

Strategic Plan 2021

Central Christian Church

Our Mission: Share Christ – Change Lives – Deliver Hope

The following information was developed by Central's Visioning Team from January through June of 2021. This 3-5 year Strategic Plan will focus on four distinct areas at Central...Our Neighborhood, Families, Operational Excellence and Generosity. As a part of this effort, the Visioning Team also developed core values that we will use as a congregation during this process and beyond.

At Central Christian Church, we seek to be true to the word of Christ in all we do. The following Core Values are our deeply entrenched and timeless beliefs that guide us in that pursuit:

Acceptance

We welcome and love all people. We embrace unique talents and diverse ideas, while remaining unified in spirit and purpose.

Openness

We are open to all seeking faith in Christ: members, non-members and visitors; in our communication with one another, and with the use of our physical spaces.

Altruism

We are compassionate to the needs of others, generous, kind and devoted to all humanity.

Intentionality

We value a visionary outlook that is supported by our worship and programs.

Definitions:

Focus Areas are the major areas of work for us to concentrate on in the next 3-5 years. We will continue to strengthen and improve all of our good work as we always have, but the Focus Areas are areas in which we want to see significant growth and development. Some Focus Areas involve the work we will do for our present and future members and the community, while other areas involve improving our ability and capacity to do our work well.

Objectives – Within each Focus Area, we identify a handful of desirable results to accomplish. We will use these to track our progress, and to verify that we have done what we said we wanted to do. These are results-oriented, measurable, and presented at a strategic level, without an explanation of how we'll do them. This could be for example, "Increase Membership by 20%."

Potential High Level **Strategies** – Within each Focus Area, we also develop proposals for activities to be considered to accomplish the Objectives. The Visioning Team captured ideas that were generated during their thinking about the next 3-5 years. These are not carved in stone, but should provide some good material to begin development of detailed annual operating plans.

Annual **Operating Plans** – These plans will be developed for each Focus Area on an annual basis. These year-by-year steps will help to keep us focused on the details and the need to make continuous progress to reach our long term objectives.

Focus Area 1-Our Neighborhood

We seek to improve Central’s impact in several areas. First, we need to better understand the 2-block radius around our Church and then we will effectively contribute to its improvement. Second, we would like to enhance our connection to Millikin University and its staff and students for our mutual benefit. Finally, we will strive to participate more effectively and constructively in the continued development of the greater Decatur community.

Objectives:

- 2-block radius
 - Development of a better understanding of the neighborhood in year 1, resulting in establishing additional improvement Objectives to add to this section
 - Central develops 1 additional meaningful relationship from the neighborhood per year over the next 3-5 years
- Millikin
 - More Millikin students, 20 total in 5 years, are connected to and active in Central activities (not limited to worship services)
 - Millikin events, 1 new event per year, are held (and perhaps co-sponsored by Central) at Central facilities
- Decatur
 - Determine one community need and organize efforts to solve or improve it.

Potential Strategies:

- 2-block radius:
 - Training for effectively caring for and engaging with people in the neighborhood
 - Develop interview process and questions
 - Research, survey and interview the homes and residents
 - Compile results to create a ‘directory’
 - Engage neighborhood residents to analyze neighborhood needs
 - Engage neighborhood residents to develop improvement Objectives
 - Develop a “caring response plan” for those in our neighborhood who have recently experienced tragedy and suffering, in alignment with our core values
 - Increase neighborhood events
 - Use vacant lots as a point of connection to neighbors
- Millikin:
 - Millikin students’ connection to Central are not only through worship services
 - Central families, 3 total, “sponsor” students to create more significant connections. (Millikin has many international students who spend considerable time away from parents)
 - Central demonstrates its hospitality during Millikin events

- More and varied internships for students
- Central members provide a local family for informal activities and discussion with students
- Millikin events held at Central are “co-sponsored” by Central.
- Decatur:
 - Reach out to nearby churches to discuss ways to partner for community improvement
 - Connect with potential partners in the community, such as the Chamber of Commerce
 - Use vacant lots as an activity for DPS FFA
 - Explore opportunities with DPS and Ben Franklin in particular.

Focus Area 2-Families

We want to pay particular attention to families in the coming years. This will include ensuring our spiritual, educational programs and activities are attractive to families and helpful to their development. In addition to focusing on various types of existing families of all types, we also see benefit in helping those without traditional families create beneficial group relationships within Central.

Objectives:

- Number of actively participating families increases from x to y
 - During year 1, agree on our definition(s) of family, and our numeric targets for each type
 - Include family-like groups of those without traditional families
- Average age of congregation reduces by 3 years
- The Pre-School reopens by year 2. It is restructured to be more competitive in salaries and to have a greater connection with the church.
- Improved, more robust Sunday School and Youth Education programs by the beginning of year 3 of plan.
 - Include online access

Potential Strategies:

- Include religious elements in the Pre-School programming
- Increase activities other than Sunday Services – fellowship meals, car trips, etc.
- Provide transportation for those without – Millikin students, etc.
- Expand Faith Quest – market it to families with no church home
- Increase participation options with Sunday school, adult and youth education, as well as adult Bible study programs

Focus Area 3- Operational Excellence

We would like to focus on how well we do all the things we do. In order to have our greatest impact and our greatest success in achieving our mission, we seek to improve how we do things to an excellent level. All aspects of Central's operations will be examined and evaluated to create steps to improve, including our committee structure, our activities, our projects, our use of technology, et cetera.

Objectives:

- Alignment of committees with Focus Areas
- Increased participation in committees and as volunteers
- "Great meetings"-better facilitated, more productive, more efficient and build a sense of togetherness.
- All committees, responsibilities, and activities follow a Planning Approach, with oversight provided by Church Council and Senior Pastor, with measurable goals, regular monitoring and reporting, and corrective action being taken as needed. Implemented across the board by the end of year 1, and then continues forward into the future
- Regular assessments, evaluations and audits are conducted for all functions, with improvement plans developed to improve effectiveness, by the end of year 2, and then continue forward
- Research and development of a Central Christian Church app to allow information access and congregation participation by end of year 3

Potential Strategies:

- Plan Approach:
 - Develop a Planning Approach template for all activities to use
 - Council, committees, projects, activities
 - Compile a list of all activities that will use the Planning Approach
 - Conduct training and orientation into the Planning Approach
 - Set deadlines for initial plan completions
 - Monitor the Planning Approach and adjust as appropriate
- Regular Assessments:
 - Develop a procedure/template for performing reviews of operational functions and people
 - Include such areas as alignment with Strategic Plan, accomplishment of objectives and goals, efficiency, etc.
 - Review the structure and organization of Central's governance and operations, including committees, functions, projects, and roles
 - Review people in positions of responsibility, whether staff or committee volunteers
 - Including education and development, compensation analysis and succession planning
- Technology
 - App development
 - Social media programming
 - Improvements to campus security
 - Improve technology of vacant building space

Focus Area 4-Generosity

We seek to use Central's financial giving more effectively, making a purposeful and impactful difference as we distribute our funding. Also, because of our desire for Central to continue to be an ever-stronger institution in our community and our hearts, we seek to maintain and improve numerous financial elements that are necessary to sustain us for many years to come.

Objectives:

- Impactful Outreach Giving
 - Develop a more focused plan for impactful outreach giving, aligning with our core values and strategic plan
- Financial Responsibility
 - Maintain current building and property for future generations
 - Maintain level of invested funds and congregational giving.

Potential Strategies:

- Impactful Outreach Giving
 - Analyze current outreach giving and develop detailed objectives and strategies for greater impact
- Sustainability
 - Explore and implement varied funding options, including congregational giving, estate planning, grants, and other fundraising efforts.
 - Develop and execute a plan to maintain building and structures, including necessary staff.