

VISION REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. . . Hebrews 12:1-2

VISION REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION

OCTOBER 1, 2009

In June 2007, the Session identified the need to begin a new long range visioning process to discern God's vision for our church. Members called to develop a plan were: Jim Chapman, Nell Newton, Marlene Tyrrell, Kent Didriksen, Jo Anne Cochran, and Dr. Jeanie Stanley, *ex officio*. They reviewed the Vision Report from 2003, visited four area churches which have gone through similar planning exercises, met with Rev. Mike Murray, consultant, and used his Strategic Planning Process. Based on the above, the group developed twenty questions which, when answered, would provide the information needed to develop a vision for our church. The Vision Process Report was approved by the Session on July 10, 2008.

Early in 2009, the Vision Team was formed consisting of: Kent Didriksen, Nell Newton, Marlene Tyrrell, Bill Urban, and Dr. Jeanie Stanley, *ex officio*. We broke into task forces to address each of the twenty questions focusing on: demographics; community needs; congregational needs, values and hopes; theology; and facilities and staffing.

In March 2009, we held congregational gatherings totaling approximately one hundred people. We broke into small groups and answered four questions addressing our needs, values, and hopes for the next three to five years. Summaries of these responses, the task force results, and the answers to the twenty questions were presented to Session on May 21, 2009. The Session Ministry Teams then met with interested members of the congregation to prioritize their ministry goals for the next five years.

Based on the above, the Session affirmed our present Mission Statement and developed a Vision Statement reflecting the spirit of our congregation. It was approved on September 3, 2009. The Session, in coordination with the Vision team, will provide annual reports on our successes as we work toward achieving our Vision. All information gathered by the Vision Process Team and the Vision Team is available in binders in the church office. We hope you will use them as a valuable resource in the operation of our church.

We present this as a living document inspired by the spirit to guide our church forward through the next five years.

Kent Didriksen

Marlene Tyrrell

Dr. Jeanie Stanley

Nell Newton

Bill Urban

THE SAN GABRIEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OUR MISSION— In Jesus Christ and led by the Spirit, generations work together to live and share God’s love and the Word with each other, our community and the world.

OUR VISION FOR 2015 -- We will be a growing congregation that cares for all generations as we grow spiritually and serve an ever-changing community in Christ’s name by...

- Responding to an inter-generational congregation by promoting fellowship, spiritual growth and prayer
- Offering inspirational worship services designed to reflect growth and spiritual diversity of those who come and those who offer their talents as they glorify God
- Providing a variety of discipleship/education and Bible study opportunities
- Sharing God’s love by nurturing and caring for our congregation, reaching out to the larger community, and engaging in mission endeavors
- Developing a strong youth ministry
- Utilizing current technology to enhance worship; for efficient, effective communication within the congregation; and for interfacing with the larger community
- Encouraging and affirming the giving of time and talents to support God’s work through SGPC
- Demonstrating responsible stewardship of resources

VISION THEMES WITH IDENTIFIED POSSIBILITIES

Responding to an inter-generational congregation by promoting fellowship, spiritual growth and prayer

Providing a variety of venues for fellowship, continuing traditions, and being intentional in assimilating new members into SGPC through specific activities

Creating a safe place for teens to see one another and “be kids” i.e. pool table, etc.

Developing singles groups, groups for young families and play groups such as babysitting co-op for new parents to interact and provide babysitting for one another

Offering inspirational worship services designed to reflect growth and spiritual diversity of those who come and those who offer their talents as they glorify God

Creating and communicating a clear vision and process for Reformed worship at SGPC.

Planning for and, when appropriate, implementing an additional Sunday morning service, with an identified focus for each service.

Providing a variety of discipleship/education and Bible study opportunities

Offering a variety of discipleship/education opportunities for adults that include Bible study, current issues, Presbyterian beliefs, Reform theology, mission, worship and nurture.

Involving the entire congregation in regular Bible reading and prayer, as well as small group home Bible studies, which would extend into neighborhoods.

Establishing a scholarship program that funds camps and conferences for children, youth and teachers.

Sharing God’s love by nurturing and caring for our congregation, reaching out to the larger community, and engaging in mission endeavors

Continued emphasis on caring for each other through shepherds, deacons, Stephen Ministers and related programs.

Reaching out to the community through worship related events and activities, music programs, social activities or other programs such as marriage enrichment, parenting, family budgeting and finance, AA/Al-Anon, grief support or divorce recovery

Designing programs to encourage our congregation in its outreach and service for Christ in the community.

Developing a focus for our mission work

Developing a preschool for 3-year olds.

Developing a strong youth ministry

Calling an Associate Pastor or hiring other staff with particular responsibilities in children, youth, and family ministry

Utilizing current technology to enhance worship; for efficient, effective communication within the congregation; and for interfacing with the larger community

Enhancing audio/visual capabilities through leadership, training and education/direction.

Having the necessary technical equipment and web master/media tech needed to provide our face to the community and the link to and within our congregation

Encouraging and affirming the giving of time and talents to support God's work through SGPC

Expanding the lay ministry program, Get Connected, to more effectively match the talents and gifts of members with ministry needs/opportunities and to provide necessary training, support, and resources

Demonstrating responsible stewardship of resources

Begin financial planning to support the hiring of an associate pastor or staff for youth ministry.

Expanding the Session to include an elder for Building & Grounds

Keeping congregation informed of current finances .

Offering estate planning programs as a part of the financial planning picture for SGPC

RESPONSES FROM CONGREGATIONAL GATHERINGS, MARCH 2009

As part of the Visioning process, the Vision Team held congregational gatherings on March 8 and 15, 2009 to assess the needs, values, and hopes of our congregation for the next five years. Approximately one hundred people attended and we gathered into groups of 8 to 12 people led by trained leaders. Each person responded individually in writing to the following four questions. Then each group discussed these responses and recorded them on summary sheets.

1. What are the strengths you see in SGPC?
2. As we seek to become more faithful disciples, what could we do to assist you and the congregation in our journey?
3. What do you think God is calling SGPC to be and do as a church?
4. What are the needs you see in your work place, school, neighborhood, or community that should influence SGPC programming and our service to the community?

Individual responses are included for review in the Vision Team Report in the church office. Summary sheet results from each group are listed below.

Six or more responses:

Multigenerational/generations working together
Reach out to community
Keep volunteer spirit and willingness to cooperate
Become a community beacon
Draw in neighborhood by hosting small groups in homes
Continue strong music program

Four to five responses:

Equip the saints
Keep friendliness, outreach, caring and sharing
Invite neighborhood, community, music groups, and speakers
Members serve as volunteers in community

Start pre-school, daycare, for children

Start daycare program for elderly

Add new small group ministries or classes

Less difficulty saying “no” and have it be ok

Three responses:

Desire to hire an associate pastor/youth leader

Continue outreach programs such as the living nativity and blessing of the animals, etc.

Establish health ministry through a parish nurse

Updating and maintaining time and talent surveys

Support for jobless persons through parish supplies, computers, and ministry to families;

Accept new people and ideas.

Responses also stressed responsibility as Presbyterians to represent Christ’s love and caring to each other, our neighbors, the community and the world.

Based on the above, our congregation clearly sees reaching out and ministering to the community as the first priority. This is reinforced in thirteen of fourteen response categories and range from spiritual (becoming a community beacon), to members serving as volunteers in the community, and starting specific ministries such as daycare for children and the elderly.

The response of the congregation was enthusiastic, positive and affirming. Results indicate that most people are happy with our present worship services, church facility, music, and volunteer ministry. Strong leadership from our pastor, music ministry, and church leaders was affirmed. Accomplishing our Vision for next five years may require additional revenue in order to add new staff, facilities, and outreach programs.

REPORT TO SESSION

May 21, 2009

In their 2008 report to the Session, the Vision Team Committee posed a series of questions, the answers to which would provide useful information in helping the church determine a vision for SGPC. As part of the team's work over the past nine months they have arrived at the following answers to those questions. Additional and more detailed information for many of these questions is available in the Vision notebooks located in the church office.

Question 1: What is the definition of SGPC as a "Missional" Church?

Christ calls the church into being and gives the church its mission (Book of Order G-1.0100). *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you...I am with you always (MT 28: 19-20). As the Father sent me, so I send you (John 20:21). The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world (BO G-1.0100).* We discern our mission together through the Living Word by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Question 2: What are the community demographics within a 5-mile radius of SGPC and within Georgetown and the county?

Adjacent to SGPC is Sun City Texas, a retirement community (predominantly age 55+) of ~ 9,500 which when completed in ~5 years will have a population of ~ 11,000. In addition, there are a number of additional senior communities nearby. Georgetown's population of 28,339 in 2000 had approximately 25% of its population as over age 55 and 18% were over 65. At that time the population was approximately 85% white. County data of 2007 indicated a median household income of \$68,320. Also the city educational level was high with ~87% of those over age 25 having a high school degree or higher and ~37% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Approximately 22,000 (all ages) were in poverty. Also close to the church are a number of newer intergenerational neighborhoods. The two closest elementary schools, Ford and Village, draw from a number of newer single family neighborhoods and the makeup of these schools consist of

mainly white children (~80%) with only about 25 % at risk as compared to the entire Georgetown ISD where these numbers are ~ 65% and 40%. The Georgetown ISD has noted that a number of children are homeless and the county has also recognized that there are a number of homeless in the community and the county does not have a homeless center. Also those without health insurance have been noted. In 2006 the county had less crisis center resources than were needed. The attachment for this question provides additional information.

Question 3: What are the needs of the unchurched in our demographic area?

All outreach to the unchurched should be done with a focus on Holy Scripture and Jesus. With a strongly multigenerational population containing a large component of senior citizens as well as many young families there are many avenues to reach out. The church will need to seek a balance in addressing the entire community. Data from the Precept Group indicates that Georgetown residents tend to have slightly higher faith receptivity as compared to the national average and that their financial support for religious giving is about average. Church style can be described as both traditional and contemporary (much as has been evidenced in SGPC) and the church programs most likely preferred are, in order of priority, recreation, spiritual development, and community/social service. Based on the Precept Data and suggestions from SGPC members the following areas have been identified as being possibilities for reaching out to the community: preschool/day care/mothers day out, Alzheimers/dementia/Parkinsons program, focus groups in house to draw in neighbors, clearing house for available community services, opportunities for volunteering in community organizations, and making the church facilities available or sponsoring neighborhood groups, speakers, music performances, etc.

Question 4: What unmet community needs can SGPC serve?

We are called by Scripture to serve others. Unmet needs in the Georgetown community generally fall into five concern areas: health care; well-being of children, senior citizens, and families; crisis care; and enhancement of community social services. We are also called to spread the gospel through national and international missions. In addition to SGPC financial support to local, national, and world missions, members may serve Christ by volunteering their time and talents to help meet these needs. (Attached is a list of organizations and groups assisting in the above areas and how members may help.)

Question 5: What are the growth projections for the community?

Using population data obtained from Georgetown for the period of 2000 - 2008 and their population projections for 2010 - 2015, together with church membership numbers for 2002 - 2008, we have estimated church membership numbers five and ten years hence. These calculations indicate a church membership of 323 in December 2013, i.e., 5 years from December 2008, and a membership of 460 in December 2018. Given that the sanctuary has a fire code limit of 350 these numbers suggest that in about 5 years or less the church will need to consider either (1) multiple Sunday services, (2) enlarging the sanctuary, or (3) starting a new church. In any case, additional parking will be mandatory as well as additional classroom space. For the reasons cited below we believe that the numbers given above may be not be conservative and thus the time frame for action may be advanced. See the attachment for details on the community population and how the membership numbers were calculated. It was suggested in the Vision Process Team Report of July 10, 2008, that the SGPC membership percentage relative to the total (city) population was to remain constant in making these projections. However, it is noted (see Question 5 Attachment) that the church membership has been increasing at a faster percentage than the city population every since the move was made to the new church. Furthermore, the city projections beyond the current date use a constant, in absolute change in year-to-year growth, which represents a slowing growth with time. The attachment for this question provides additional information.

Question 6: What does God want the congregation of SGPC to do?

God has indicated what he wants SGPC to do in the Old and New Testaments. In all that SGPC does, it must remain faithful to Scripture as the Word of God. The following scriptures: Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:38-39, 42:16:31-33; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23-26, 12:13; Ephesians Chapter 4 and from the Westminster Confession of Faith 6.058 provide guidance, but recognize that the Scriptures in their entirety provide the definitive direction for SGPC. This direction has been put into a concise statement, i.e., the current mission statement for SGPC which is as follows: "In Jesus Christ and led by the Spirit, generations work together to live and share God's love and the Word with each other, our community and the world."

Question 7: Who are we as a congregation?

San Gabriel has a fast growing congregation (~20% from 12/2007 to 12/2008) which now numbers 220 members and in 2008 the average Sunday attendance was 163. Approximately 47% of the members were over age 65 and 70% were over 55. Balancing this were about 25 children and toddlers through high school. In addition to our pastor, there are 6 retired pastors in our midst and about half of the members have served as elder or deacon. The congregation is very diverse in its background with members having occupational talents and skills across a broad spectrum. The attachment for Question 7 contains some visual aids for viewing the age demographics in the church and there are tables indicating the demographics of the children with respect to age and also a table indicating skills/talents represented in the congregation.

Question 8: What are the values of SGPC within the context of God's mission for us?

The Vision Team conducted a congregation wide meeting to determine how the congregation views our strengths, our needs to become more faithful disciples, what God is calling SGPC to be and do, and what needs the congregation sees in our community, schools, and work places. Details of the summary of the responses are attached to this report. Overall, we see ourselves as a diverse group interested in learning more about our faith and the Bible with a family orientation that is welcoming to each other and visitors. We feel a strong sense of cooperation and family, find great enjoyment in our music ministry, want to emphasize generations working together and wish to provide more youth enrichment activities. By continuing to create a warm, welcoming, open, and flexible environment, we share this good news to our friend, neighbors and our SGPC family.

Question 9: What are the hopes of the SGPC community?

The summary sheets of the congregational gathering (attached to this report) indicate that our hopes for SGPC is to serve as a beacon to the community to spread Christ's message to all generations as we minister to youth, families, and senior citizens within our church and the Georgetown community. Both the construction and completion of our physical plant, and programs, e.g., WOW, Blessing of the Animals, Living Nativity, etc., are designed to draw the community to us so that we may share God's Word and the blessings we receive as members of the SGPC community.

Question 10: What are the implications of generations working together?

The responses from the congregational meeting indicate a strong desire to continue to have a strong blend of generations in all aspects of SGPC life. God calls us to minister and support each other through worship, Bible Study, intergeneration programs, mentor programs for youth and senior citizens, support for members working outside of the home, staff dedicated to youth, grief and care groups, and other needs as identified.

Question 11: What are the current financial resources, obligations, and goals of SGPC?

SGPC currently has a mortgage of \$1,500,000 on the building and property. Approximately \$405,000 has been pledged through the Bridge to the Future Campaign which concludes in April, 2011. The details of the current financial situation of SGPC are included in the attachment for this question. The gist of the numbers is that we are presently running in a deficit condition that will challenge the creativity of both the Finance Committee and the membership as a whole. Care must be taken to insure that whatever additional resources accrue to SGPC must be used as prudently as possible, in addition to a continuing search by the members of the congregation into ways in which additional revenue can be generated. Possibly due to the current recession new members have been less likely to pledge and giving per family has been lower. While being good stewards, SGPC must plan ahead confident that God will provide resources as needed according to His plans.

Question 12: What is the ideal size of SGPC?

The size in terms of worship participation or membership ultimately is in God's hands by the call of Jesus Christ. Fire codes, parking and space restrictions suggest that additional worship services and parking must be planned when we have an excess of 350 attending worship at the same time. Some studies recommend a maximum of 100 in worship attendance per acre, which suggests a maximum of 600-700 on our current property. The master plan filed with the City of Georgetown accommodates the 600-700 with multiple worship services. Size is a by-product of our mission, not a goal of our mission. Additional worship services, and the additional of both administrative and pastoral help to support those services, are alternatives to an immediate physical expansion of the building, although physical expansion is also anticipated. The

congregation is aware of the growth of our community by the size of the attendance at Sunday services, but might not be aware of these additional consequences of our continued growth.

Question 13: What are the facilities and staffing needs of SGPC – both present and future?

The master building plan filed with the City of Georgetown includes a second phase of classrooms and offices, followed by a third phase of an additional sanctuary or multi-purposes use facility similar to our current building. The memory garden is designed to include a columbarium and provide fellowship space. Additional parking is included with each phase. Our facilities are adequate at this time, but we cannot accommodate additional classes, a pre-school, storage or worship attendance over 350 at one time.

The Session approved a task force recommendation regarding an Associate Pastor for Youth and Family Ministry in 2006, but recognized that we will not have sufficient funds to pursue this until we reduce our mortgage commitments or increase our funds. The Session recognizes that we need more custodial, yard services, administrative and ministry staff, but funds are currently not available. We continue to be creative in our use of volunteers and the minimal staff we currently have, but we are risking burn-out. We currently have a part-time administrative assistant, a 5 hour a week custodian, two part-time music staff members, and a full time pastor. With membership approaching 250, this is not adequate. Staff increases are the priority when funds become available. As with question number 12 above, the consequences of the growth we have had and anticipate in the future must be matched with a willingness by the congregation to provide for the growth—failure to do so may result in a loss of the pioneer spirit that is so evident at SGPC, and so necessary for us to continue to serve both the community within and outside of the church.

Question 14: What is the role of technology at SGPC?

From its inception, SGPC has used the latest technology in our communication with each other and with the community. We recently upgraded our office print capability, but our sound system continues to need improvement. We offer only minimal technological support for learning experiences, but significant improvements likely will wait for the next building phase. Our audio and visual support for worship is limited by funds available, but they probably are adequate for now except for the needs of the hearing-impaired. “New” must continue to be balanced with

“improved” with the goal of further enhancing worship and the good stewardship of SGPC’s resources.

Question 15: What are the competencies of the congregation?

The Time and Talent Survey indicates a broad base of congregational abilities that continues to grow as new members are added. Care should be taken to match the needs of our church with what an individual feels called by God to do. Some responses in our congregational gathering emphasized members should be able to say “no” and have it be okay. We are blessed with a strong sense of community that has brought out many volunteer efforts and we must be careful to shepherd and not overuse our volunteers.

Question 16: What is the guide for the deliberations and plans of the Vision Team?

The Vision Team was tasked to undertake this effort by the SGPC Session. In its deliberations and planning, the Vision Team has relied first and foremost on Scripture and the Holy Spirit, secondly on the Presbyterian Book of Confessions and Book of Order, and finally on the SGPC Session and Congregation.

It was an objective of the team to “listen sensitively” to what the congregation and the community needs, hopes, and desires were, but always tempering what we heard by how we thought we were being lead by the Holy Spirit.

Question 17: What is the theology of the Presbyterian Church?

Reformed theology is based on scripture and expressed in our Constitution, which includes the Book of Order and the Book of Confessions. These “confessions and declarations are subordinate standards in the church , subject to the authority of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the Scriptures bear witness to him.” (Book of Confessions, Confession of 1967, 9.03)

What are its members called to do?

Scripture: Matt. 28:18-20 (Great Comm.), Matt. 9:36-38, Acts 1:8, Rom. 10:13-15, Ephesians 4:11-12,16 “A faithful member accepts Christ’s call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of his Church. Such involvement includes: (1) proclaiming the good news, (2) taking part in the common life and worship of a particular church, (3) praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian Church, (4) supporting the work of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents, (e) participating in the governing responsibilities of the church, (5) demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church, (6) responding to God’s activity in the world through service to others, (7) living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life, and (8) working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment.” (Book of Order G-5.0102)

Question 18: How can we minister to those with diverse theological beliefs?

Ministries are encouraged to make an effort to incorporate in all their meetings and activities a focus on Jesus Christ through the use of scripture and prayer in such a way to allow those participating to grow spiritually and at the same time in a way that is broad enough for all to find value in the spiritual aspects of the meeting and/or activity. In addition, the church has in place an ongoing series of classes that provide an opportunity for all to study, at all levels of spiritual development and education, the scriptures and their applications in everyday life. Furthermore, while always being in conformance with Scripture, the church offers these opportunities in an open and nonjudgmental setting where all can share as well as become familiar with the theology of the Presbyterian Church, USA.

Question 19: How can we meet the needs of the broad theological experience of SGPC members?

Currently these needs are being met through a number of opportunities which are offered by the church related to worship, spiritual development, mission, and congregational life. In all aspects of SGP, It is suggested that ministries offer a wide range of classes, opportunities to serve, and activities while being sensitive to the different levels of spiritual development of the members participating. The church seeks to continually tailor its emphasis to meet the changing needs of

the individual and the congregation in their faith journey while at the same time always keeping the direction provided by the Scriptures as the guiding light.

Question 20: What worship style is needed to best serve our congregation and our mission?

From its inception SGPC has offered a dynamic Spirit- led worship service designed to appeal to a diverse congregation. Thematic worship is planned collegially by a worship team with encouragement of congregational participation. Contemporary, traditional and eclectic musical offerings are organized around the Word and Sacrament. God's Word is proclaimed in a variety of ways so that it is relevant and motivational to those to come. Worship is designed for all generations, for visitors and members, for the churching and the unchurched. Our worship begins in the parking lot and continues through worship, fellowship, Discipleship Hour and the sending out for Christian service in the world. We worship God in our diversity of preferences because in Christ, through the Spirit, we are called to be the body of Christ in this time and place.

Results from the congregational survey indicate that congregation likes both the present "style" and also the diverse new aspects that are introduced into the worship services at SGPC. The leadership shown by the Pastor as well as the additional resource of many retired Pastors is highly appreciated.