

Moving Forward Committee

Final Report

Presented to Administrative Board

November 19, 2024

Review of Timeline

- Church conducted Nehemiah Study - Sept.-Nov. 2022
- Nov. 2022 - Committee was established to review the results of the study. This committee later became the Discernment Committee
- The Discernment Committee made presentation to the Administrative Council regarding the results of the Nehemiah Study - March 2023
- The Moving Forward Committee was Established - October 2023
- Final Recommendations from Moving Forward Committee - November 2024

Purpose Moving Forward Committee

To further examine the issues identified by the Discernment Committee specific to the four ministry areas that were determined to need improvement.

Additionally, the committee was to study other denominational affiliations to bring before the congregation, and will review several administrative processes of the church.

Moving Forward Committee Members - 44

Congregational Care:

Allison McCormick, Chair
Marilyn Batts
Martha Camp
Donna Cotton
Marla Dean
Diane Gilbert
Shannon Hutton
Mary Pat Martin
Donna McDaniel
Susan Woodroof

Discipleship:

Penny Boyett, Chair
Kris Murphy
Lisa Rich
Martha Griggs

First Impressions:

Monique Cannon, Chair
Jennifer Bunnell
Alex Cate
Chris Hamilton
Christy Hubbard
Tina Martin

Policies & Procedures

Bernie Sims, Chair
Buddy Carter
Tom Forse
Tom Murphy
Keith Oldroyd
Maggie Tomlin

Outreach:

Darren McNutt Co-Chair
Cathy Brett, Co-Chair
Bill Dunnivant
Gary Hill
Beth Hill
Lucretia Woodroof
Sanders Woodroof

Denominational Affiliation

Howard Rew, Chair
Carl Bailey
John Christopher Batts
Wes Canasrtrai
Henry Griggs
Milton Looney
Brian Moore
Fred Pepper
Alan Sandlin
Hew Smith
Thomas Woodroof

Discipleship Sub-Committee

Scored 2.92 on scale of 1-5

Penny Boyett, Chair
Martha Griggs
Kris Murphy
Lisa Rich

Questions to Consider

- Does our church have an intentional plan for helping people grow deeper in their relationship with Christ?
- Does our church offer regular opportunities for people to experience Wesley's "Means of Grace?"
- Does our church actively teach spiritual practices and disciplines?

- Does our church have the means to accommodate all people who wish to participate in discipleship opportunities?
- Are our members knowledgeable of their spiritual gifts? Are they serving based upon their individual callings and giftedness?
- Are we intentionally seeking the guidance of Jesus for growing disciples?

Does our church have an intentional plan for helping people grow deeper in their relationship with Christ and the means to accomplish this?

- Sunday School
- Small Groups
- Bible Study
- Conferences

Does our church offer regular opportunities for people to experience Wesley's "Means of Grace" including spiritual practices and disciplines?

- Teaching series on what Means of Grace entails

Are our members knowledgeable of their spiritual gifts? Are they serving based upon their individual callings and giftedness?

- Need for a teaching series on “What are Spiritual Gifts.”
- Need organized opportunities to put spiritual gifts into practice

Steps of Action

- In April, the Discipleship Committee hosted a churchwide fellowship time to promote small groups and communion among churchgoers.
- There are plans to have scriptural prayer prompts to pray over our church in unison.

Committee Recommendations

- Churchwide study: “Practicing the Way” by John Mark Comer
- Discipleship Conference
 - Renowned leaders in discipleship training
- Leadership training on discipleship for Small Group leaders and church staff
- Men’s Conferences and Women’s Conferences
 - Encourages Christian fellowship and inspires the congregation to be Christ centered
- Planned fellowship time to promote relationships within our church
 - Creates an excitement to come together and worship
 - Encourages involvement in discipleship groups
- 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting
 - Possibly in coordination with other churches

Committee Recommendations Continued

- Conduct a “Gifts & Graces” survey of members to help members identify where they may be best suited to serve. Once complete, staff and/or committee chair-people would reach out and invite those responding to serve in the area for which they “matched.”
- “Blueprint for the House of Prayer” by Terry Teykl
- Survey the congregation for topics of interest for Small Groups
- Make “Discipleship” a committee of the Administrative Board

Congregational Care Sub-Committee

Congregational Care

Scored 2.31 on scale of 1-5

Allison McCormick, Chair, Marilyn Batts, Martha Camp, Donna Cotton, Marla Dean, Diane Gilbert, Mary Pat Martin, Shannon Hutton, Donna McDaniel, Susan Woodroof

Questions to Consider

Scored 2.31 on scale of 1-5

- Does our congregation have a system for providing care to members in need?
- Do we have a system in place to maintain contact with our homebound members?
- Do we have a trustworthy way of knowing when a member has missed church for a significant amount of time? Do we have an intentional plan for contacting them?

- Do we have an effective grief support system? If not, do we have a reliable referral option for those in need?
- Are there any overlooked groups in our church that need more attention?
- Are we intentionally loving every person in our church as Christ does?

Components of Congregational Care

- Group 1: *Members in Need*
- Group 2: *Lapsed Members*
- Group 3: *Overlooked Groups*

Group 1 - *Members in Need*

Subgroup 1: Illness/
disability -
temporary/long term

Subgroup 2: Bereavement

Subgroup 3: Catastrophe/Natural Disaster

Subgroup 1 : Illness/Disability

Needed Actions/Processes

- Procedure to get information to the correct staff person
- Staff person receive and input data
- Method in place to disseminate the need to the appropriate CC ministry
- Information accessible to all group leaders participating in forms of CC
- Identified staff person responsible for reviewing contact logs

Subgroup 2: Bereavement Needed Actions/Processes Needed

- Create a written description of the church offerings concerning all aspects of death related events for church staff to give to the family, by conversation and/or written communication
- Procedure to get information to the correct staff person or church member to coordinate all services offered. (i.e. bereavement meal, use of parlor)
- Put a plan in place to contact the church members of the deceased for follow up care.

Subgroup 3: Catastrophe/Natural Disaster

- Train church staff on to how to handle this type of situation.
- Maintain a list of city and county agencies that assist in these type of emergencies.
- Maintain a list of church members trained in specific areas to assist (i.e. EMT, firefighters, nurses, doctors)
- Form a committee/task force of church members willing to assist in the various aspects of need (food, clothing, housing, pet care)

Group 2 - *Lapsed Members* ***Actions/Processes Needed***

1. Assign staff person maintain attendance data
2. Decision as to when contact should be initiated (i.e., after X number of absences in a row, X number of absences in a quarter, in 6 months, In a year)
3. Method used to contact lapsed member?
 - a. post card
 - b. letter
 - c. email
 - d. text
 - e. phone call
 - f. visit

- 4. Who makes the contact?
 - a. church member
 - b. minister
 - c. Sunday School teacher
 - d. Youth Director
 - e. Children's Director
- Contact is made with lapsed members which would include follow up.

Overlooked Groups

- Single Parents
- Parents of children with disabilities
- Families with no relatives living close
- Widows/Widowers
- Families with new babies

First Steps Needed to Serve Overlooked Groups

- Advertise potential support to determine the need for these type services among our members (i.e., surveys, Sunday School Classes)
- Staff person designated to input data collected from surveys and to analyze the results.
- Identify type of support desired by church members in need. (This question could be included in the survey. i.e. support group, occasional child care, surrogate grandparents, small group gatherings)

Actions Needed to Accomplish

- Provide training for staff responsible for these groups.
 - Create a standing church committee on congregational care.
 - Create policy/procedure manual concerning all components of congregational care.
 - Clearly define responsibilities of all groups participating in congregational care.
- Create a central record keeping system to record all congregational care "touches."
 - Optimally, an Associate Pastor would be hired to oversee all congregational care. Until then, Jack McDaniel, Brandon Starnes and Logan Cate have derived a plan in that each of them would be responsible for the various aspects of congregational care.

First Impressions Sub-Committee Scored 2.93 on scale of 1-5

- Monique Cannon, Chairperson; Jennifer Bunnell, Alex Cate, Chris Hamilton, Christy Hubbard, Tina Martin

Questions to Consider

Scored 2.93 on scale of 1-5

- Does our website help visitors find the information they need?
- Is our social media presence inviting to visitors?
- Do we have digital videos highlighting the ministries of our church?
- Are our online offerings engaging and done well? Do they offer next step opportunities to visitors?

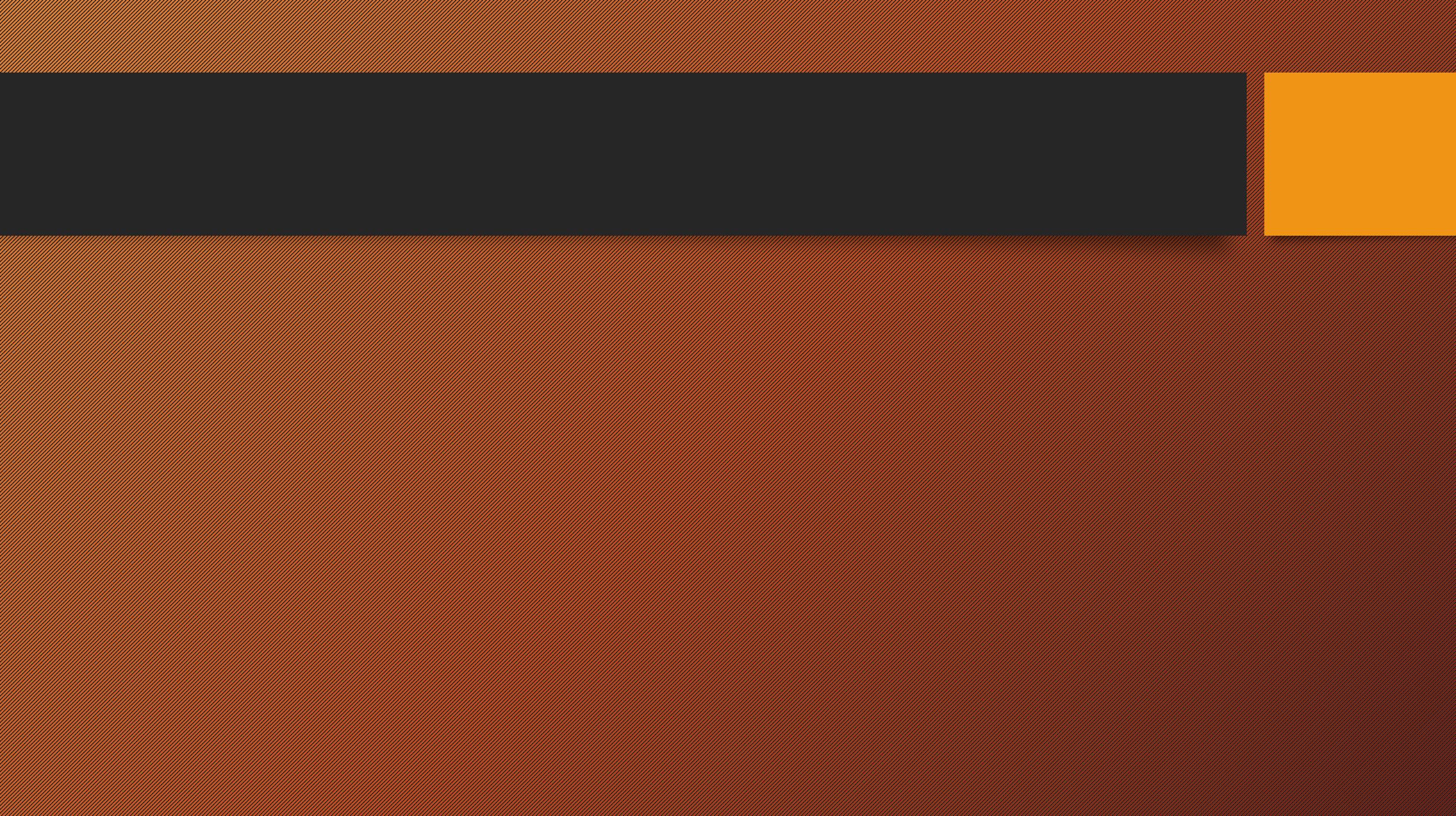
- Do we have greeters intentionally designated to meet visitors and answer questions on Sunday mornings?
- Is our facility welcoming to visitors?
- Do we have an effective follow-up plan for contacting visitors
- Are we led by the Holy Spirit in the way we welcome visitors?

Outdoor Signage

- (Color Coded: Light Blue with dark blue print - keeping with this color scheme throughout will help guests recognize helpful info specifically for them)
- **Parking Lots**- Signs with our church logo in blue color scheme to let guests know these lots are for our church use.
- **Building Entrances** - Jefferson Street & Bryan Street (“Welcome! Enter Here”)
- **Parking Spaces for Guests** (2 in front of sanctuary on Hobbs St. and 2 in parking lot in front of Beasley Center. Flag/banner on Lamp posts to designate for First Time Guests in blue color scheme)

Parking Lot Signs





Action Needed on Campus

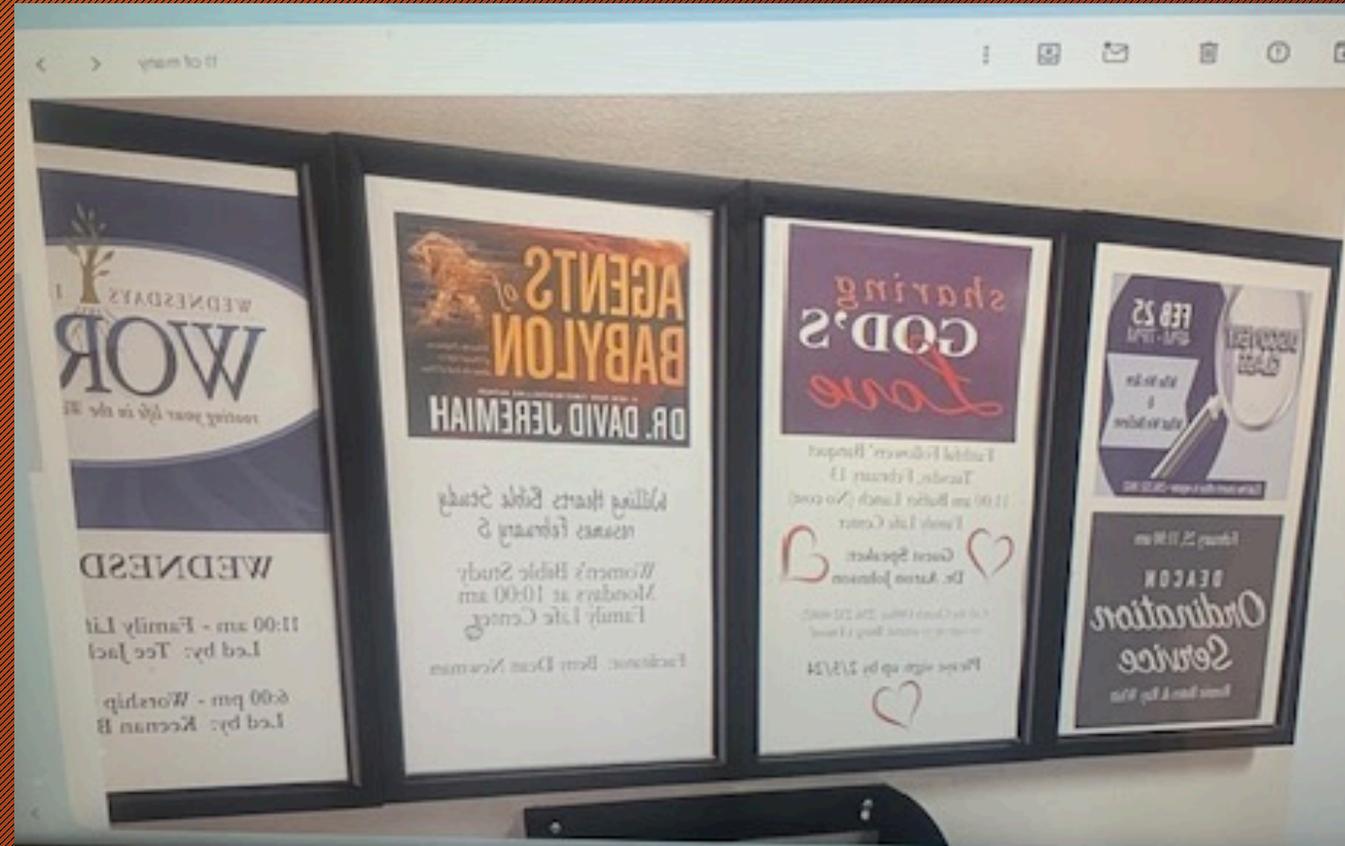
- **Indoor Signage:**
 - **Directional Signage** - Add signage throughout church to guide guests (sanctuary, classrooms, nursery, restrooms)
 - **Sunday School Classroom Signs** - Have 2 separate signs at doors: Logo & Color Scheme for First Friends and different signage with church logo and color for Church for Sunday School classes



CAMPUS

- **Newsletter Announcements/Events Posted**
- At main entrances- bulletin board like, but framed with large, poster, color prints of info from the newsletter of upcoming events. Can be easily changed out & printed at Athens State Printing Services.

Bulletin Boards & Indoor Signage



DIGITAL AND PRINT MEDIA

- **Website** - Add maps to the website of the Church/Sanctuary, Youth building & parking, Beasley Center, other parking lots, entrances to use, guest parking spaces. Create area specific to visitors, “Planning a Visit?”
- **Digital Videos** - Create videos to be posted on social media highlighting the ministries of our church. This would give viewers a visual idea of what it is like to be a part of our church family and what we are doing for God’s kingdom.

Church APP

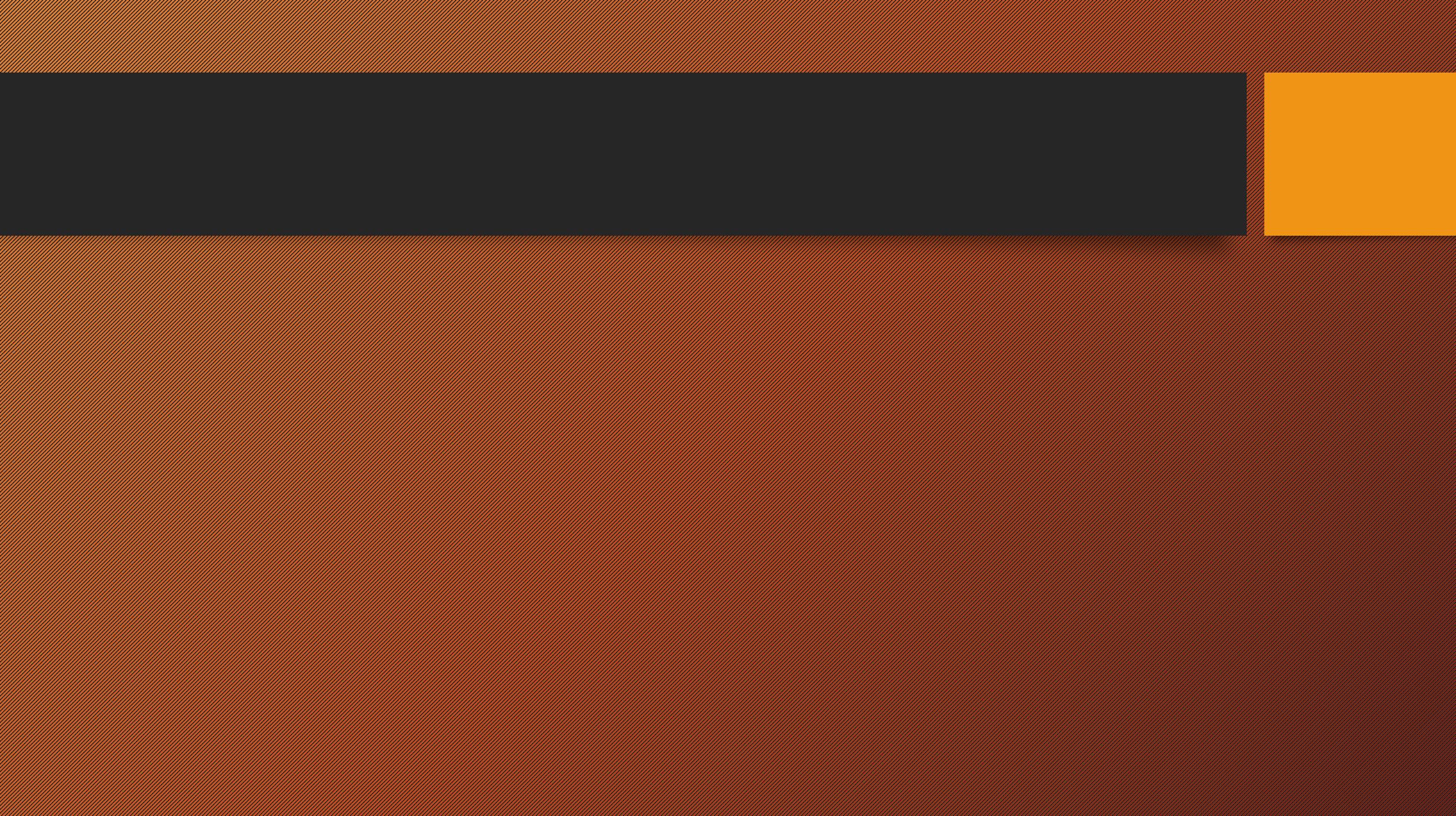
- Promote the App's available and features to members (A training video could be done and added to our website)
- Offer downloading & set-up of the app in Sunday school classes and in church service ("See Brandon or Monique if you would like help getting App," get the youth involved to help members download the app)
- Use the notification feature of the app to remind members of events and meetings.

Printed Materials

- **Brochures** - Color code/brand all printed materials using same color, font, etc. throughout the church. Needed for all ministry opportunities and small groups so guest and members are aware of who to contact to become involved. (Greeters, Youth-Mid Week Meals, Music/Choir, Mission, LCCI, God's Blooms, Wheelchair Ramp, Mana Meals, Small Groups, United Methodist Women, etc.)
- **Information /Connect Cards**- Continue use of the the notification/connect cards.
- **Small Group Brochures** - Small Group descriptions- (These are in-use: currently 2 versions, condense to 1 & utilize color scheme)

HUMAN PRESENCE

- **Greeters** - In addition to Ushers include Greeters at both services before and after (In pairs so that one can show a guest: how to get to Sunday School classes, nursery, introduce to people, etc.)
- **Training** - Create a training program for the greeters
- **Lanyards** - Ask greeters to wearing color coded lanyard (“WELCOME!, How may I help you?”)
- **Gifts** - Provide a gift to first time guests



Additional Ideas

- Revisit the mid-service practice of “greet your neighbors worshiping next to you” (Not meant to get up and walk around, just immediate neighbors to your left and right. This was said to be a negative practice by some, but all of our committee members wanted to give it a try again)
- Quarterly, conduct joint Sunday worship services (4 times per year) like we did for the 200th Anniversary celebration. Assign a staff member or volunteer to plan these events.
- Plan joint gatherings (covered dish suppers, ice cream socials, etc.)

More Info Needed....

- Signage should be in keeping with the historic style of our church; therefore, visits to other older churches could be beneficial.
- Utilize SubSplash or some other software to track and sign children into the classrooms and nursery so parents feel comfortable leaving their children. Additional, this gives nursery staff information to directly communicate with parents.

Outreach Sub-Committee

Scored 2.98 on scale of 1-5

Darren McNut, Co-Chair, Cathy Brett, Co-Chair; Bill Dunnivant,
Sanders Woodroof, Lucretia Woodroof, Gary Hill

Question 1: Do we have an intentional plan for reaching the unchurched in our community?

No formal plan

Question 2: Are our members equipped and encouraged to share their faith with people outside our church?

- I. Some are more than others.
- II. There is no real plan for outreach during ministries.
 1. Example - training on delivery of Manna Meals
 2. Father Daughter Dance - outreach planning
 3. We are meeting needs but missing opportunities to bring people closer to Christ.

Question 2: Are our members equipped and encouraged to share their faith with people outside our church?

Equipped:

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- II. There is no real plan for outreach during ministries.
 1. Example - training on delivery of Manna Meals
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Question 2: Are our members equipped and encouraged to share their faith with people outside our church?

Encouraged:

Not in an organized fashion, but we do have motivated parishioners.

Question 3: Does our church actively serve the needs in our community?

A. Yes

B. We need to evaluate the needs and make sure we are spending our resources wisely

Are our members consistently inviting others to church?

Maybe? We should evaluate.

Does our church offer events/programs that appeal to outsiders?

- A. Fall Festival
- B. Build a Bed
- C. Father Daughter Dance
- D. Etc.

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- D. Etc.

Are we intentionally seeking the Lord's will in ways to connect to our community?

Yes, but not in an organized, targeted fashion.

In summary...

- We believe that a position is needed that will organize outreach, from start to finish.

A. Planning (Answer the question Why we are doing this? Who we are targeting? How to capitalize on those opportunities)

B. Marketing to get volunteers

C. Training volunteers to equip them to bring people to Christ (How to share your faith)

D. Execution be sure we are cross promoting our church and other outreach opportunities

E. Marketing to show what we are doing in the community

Administrative Processes & Procedures

- Bernie Sims, Chair
- Buddy Carter
- Maggie Tomlin
- Tom Forse
- Tom Murphy
- Keith Oldroyd

Denomination Affiliation

- Howard Rew
- Thomas Woodroof
- Henry Griggs
- Alan Sandlin
- Carl Bailey
- Wes Canastrai
- Brian Moore
- Fred Pepper
- John Christopher Batts
- Milton Looney
- Hew Smith

Committee met with the following groups:

- Free Methodist
- Global Methodist
- The Forge

Recommendation

- The Affiliation Subcommittee recommends that the church should move very carefully and deliberately as consideration is given to affiliation. At this time, the Committee felt it is in the Church's best interest to remain independent as we currently are operating.

QUESTIONS