

The Strategy & Vision of the Churches of God, General Conference



Maximizing
our
collective
potential
for kingdom
impact!



Churches of God
General Conference

■ Why Strategic Planning?

This booklet represents a significant amount of time and effort in listening to the Lord and responding to what He's calling us to as a denomination.

We believe that the Lord operates both proactively and reactively – speaking ahead of what He is going to do and speaking in the midst of what's happening. Strategic planning represents the proactive work. We listen to what the Lord is speaking in vision, calling, and identity, and let that dictate our action steps, programming, and initiatives. Just as the Lord called Abram to the vision of fathering a nation, or as He called Jesus to the incarnational work of redemption, or as he met Paul on the road, the Lord is calling us.

These plans are not fixed. We don't want to settle so deeply into what God has said that we miss what He is currently saying. We want to continue listening to the Lord, reactively, as we follow our calling and adjust as He speaks.

We pray that as we have heard, you also will hear and that you will hear what God is speaking to you and to your church, as you seek to follow Jesus in all that you do.

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■ How to Use this Booklet

This booklet is meant to give you an overview of the Churches of God, General Conference strategic plan, as well as questions to use with your church's leadership and a listing of potential next steps for your church. Possible uses could be with membership classes, elder or council training, leadership development, or with strategic planning processes in your church. Our expectation isn't that you'll adopt, word for word, the contents of this resource as your church's strategy, but instead that you'll see how your church is connected to a broader movement of God and grow in your understanding of how your church uniquely plays a role in that movement.

■ Our Mission

To maximize our collective potential for Kingdom impact!

Mission Defined:

The mission makes the overall direction of the CGGC unquestionable and points everyone in that direction. The mission is also like a golden thread that weaves through every activity of the CGGC. Therefore it brings greater meaning to the most menial functions of ministry.

Strategic Question: What are we ultimately supposed to be doing?

Mission Articulated:

Mark 2:1-12

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Reflection Questions for Mission:

- What would it look like for churches to come together to support one another in making an impact for God's Kingdom?
- What does your church have to offer other churches that could maximize their potential?
- What does your church need from other churches in your next season of ministry?
- What is God calling you to do to make an impact for His Kingdom in the coming year?

■ Our Values

Because we seek to obey Jesus Christ and His Word, we value:

1. **Vital Connection**
2. **Total Participation**
3. **Global Mobilization**
4. **Daring Action**

Values Defined:

Values are the shared convictions that guide your actions and reveal your strengths. They are springboards for daily actions and filters for decision-making. Values represent the conscience of the CGGC. They distinguish your philosophy of ministry and shape your culture and ethos.

Strategic Question: Why do we do what we do in the CGGC?

Values Articulated:

Because we seek to obey Jesus Christ and His Word, we value:

1. **Vital Connection** – because we die to self and grow to maturity through meaningful relationships

Ephesians 4:15-16 – Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Romans 12:4-5 – For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 – Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not

quickly broken.

2. **Total Participation** – because we are all qualified and commissioned to make disciples

1 Peter 2:9-10 – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 – Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 – All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

3. **Global Mobilization** – because we must send the Gospel to places both near and far

Matthew 28:18-20 – And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Acts 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

John 20:21 – Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”

4. **Daring Action** – because we are compelled to risk greatly for and stand secure in God

1 Chronicles 28:20 – Then David said to Solomon his son, “Be strong and courageous and do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed, for the LORD God, even my God, is with you. He will not leave you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished.”

Matthew 25:24-30 – He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, “Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” But his master answered him, “You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Acts 4:13 – Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Reflection Questions for Values:

- Which value catches your attention the most? Why?
- Which value does your church embody the most?
- Which value is most aspirational for your church? (You're not living it out, but would like to.)
- What would it look like for your church to live fully into each of these values?

■ Our Strategy



Strategy Defined:

Strategy is the picture or process that demonstrates how the organization will accomplish its mission on the broadest level. It also sets the expectation of involvement for all members.

The strategy is like a container that holds all of your activities into one meaningful whole. Without this picture, churches within the denomination will forget how each component fits into the mission. They will be lost in a programmatic soup of good but random activity.

Think of strategy as a pattern of participation or engagement. It reveals places and rhythms of being involved. It is the denomination's operational logic.

Strategic Question: How do we do what we do?

Strategy Articulated:

1. Strengthening Churches

If lived out, the future could look like...

- Churches and regions are mutually invested in one another to see growth
- Consultants from local churches, regions, and the General Conference are sent to support and lift up struggling congregations
- New churches call the General Conference office to receive help filing for non-profit status
- Lists of beneficial articles, blogs, and books are emailed bi-weekly to church leaders to generate new ideas

2. **Developing Leaders**

If lived out, the future could look like...

- Young leaders are identified and invested in early for a life-long journey of rich and fruitful ministry
- Churches implement intentional leadership development plans to share the weight of ministry in the local church and to raise up the next generation of clergy
- Gap-year students intern for a year in Haiti, Mexico, and Bangladesh
- Regions pair new pastors with fruitful mentors during their first year of ministry

3. **Mobilizing Disciples**

If lived out, the future could look like...

- Church leaders are coached weekly by video conference in launching discipleship groups in their churches
- Through regional mission training events, church teams develop plans to engage their communities once a month
- Through a denominational initiative, several churches launch alternate worship experiences on Saturday nights to reach new demographics of their communities
- Apostolic high school students are brought together to begin dreaming of a life of church planting

4. **Partnering in God's Mission**

If lived out, the future could look like...

- Hospitals and schools are built to demonstrate the love of Jesus to unreached people groups
- Local churches in the same city come together to bless their community
- Leaders from churches in the same geographical area meet monthly for prayer and support
- Regional leaders from across the US meet annually to share stories of fruit and failure with one another

5. **Global Reach**

If lived out, the future could look like...

- The gospel is sent out across the world
- New mission fields are started
- Current fields grow, flourish, and send
- Leaders around the world are raised up and sent as missionaries

Reflection Questions for Strategy:

- Which aspect(s) of the strategy is your church already living out well?
- Which aspect of the strategy needs to be an emphasis for your church in the next year?
- We listed what the future could look like if each aspect of the strategy were lived out well. What else would you add to the future possibilities of the strategy?
- Using pages 14-17, what might a next step be for your church?

■ Our Vision Proper

Contagious Awakening: By our 200th anniversary (2025), we will equip and release thousands of spiritually charged leaders to every man, woman, and child to whom we are sent. This will happen by positioning ourselves for a movement of the Holy Spirit through repentance, reconciliation, and prayer.

Vision Proper Defined:

Vision proper is the living language that illustrates and anticipates God's better future. It is important to keep the distinction between mission and vision proper clear. Mission is simply a compass; it informs about direction. Vision Proper is a travel brochure; it inspires as a picture of the future that no one can see yet. Vision Proper does things that no other part of the Vision Frame can do.

Strategic Question: Where is God taking us?

Reflection Questions for Vision:

- What impacts you the most or catches your attention most from the vision?
- How can your church play a role in accomplishing the vision?
- What does your church do well in equipping and releasing spiritually charged leaders?
- What's your church's greatest challenge in equipping and releasing spiritually charged leaders?

■ Next Steps



Strengthening Churches

Strengthening Churches is the resourcing arm of the General Conference. Aiming to provide tools and connect churches and leaders to helpful content, this is where you can ask questions to help build your ministry. If we don't have a resource on our list to connect you with, we'll work hard to find you one.

- **Resources:**

Various resources are available to help in the discipleship opportunities within your church, including:

Adult & Children's Curriculum – from David C. Cook, Scripture Press, Gospel Light, Standard Publishing, and Union Gospel Press

CGGC Specific Resources – doctrinal, history, missions, discipleship leadership, stewardship

Worship and Administration Supplies – certificates for membership, baptism, and child dedication, welcome visitor cards, worship manuals, bulletins, and offering envelopes

- **Periodical:**

The Global Advocate is a free publication from the CGGC designed to strengthen and encourage churches and leaders.

- **Right Now Media:**

Available free to CGGC pastors through the national office.



Developing Leaders

Developing Leaders aims to provide a clear line of development within the denomination and to serve regions and churches by helping them do the same. We also have select opportunities to equip leaders from your ministry so they can be sent back into fruitful ministry. If you have leaders in your church that you need help developing or if you'd like to create your own leadership development plan, we're here to help.

- **Leadership Development Pipeline Online Learning Community:** A one-year journey through video conference that will help cast vision and give you the practical tools necessary to create a leadership development pipeline in your church.
- **Coaching Huddles:** A one-year training in being discipled so that you can effectively disciple others called "Huddle." You and five others meet weekly for one hour by video conference to learn the tools and have the practical experience in discipleship.
- **Uptick:** A one-year experience for 23-32-year-olds that includes coaching, reading assignments, assessments, and immersive retreats. All training is meant to raise the capacity of young leaders in the areas of mission and discipleship. Future participants need to be nominated by a leader within the CGGC.



Mobilizing Disciples

Mobilizing Disciples aims to help churches move from an internal focus to external engagement. In doing so, churches and leaders are better equipped to send their people out as missionaries to their local communities. Mobilizing Disciples also aims to start new works, such as campuses, churches, Christian businesses, and Christian non-profits.

- **Missional Church Initiative (MCI):** This two-year, four-retreat opportunity takes teams from churches through content and planning to help them make strategic decisions about the local missionality of their church. MCI is hosted by regions and is currently being offered in the Midwest Region. If you'd like your region to host, please let us know.

- **Table Talks:** This series of four round table conversations will take you and your leadership through the process of recognizing where God is calling you to go and how to get there – all through the lens of mission and discipleship. Your church can host your own set of table talks or work together with your region to have several churches participate.
- **Harvest Prayer:** Churches across the denomination join their voices during the month of October to pray for Spiritual Harvest in their churches and communities. We provide resources to help you engage your congregation in prayer through prayer walks, a prayer service, as well as congregational and personal prayer opportunities.



Partnering in God's Mission

Partnering in God's Mission aims to help various leaders, churches, and organizations come together to make an impact for God's Kingdom. By creating opportunities to work together, we recognize that we can accomplish more than we could ever do alone.

- **Vital Prayer:** Join together with leaders and churches from across the denomination as we focus our prayer efforts on what the Lord is doing in and through the Churches of God, General Conference. Sent via email once a week, these prayer prompts are meant to guide our collective prayer towards the mission and vision that God has laid before us as a global family.
- **Disaster Response:** The CGGC has been working with the Baptist General Association of Virginia to create a partnership with their Disaster Response ministry. While this partnership is in the beginning stages, the CGGC is building a leadership team to head up our side of the ministry. If you're interested in being on the leadership team or if your church is interested in receiving information about opportunities to respond to disasters, please let us know.
- **Partnering with Other Ministries:** The denomination has formed partnerships with several affiliated ministries and has extended its ministry across the world. We encourage every church and leader

to find another ministry with which to partner, including: The University of Findlay and its Campus Ministries, Winebrenner Theological Seminary, individual missionaries, global churches, and missions fields.



Global Reach

Global Reach aims to extend the work of the denomination into other nations and cultures. We can help your church and leadership gain a wider perspective of the work of the Gospel and help you develop disciples through global work.

- **ACTS Teams:** ACTS Teams (Advancing Christ Through Service) are 7 to 10-day mission trips where individual participants come together to form a team that serves and learns in a different culture. These trips are meant to widen the participants' experience of the Gospel at work and give them opportunities to lead so that they can return home equipped to serve.
- **Short-Term Mission Trips:** Churches can send teams from their congregations to one of our global mission fields to serve and learn in a different culture. These trips are meant to widen the participants' experience of the Gospel at work and give them opportunities to lead so that they can return home equipped to serve.
- **Global Missions Teams:** Keeping global missions as a focus of the local church can be a challenging task. We can help you create a global missions team in your church that will help develop a culture of thinking beyond your own community. Once the teams are created, we'll help them develop practical plans for helping your church take its next steps in having a global reach.

■ Logo Design Rationale



This mark is comprised of individual elements, the shape of each showing outward movement to connote impact. The design represents individuals connecting together at the table where we partner and plan to empower each leader to maximize the church's reach and impact. Using different colors and shading, the cross is shown in the center of the mark to communicate that everything we do is centered in the message of Jesus.



Churches of God

General Conference

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