and ministry trainers, project assistance, bi-lingual pastors, etc.) See Strategy 2.13 as an example. *(Presbytery June, 2023)*.

Goal # 4

Intentional discipleship by developing ministries focused on children, young people, women, men, families, parents and the community.

Strategies:

- 4.1 Institute and convene a **Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission** of at least 10 church members comprised of 1 leader, 3 women, 3 men and 3 young adults (and may include a representative from each congregation when appropriate) to explore opportunities for programs, ministries, activities and events at both the local and denominational level with a view to **providing the Presbytery and local congregations with an action plan, recommendations, guidelines and/or resources** to implement a variety of Ministries including:
- men and women ministries
 - youth ministry - young people clubs, bible study, sports ministry, VBS, Sunday school
 - music ministry
 - small groups
 - evangelism
 - justice and mercy
 - parenting
 - prayer

See Strategy 1.4 for additional details around the Commissions mandate. *(Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission - commencement of first meeting no later November, 2020)*.

- 4.2 Use **one** Sunday service per month as a **teaching – discipleship - fellowship** service allowing for congregational involvement through congregational or group discussions, questions and real life testimonials. Consideration to be given to activities or topics including:

- disciplining – what it means to be Christ’s disciple in our community?
 - internal conflict – what does humility, disagreement, reconciliation and forgiveness look like?
 - power of prayer, devotions and fasting
 - the administration of the Lord’s Supper
 - parenting and family
 - developing local ministries
 - community development – what does that look like?
 - fellowship hour after the service – to include a potluck meal and/or other activities
 - how to assist and participate in Church ministries - creating opportunities of service in the church and the community (e.g. Presbyterian schools, justice and mercy ministries)
 - how to develop and implement evangelical campaigns
 - what does it mean ‘to be church’ in today’s society
(Congregations – Begin in January, 2021).
- 4.3 Develop a program designed with ½ day of activities for neighbourhood or village children that includes games, sports, bible stories - initially every two months
(Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission to work with local churches in establishing – January, 2023).
- 4.4 Explore a worship service especially developed and/or developed for young people – initially once every 3 months
(Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission to work with local churches in establishing – January, 2023).
- 4.5 Examine a sports ministry developed for young people. Considered inter-church sports competitions once established
(Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission to work with local churches in establishing – January, 2023).
- 4.6 Use the *gifts survey* conducted across the denomination to identify God-given talents of congregants including those interested in becoming involved in ministry, discipleship projects and commissions. Compile survey into a master list for use in identifying potential candidates wishing to use their gifts. To include email addresses and telephone numbers for each survey participant.
(Presbytery to coordinate for all congregations – December, 2020).
- 4.7 Each congregation to develop a written **Youth Plan** that sets out strategies and programs (with the guidance of the *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission*) outlining expected outcomes. Some strategies have been addressed in this plan
(Local congregations with assistance of the Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission – January, 2022).
- 4.8 Each congregation to develop a written Plan that sets out mission driven strategies for distinct evangelism-based projects. Include expected outcomes of each project
(Local congregations with assistance of the Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission – January, 2023).

Goal # 5

Identify, plan and promote justice and mercy ministries as a priority for the foreseeable future

Strategies:

- 5.1 Convene a **Justice and Mercy Task Force** reporting to the Presbytery and comprised of four to five congregants - to examine and explore the needs of the disadvantaged (e.g. homeless, needy, marginalized, sick, single parents, drug users, hospitalized, inmates, etc.) making recommendations to local churches on how they may contribute or assist through volunteer opportunities, collections, fundraising events, etc. The Task Force would examine existing charitable organizations to contribute to or partner with and how the use of 'Crowd Funding' could be used to fund specific justice and mercy projects. The Task Force is intended to complement the work undertaken by congregations in developing their own local justice and mercy ministries (**Presbytery – January, 2022**)
- 5.2 Similarly, each congregation to explore the needs of the village and the surrounding community identifying sick, homeless, shut-ins, elderly, widowers, congregants and/or village families suffering from substance abuse, violence, dysfunction, discrimination, etc.

Schedule parishioners (include youth with parents where suitable) to establish a relationship with the disadvantaged through regular weekly visits, meals, clothing, hampers, clean-ups, rides, etc. on a weekly basis. This is to include (but not limited) to hospitals, prisons and police stations. Share the gospel with the disadvantaged once a relationship or friendship has been well established (**Congregants – June 2023**).
- 5.3 **Appoint a Justice and Mercy Ministry Coordinator to develop a Plan for the Needy in each of the congregations** and build on the plan as opportunities arise. See Strategy 5.2. (**Each congregation – January, 2024**).
- 5.4 Partner with other local denominational churches (e.g. Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, etc.) and seek opportunities to jointly provide community services to the disadvantaged (**Each congregation – January, 2024**).
- 5.5 Explore and implement at least one significant and well-advertised church event each year in the local community to profile the needs in the community with a view to raise funding for the disadvantaged (e.g. Christmas choir event, BBQ, etc.) OR hold a BBQ for the needy monthly or every other month. Consider a joint event with other churches in the community(s) (**Each congregation – January, 2024**).
- 5.6 Prepare congregants on the importance of helping the disadvantaged in their community and across Belize through congregational discussions, prayer, sermons and website information (**Each congregation – starting in January, 2021**).
- 5.7 Convene Presbytery and congregational discussions to deal with the issue of sexual discrimination, orientation, domestic violence, substance abuse and other associated issues within (and outside) the church. (**The Presbytery, Sessions, Each congregation – January, 2022**).
- 5.8 At each worship service, identify the sick and needy in the congregation, pray for them publicly and assign one or two members to visit with them the following week (**Each congregation – January, 2021**).

Goal # 6

Develop Financial Stewardship and Church Infrastructure across the denomination with a view increasing accountability, planning and sustainability.

Strategies:

Financial

- 6.1 Develop (or re-communicate) clear reporting requirements and expectations between the Presbytery and local congregations. Presbytery to clearly re-communicate expectations of each local church in all areas where existing agreements, financial reporting requirements and church order dictate. Follow-up with non-compliant churches (***Presbytery and Financial Commission – November, 2020***).
- 6.2 The Presbytery prepares their annual budget (with expected congregational commitment) and distributes it to each church prior to congregational budget deliberations. Quarterly financial statements of the Presbytery are to be prepared and distributed to each congregation. Audits of Presbytery statements are to be carried out annually (***Presbytery – November, 2020***).
- 6.3 Each congregation to develop an annual budget and posting and distributing a draft budget for discussion and approval by church members. The budget is to follow standard accounting and budgeting principles normally associated with the management, maintenance and growth of a non-profit organization. It is to provide sufficient detail to assist church members in understanding the real costs including salary costs, church facilities costs and maintenance, ministries' costs, travel and meeting costs, training, Presbytery commitments as per agreements, special projects, etc.

Final budget from each congregation is to be distributed to the Presbytery within a month of its approval.

Audits of each mission, congregation and church financial statements are to be conducted annually

Consideration for good financial practices within each congregations include:

- a church treasurer or book keeper
- a finance committee responsible for the churches finances, statements and audits
- the issuance of a quarterly statement of the churches finances to the membership and Presbytery
- request to church committees, ministries, etc. for their expected annual costs in preparation of the church budget
- giving based on member or family 'pledges' (***Each Congregation – December, 2020/January, 2021***).

- 6.4 Based on the congregation's approved budget, develop a 'pledge' system for members to donate to the church. This would entail an annual signed commitment by the member to donate a set amount based on the congregational needs (budget) and their ability to give (***Each Congregation – December, 2020/January, 2021***).

- 6.5 Each Mission, Congregation and Church to send their pledges from members directly to the Presbytery as per standing agreements (***Each Congregation – ??***).
- 6.6 Resolve issues associated with the current *Financial Commission* and recommend changes to improve or change its mandate, composition, effectiveness and oversight. Consider appointment of an accountant for the next two years of the new structure (***Presbytery – January, 2021***).
- 6.7 Develop a one page *Stewardship* handout to families about their:
 - financial responsibility - payment of pedges, ministry contributions, etc.
 - benefits of volunteerism in the ongoing success of existing and new ministries and community projects
To be distributed at congregational budget discussions and the launch of a new ministry (***Each Congregation – December, 2020; Ongoing***)
- 6.8 The *Financial Commission* in concert with the *Leadership Institute* provide training and resources to all treasurers, bookkeepers, and leaders responsible for preparing and maintaining a churches budget, statements and financial records. Consider the use of an accountant to conduct the training (***Financial Commission – September, 2021***)

Infrastructure

- 6.9 Maintain a ***Presbyterian Church Denominational Office*** with a full time staff member to:
 - act as central communication and liaison hub for all congregations
 - liaise with the general public
 - develop communications material
 - develop and maintain church website
 - act as central contact with Presbyterian Churches worldwide
 - prepare agendas and scheduling of denominational meetings, events, commissions
 - maintain central financial records, tax records, assisting in carrying out the audit function and establishing financial accounting and budgeting standards for all churches.
 - assist in the development, maintenance and distribution of all policies
 - develop and distribute Presbytery reports, statements, and reports
 - maintain central file registry
 - respond to requests for resources, advice and assistance
 - follow-up with congregations in a variety of areas where appropriate (e.g. ministry development, training, financial reports, etc.)
 - assist in the development of the *Presbyterian Church Leadership Institute* and its training efforts
 - assist Church Commissions when required
 - respond to donors
 - act as liaison with mission teams – other than the teams assigned to church schools
 - other duties as required (***Presbytery – September, 2020***)

6.11 Create a functional Presbyterian Church *Facebook Page* and *PCB website* (with links to local church Facebook pages and websites) that includes ‘intranet’ access for use by church members and ‘internet’ access by the general public. See also Strategy 3.3.
 - The ‘intranet’ provides information to church members including resources for ministries, reports, meeting minutes, daily devotional material and other materials

that create community, encourages discipleship and provides gospel messages – include an opportunity to chat as a group, training webinars and podcasts

- The “Internet’ (General Public) provides information available to the public that defines the church’s mission and vision, how to join, contact information for each congregation, daily devotions, ministries that provide assistance and comfort, bulletins, sharing of gospel resources, etc.
- A link to ‘donate’ and ‘volunteer’ on both sites describing ministries and special projects that international church congregations, local members and the public may want to specifically contribute to.

Provide training to local churches on use and development of these technologies
(Presbytery and local congregations – September, 2021).

- 6.12 Supplement the work of MTW teams to build, improve and maintain church facilities by providing local church ‘work’ teams to assist MTW in the project work ***(Each local church with assigned MTW teams – June, 2024).***
- 6.13 To ensure a critical mass of members in a congregation to effectively plan and deliver on ministries, explore how to combine congregations where appropriate (e.g. Patchakan, Chan Chen and Caledonia, etc.) by busing or providing transportation for congregants in smaller congregations or mission plants

Performance Measures* and Expected Outcomes

A Checklist

** Performance Measures define outcomes that can be measured. The following outcomes followed by an asterisk (*) constitute an actual indicator that can be measured.*

By December, 2025, the Presbyterian Church of Belize will have achieved:

Values and Culture

- Unified congregations where leaders, the pastor, congregants and churches actively and regularly plan and implement ministries and church together
- Congregation and congregants that regularly extend their hands, hearts and prayer to the needy and vulnerable - both inside and outside the church
- Church members who invite constructive disagreement, despise gossip, embrace forgiveness and care for one another unconditionally
- A significant increase in male participation in church activities and Bible study
- A church committed to rejuvenation in the short-term with a view to their vision of the future – all Belizeans as Christ's Disciples
- Each church re-committed to ministry development, discipleship and follow-through on projects
- Women who play an increased leadership role in the development of ministries

Governance and Oversight

- A denomination, Presbytery and Sessions willing to actively discuss and resolve difficult issues facing the modern church
- By congregation, annual recorded number of new:
 - baptisms
 - professions of faith
 - home visits
 - number of congregants involved in active ministries
 - number of non-churched people reached in the community through ministries, events and technology
 - number of new people from the community attending worship services*
- Full transparency - one hundred percent (100 %) of churches sending their approved congregational budget and quarterly statements to the Presbytery. Similarly, the distribution of the Presbytery budget and statements to all churches*
- An effective, functioning and pro-active:
 - *Financial Commission*
 - *Presbyterian Ministry and Youth Commission*
 - *Presbyterian Leadership Institute*
 - *Denominational Office*

Servant Leadership and Development

- Three (3) trained pastors and four (4) *lay pastors* by 2025 across the denomination*
- Trained pastors, elders and deacons in each congregation*
- Increase in North American trainers to assist in skill and leadership development*
- All leaders as collaborative 'servant leaders' and one of many in the decision-making and planning of Church rejuvenation and ministry development

- Leaders as ambassadors and champions of ministries, agents of change and 'shepherding the flock'
- Pastors who regularly attend professional training and leadership training opportunities - online or otherwise
- A significant decrease in the pastor's day to day role in managing a church and an increase in the delegation of roles to others
- An evaluation or assessment of each pastor every second year

Missions, Ministries and Programs

- A significant and measurable participation rate of churches and members in church activities, ministries and community*
- An active *Ministry Coordinator* in every congregation*
- An active *Men's Bible Study* in each congregation*
- A flourishing *Women's Bible Study* in each congregation*
- Standard curriculums and/or study guides for VBS, Sunday School, Men's Bible Study, Women Bible Study and Youth Programs*
- Each Belizean congregation 'twinned' with a new North American congregation*
- Marked increase in parents' involvement in the 'school' ministry
- A *Small Group Ministry* functioning in every congregation*
- Regular and constant communication from the Presbytery with congregations and church members

Communications

- A up-to-date roster of each member's gifts and talents along with contact information*
- Regular annual family visits*
- Ten (10) transformational stories per congregation annually to celebrate, advertise and build on*
- Local and denominational websites in each congregation with up-to-date resources, reports and contact information
- Significant increase in communications at all levels – active use of What's app, Facebook and the Churches' websites

Evangelism and Growth

- An 5 % annual increase in active membership numbers for each congregation for each of the next five years*
- Each congregation with a clear plan dedicated to outreach and evangelism projects and ministries*

Gospel Proclamation and Worship

- An active Music or Worship Team in each congregation*
- Vibrant, joyful and spirit-filled worship services - full of passion and unrehearsed expression
- Special services dedicated to youth, fellowship and discipleship education*

Faith Formation

- Fifty percent (50 %) of existing non-active members restored to the church family demonstrated by church attendance and involvement in church activities*
- An annual national*:
 - camp, retreat or conference for young people
 - worship service or conference

Mercy and Justice

- Two (2) new and significant active 'justice and mercy' ministries per congregation – one, involving the partnering with another local church*
- Assistance to or mentorship of families experiencing dysfunction, conflict and parenting issues
- Each congregation dedicated to regularly visiting or providing for the lonely, homeless, imprisoned and sick*
- One 'community' event held annually per congregation*
- A national church supporting justice and mercy programs across Belize
- A *Mercy and Justice Coordinator* in each congregation

Managing Conflict

- Conflicts (historical or otherwise) and broken relationships reconciled and restored at all levels
- Some leaders and congregants trained in *restorative practices**

Youth

- An active youth ministry in each congregation*
- Demonstrated increase of attendance in church worship services and events by young people*
- A written *Youth Ministry Plan* at both the local and national levels*
- Assigned mentors available to each inactive young teenage members or those experiencing challenges*

Financial and Infrastructure

- Each congregation with an approved published budget*
- Well-established accounting principles used throughout the denomination*
- Ninety percent (90 %) of all members or families *pledging* their annual donation (i.e. tithes) to the church resulting in a 20 % increase in annual income for each congregation*
- Annual audited financial statements for the Presbytery and each church*
- All missions, congregations and churches sending their agreed upon tithes to the Presbytery*
- An active and staffed Presbyterial Denominational Office*
- The use of an accountant for training*
- Well-funded active Ministries at the local level*
- Combined church congregations where appropriate to allow for the critical mass to implement effective ministry
- Established work teams to assist MTW teams*

Closing Reflection

Over the years, the Church in Belize flourished – missions grew, congregations multiplied and ministries developed. With God’s blessings, it accomplished much - bringing the gospel to many Belizeans while steadfastly holding on to His Word and the mission He gave us as His disciples.

As with any church, it was time to step back and reflect on the church’s strengths as well as the challenges it faced. That takes courage. We are now at a crossroad. Focusing on rejuvenation over the next five years will be paramount.

Our capacity to invite and manage change is critical in moving forward. That includes *letting go, learn as we go* and *to keep going*. There will be bumps and hurdles along the way, but know that God is beside us at each step of the way.

This will require every member of the church and its leaders to engage in problem solving while building the Church together. It started with the development of this Plan.

Implementation of the Plan will require work – hard work - but also requires a new skill set including:

- being able to face the unknown
- to refuse quick fixes
- to always engage others in the learning and planning process
- to seek new perspectives
- to regularly raise the deeper and underlying issues at work in our community
- to explore and confront resistance and sabotage
- to learn and change without sacrificing personal and organizational fidelity - and our reformed doctrine
- to stay together relationally and to build on those relations at all costs
- to help each other and congregations make hard, and sometimes, painful decisions to fulfil our mission in a changing world and a changing context

Success will largely be about our passion to adapt, to transform and to do so without giving up - our Lord wouldn't want it any other way.

(Partial excerpt from 'Canoeing the Mountains, Tod Bolsinger, 2016)

Appendix 1

The Metaphor of a Tree

Key Components of an Organization

Impacting its Health



Roots - Structure

-social, physical and organizational structure

Trunk - Leadership

-provides 'pathway' for nutrients, is flexible, provides direction

Branches and Leaves - Culture

- our beliefs, values, rituals and behaviours – sometimes unspoken

Environment (Soil, Water, Nutrients, Air) - **The World Around Us**

- sustains and grows us, impacts us positively or negatively,

provides for adaption

Appendix 2

Presbyterian Churches, Congregations and Mission Plants (January 2020)

** No Report*

NAME	LOCATION	COMMUNION MEMBERS	NON-COMMUNION MEMBERS	TOTAL
1. ST ANDREWS	Belize City	28	*	28
2. EBENEZER	San Jose	35	76	101
3. DIVINE REDEEMER	San Narciso	34 (29 active)	20	54
4. BETHEL	Cristo Rey "			
5. HOLY TRINITY	Patchakan	70 (45 active)	30	100
6. BETHANY	San Ignacio Cayo	9	12	21
7. EMMANUEL	San Pablo	32	51	83
8. SHALOM	Louisville *			
9. MOUNT SINAI	Xaibe	15	24	39
10. UNITY	Belize City	45		45
11. FAITH	Orange Walk	14	12	26
12. SHAKINA	San Victor	2	12	
		3		
13. CHAN CHEN	Chan Chen	20 (12 active)	15	35
14. PRINCE OF PEACE	Corozal	19 (17 active)	16	34
15. HARVEST	Calcutta	3	5	8
TOTAL		290 (Active)	273	574

Appendix 3 – Strategic Planning Conference Participants



Contacts

For more information about this document or if you would like to make comments, please contact:

1. Chair of the Presbytery, PCB – Rev. Juan Patt (juanmaria5430@gmail.com)
2. The Strategem Consulting Group / EduDeo Learning Leader – Peter Meerveld (peter.meerveld@sympatico.ca)
3. EduDeo Ambassador – Bill DeJager (bdejager@edudeo.com)

Questions

1. How to deal with cultural differences? Should be included in the strategy. Language, ethnicity, rural vs urban, traditions.. Need a transparent conversation.
2. Need to make technology a major point of Communication. This is a major strength for the implementation of the strategies. Training needs to take place for the use of technology. The Covid pandemic has brought out the strength of technology.
3. Ezequiel focuses on the need for leadership training.
4. Ezequiel – schools and other presbytery witness to the world. The school's strategic plan is part of the Presbytery's overall ministry. Could be shared to Presbytery and church in general.
5. Isaias Botes – Baby steps, don't overwhelm
6. Dissemination of information needs MAJOR improvement. Need for a communications champion in Presbytery, Commission, Schools, Local Church, and Medical Clinic..
7. Core Value: A commitment to radical dependence on God through ferernt and regular times of prayer.
8. Who will champion the work? The ones from Peter's experience that do the best have a champion or ambassador.and a small committee to support that champion. The second is developing a implementation plan because there is just too much to start immediately. Can two or three be the champions? Not as good as one ambassador and a small committee. The committee could be one man and one woman. I would add one youth. Would we want to include country areas or cultures (See question #1) SOMEONE MUST STEP FORWARD.
9. Is the champion a part-time or full-time person? Peter suggests that it be a full-time person.
10. Each individual must ask this question: What role will I play? Will I step up? How will I encourage COMMITMENT.
11. Each individual congregation will have their own strategy focuses. So that means that there will be Presbytery strategy focuses and church strategy focuses. We want to rejuvenate our COMMUNITIES.
12. There is a need for a Champion/Committee Budget. Peter suggest that this budget be done after the approval.

13. There MUST be a close association between church and schools and clinic. How does the church SHEPHERD the schools administration and teachers?
14. How will this work under our current commission setup?
 - a. Executive
 - i. Finance (Budgeting)
 - ii. Field (Outreach)
 - iii. Education (Institute, church resources)
 - iv. Development (Mercy Ministry)
 - v. COMMUNICATION (Prayer "Committee" or "Warriors, Dissemination of Information – New?)
15. Ismael Lopez: We have leaders. Teachers. Business People.