

GSPC New Beginnings Group Leader's Report to Session

December 2015

New Beginnings Small Group Findings;

1. a. Which of the three circles (Passion, Best At, or Resources) did the groups rate as highest?

Passion - 5 groups

Best At - 1 group

Resources - 3 groups

b. Which of the three circles did your group rate the lowest?

Passion - 2 groups

Best At - 3 groups

Resources - 3 groups

c. We found that our church is not matched well to our community.

d. Community issues to be addressed or served:

- Family Troopers need after school care
- Aging in Place Community is content with how our church is now.
- Contact school system of nearby high school, middle school and elementary
- Contact police to find out where we might help/serve.
- Sponsor an immigrant family from Mexico or Syria.
- Serve food to the local community – parent's night out, community dinners
- Provide clothing – mitten tree, clothing bank
- Job search assistance
- Use high school kids to help unload Food Bank deliveries.
- National Night Out – Block Party
- Advertise for community/church events, using a blog , nextdoor.com, and asking members to post events on their own Facebook pages.
- Partner with St. Stephens for events.
- Serve breakfast at the school across the street.
- Support single parents – babysitting, support groups
- Fun event/reunion for past Youth Group kids
- Emphasis/focus on spreading God's Word, not attracting new members
- Focus outward not on our members
- ESL classes
- Citizenship classes
- Easter egg hunt, Food Bank, Growing Home, Garage Sale and VBS are good examples of our current community outreach.
- Arts for kids or young teens (music, drama, visual)

- National Night Out
- Caroling to nursing homes and/or jails

e. The most discussed issues in the groups were

- community mosaics
- changes + possible ideas or solutions to serve our community
- not being Catholic and not being attractive to a large percentage of the community
- membership vs. mission-oriented church
- we need a balance between the two
- we may not be evangelists
- we need to evangelize within our comfort zone

2. a. What is a common point of agreement among the groups?

- Community Outreach is HUGE

b. What seems to be our greatest opportunity for ministry in this context?

- Young families, schools, kids, and parents

c. Options discussed for a future strategy:

Relocation – in Northglenn or on the east side of I25 in a new building

Parallel start with a Hispanic congregation

Consensus best option – **Mission Redefinition**

Also mentioned:

- Consolidate our resources into one building
- Sell Shepherd's Hall and renovate GSPC
- Question remains which building to sell or renovate, but there is a shortage of parking spaces at Shepherd's Hall.
- Adding a bathroom on the main level of GSPC is a priority.
- Air-conditioning the sanctuary and fixing the parking lot
- Do we need a Capital Improvements Committee to prioritize needs?
- Do we need to get estimates for renovation ideas?
- Do we need to involve an architect in the process of assessing needs?
- Might move into Shepherd's Hall while renovation takes place before selling it, or vice versa)

d. Based on this choice, a good process for moving ahead is?

- Refer to number 3

3. Based on the discussion above, the recommendation for the church governing body is as follows;

Preface

After concluding our New Beginnings small group sessions, the group leaders submit the following strongly suggested ideas (goals) and concepts to the GSPC Session. We have met, discussed, prayed, and summarized our thoughts for this direction of GSPC in what is needed to accomplish the following:

1. To be stronger disciples of Christ in spreading God's word by conversation, by action, and by being examples as Christ followers.
2. To better connect with and serve our community that we as a church call our neighbors.
3. As a result of this, we prayerfully hope our church will recognize growth which will intern allow greater abilities to do God's work, and spread God's word, love, and grace.

We suggest two approaches to accomplish these goals. These approaches refer to how quickly they can be implemented, not their duration.

Short Term

The Group Leaders decided, out of many ideas, there are four that can be implemented or organized in a relatively short amount of time, and we have the resources of facilities and people to accomplish them.

1. A National Night Out / Block Party / Community Dinner.
2. Advertise our events through Facebook, blogs, and other forms of social media (i.e. "Nextdoor.com").
3. Parent(s) Night Out (we babysit)
4. Reunion of our Youth Group Alumni kids

Long Term

We have placed in the Long Term the ideas that would require further research, conceptualizing, and planning.

1. Partner with St. Stephens Lutheran Church
2. Partner with the Northglenn Police and Adams County Sheriff
3. Working with kids through the neighboring schools (ESL, tutoring, Food Bank, unloading)
4. Spiritual Growth – Pastor Bill to lead meetings/get-togethers on big issues or parables with us and the community
5. Re-visit New Beginnings ideas every three to four years

In addition, a third approach would address capital improvement issues and shortcomings of our church's facilities.

To accomplish all three approaches to ideas and goals, we suggest two committees be formed, elected by the congregation and sanctioned by the session. These would be an outreach committee and a capital improvement committee.

Elected Committees

The New Beginnings program is designed to address the role of the local church in its community and analyze the congregation's passion of faith and level of desire to reach out to its neighbors in accomplishing God's work and spreading His word. The program does not directly address analyzing what improvements to the facilities are needed.

As we move into the next phase of the "Mission Redefinition" as discovered in the New Beginnings journey, the role of the small groups have come to a close, but there is much more to do. In light of this, the Group Leaders agree there should be two elected committees to continue work in their respective areas. Both of these committees would hopefully have approximately five members elected by the congregation and sanctioned by the Session. They both would report to the Session and the congregation. Although their areas may be similar or at least relative to three of the current Session committees as of Mission, Congregational Care, and Facilities, these new committees would work independently allowing them to focus on their objectives.

Outreach Committee

This committee would continue the work outlined in this report. Among other things, they would have the time to contact and discuss with the agencies or schools mentioned in this report, but also address possible new ideas that may arise. The committee would continue their work for up to two to three years although its members may serve shorter periods of time. Eventually, this committee could be folded into the Mission and Congregational Care committees.

Capital Improvement Committee

The gracious gift of \$150,000 from the congregation of Thornton Presbyterian Church allows GSPC to address shortcomings of the main sanctuary this church and its Session have struggled with for years. There is also approximately \$35,000 raised from past parking lot sales and other fund raisers earmarked for improvements to the facility. The intention of the Thornton Church gift was to address the need for an upstairs restroom and hopefully some form of air-conditioning of the main building.

From the small groups these two areas were echoed, but also the worsening condition of the parking lot and the strong desire to sell Shepherd's Hall, and use the money to renovate and add onto the main building. The committee would have an expected duration of up to a year, but longer if needed. The committee will need to:

1. Determine current and future needs of GSPC relative to the facilities.
2. Analyze the feasibility of selling Shepherd's Hall and revenue potential from the sale.
3. Work with architects for designs of options.

4. Contact the City of Northglenn Building Code department to determine what construction, if any, would void the grandfathered code waivers the church currently has, and if so, what ramifications it would mean.
5. Develop work scopes and cost estimates for an addition to the main building.
6. Narrow down the “wish” list by determining what is feasible, beneficial, cost effective, and within the financial capability of GSPC while meeting the needs of the church members, mission requirements, and long term concerns.

Conclusion

The New Beginnings program has help to illustrate the need for change at GSPC or we should begin planning for its imminent closure. The small groups have reflected on the fact our congregants are getting older, attendance is gradually declining, there have been fewer and fewer baptisms of children, and baptisms of adults accepting Christ as their Lord and Savior. The small groups have realized our church is not connected to our community other than through our Food Bank, and the community most likely holds little importance to GSPC being here.

We, as Christians, are charged to make disciples for Christ and to serve our neighbors. This is now our opportunity.