



**Yorkminster Park
Baptist Church**

Long Range Plan 2012



Yorkminster Park Baptist Church Long Range Plan 2012

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Mandate

Six years have passed since the Board of Deacons last created a Long Range Plan. The 2009/2010 Board decided it was time to create a new Long Range Plan for the church, in light of the accomplishments of the 2006 Long Range Plan, and the changing environment in which the church lives and has its being. This proactive planning work is in keeping with our Board's constitutional mandate, which is as follows:

- Consult regularly with the Congregation for the purpose of establishing the Long Range Plan setting out priorities of this Church and, in consultation with other Boards and Committees, give direction to this Church in accordance with such priorities. (Article X 1(f))

The Board approved the creation of a Long Range Planning Committee in winter 2010 and work commenced immediately. As with all planning conducted at Yorkminster Park, it was guided by our Mission Statement:

“We are a congregation who has established a place and a presence to worship God, proclaim the Kingdom of God, and make the love of God known. Our plan to carry out this purpose involves structured worship, thoughtful spirituality, dynamic fellowship, creative teaching and caring mission.”

Background

The LRP Committee chose to work with a planning model called Appreciative Inquiry because it is a highly participative planning model, and it is in direct alignment with our Baptist polity and our beliefs. Close to 250 conversations with a diverse range of individuals within our church family generated both a firm knowledge of our positive core values and a series of themes for possible future direction for our church. At a weekend Summit with a broad range of church leaders, such as Board members, Youth and church Officers, these themes were explored in light of six topics inherent in the conversation records: Worship, Prayer, The Word, Being Intergenerational/Multicultural, Servanthood, and Being Missional. The committee analyzed the output of this Appreciative Inquiry process, leading to the creation of the 2012 Long Range Plan.

2012 Long Range Plan Objectives

Yorkminster Park will continue to be a place where appreciative, hopeful conversations are encouraged in informal and formal settings, with attention and consideration accorded to all members and adherents. It will be a place where larger numbers of the congregation will be drawn into greater participation in the life and ministries of the church.

The chart below details the Long Range Plan Objectives.

Objectives	
1.	To be a worshipping church, where we broaden our worship experiences so that we are inspired to greater faith and commitment.
2.	To be a people of the Word – studying, applying, and living in accordance with Biblical wisdom and spiritual understanding.
3.	To be a people of prayer, where prayer is more fully understood and is experienced as an integral part of healthy Christian faith.
4.	To be a church that actively engages the world around it and nurtures its sacred task of community and disciple building within the church.
5.	To be an intergenerational multicultural community of Christian faith where we are united as one on our journey of faith.
6.	To be a people of simplicity, releasing our time, talent and resources for connection with community and our families.

2012 Long Range Plan Objectives and Characteristics

The following chart indicates each planning Objective. The *Characteristics* are what people expect the church to look like, feel like, and act like if these objectives are met. *Examples* for each Objective are included in Appendix A. These *Examples* are those ideas generated at the Summit and through the conversation records, which resonated with a significant number of people, and might be considered by our church leadership in the annual planning process that drives the Long Range Plan.

Objective #1

To be a worshipping church, where we broaden our worship experiences so that we are inspired to greater faith and commitment.

Characteristics

- There will be more diverse expressions of praise through music, liturgy and the spoken word
- People will continue to experience a spirit of calm and peace that lifts their souls in a warm, inclusive and safe place
- The worship service will continue to be formal, orderly, respectful, joyful and reverent
- There will be broader congregational participation in the worship service
- There will be increased understanding and appreciation for the various elements of our worship

Objective #2

To be a people of the Word – studying, applying, and living in accordance with Biblical wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Characteristics

- There will be excitement and thirst for learning at all stages of education, age, and spiritual maturity
- There will be resources easily available to access: teachers, seminars, classes, library, Internet sources, webcast, online studies, and off-site cell groups for all ages and stages
- The learning needs in our congregation will be continually assessed
- People will generate greater initiative to inquire and explore in search of improved understanding of Scripture, by making more personal time available for Bible study
- People will encourage learning behaviours/attitudes in others
- Our church will be fully utilized to meet the demand for spiritual growth and learning beyond Sundays
- Scripture will be interpreted within its historical context and be based on an understanding of the Scripture's contemporary significance for faith
- The truths and insights people learn will be put into practice in their own lives
- Increased servanthood and outreach will be a result of our growing understanding of the Scriptures
- Staff will continue to exercise opportunities to pursue new avenues of learning and personal development
- We will be engaged as a teaching church – using our gifts to equip others for ministry
- We will be renowned as a learning centre for clergy

Objective #3

To be a people of prayer, where prayer is more fully understood and is experienced as an integral part of healthy Christian faith.

Characteristics

- Prayer will become a stronger element in the life of the church
- Individually and collectively, we will strive to improve our prayer practices
- Through the power of prayer, people will feel closer to God and spiritually enriched
- With a greater involvement in prayer, people will be drawn closer to one another and be more supportive of one another

Objective #4

To be a church that actively engages the world around it and nurtures its sacred task of community and disciple building within the church.

Characteristics

- We will actively encourage one another to serve within the YPBC community of faith and beyond our own church doors
- There will be many diverse ways to reach out and meet the needs of our local community and beyond
- We will be aware of educating the congregation about mission opportunities both individual and communal, short and long term.
- We will better understand our own spiritual gifts in order to know best how to serve
- People will regularly increase their givings in response to articulated growth in church ministries
- We will not only welcome strangers but we will endeavour to include them in church life
- It will be a place where more social opportunities abound, in order that people get to know each other and their needs
- It will be a place where a range of needs will be met for people of different ages and stages
- Our reaching out to help others will cross all boundaries of age, ethnicity and gender
- We will continue to strive to have our facilities in constant use by a variety of internal and external groups
- People will demonstrate an increased willingness to reach out to others and ‘spread the gospel’
- The surrounding community will have increased awareness of our church as a place where their many needs can be met
- The church will strongly affirm those who serve
- We will be committed to integral mission, i.e. the integration of proclamation and demonstration of the gospel (word and deed).
- Our proclamation will have social consequences and our social involvement will have evangelistic consequences as we bear witness to the transforming grace of Jesus Christ.
- We will seek to be God’s Kingdom presence in the world.

Objective #5

To be an intergenerational multicultural community of Christian faith where we are united as one on our journey of faith.

Characteristics

- Increasingly there will be an inclusive, respectful and diverse environment in worship, social gatherings, ministry and church leadership
- There will be widespread participation by staff and laity of all ages, gender and ethnicity
- The church will encourage children and youth to be woven into church life in a meaningful way
- People of all ages will learn from one another through celebrating worship, studying scripture, serving together and reaching into one another's worlds
- Worship, music and learning will be presented in a variety of ways that meet the needs of a diverse congregation

Objective #6

To be a people of simplicity, releasing our time, talent and resources for connection with community and our families.

Characteristics

- The congregation will have a biblical understanding of the use of time and resources
- The congregation will be a people who practice regular times of meditation
- Yorkminster Park will be a place where many people learn to make time to help their church conduct its affairs and to help others
- Yorkminster Park will be a place where we do a better job of guarding and investing our own time and others' time
- We will be more efficient in the administrative services of the church so that we have more time to invest in ourselves, our families and our community
- There will be a regular time of rest designed for ministers of the congregation
- As a people of simplicity, our freedom from the desire for status and possessions would free us for acts of ministry

Appendix A

Long Range Plan 2012 Examples

Objective #1

To be a worshipping church, where we broaden our worship experiences so that we are inspired to greater faith and commitment.

Examples

- Find a way prior to the worship service, to allow for quiet reflection and prayer in the Sanctuary
- Increase youth participation in the worship services
- Investigate alternate forms/times of worship beyond the present Sunday experience
- Continue the tradition of excellent music while seeking ways to balance contemporary and traditional music
- Continue to build on the presence of guest musicians and soloists in the worship service
- Invite people to share their musical talents so that they can contribute to the dynamic fellowship and music appreciation of the congregation
- Explain the hymns within the context of worship, in the calendar and the YP Newsletter
- Increase the presence of the Minster Singers and the Choristers in the worship service
- There will be more diverse expressions of praise through music, liturgy and the spoken word
- People will continue to experience a spirit of calm and peace that lifts their souls in a warm, inclusive and safe place
- The worship Service will continue to be formal, orderly, respectful, joyful and reverent
- There will be broader congregational participation in the worship service
- There will be increased understanding and appreciation for the various elements of our worship

Objective #2

To be a people of the Word – studying, applying, and living in accordance with Biblical wisdom and spiritual understanding.

Examples

- Provide opportunities for Bible passage memorization
- List resources in the church calendar for: understanding scripture, quiet devotionals, prayer guides
- Offer more short-term Bible studies on specific topics (Lent, Advent) in cell groups and on-line chat groups
- Post the worship Scripture one week in advance
- Use the YP Newsletter as a teaching/resource tool
- Create congregation-wide learning opportunities tied to preaching themes, window on the church topics, or mission projects
- Restructure the Lester Randall Preaching Fellowship in context of the church as a learning centre
- Create more links with learning institutions like Tyndale, McMaster, Acadia
- Expand the website to include clergy learning resources (i.e. links to 'textweek.org and other websites useful to clergy)

Objective #3

To be a people of prayer, where prayer is more fully understood and is experienced as an integral part of healthy Christian faith.

Examples

- Consider offering more time in the worship service for collective prayer and private prayer
- Offer classes/seminars/retreats on prayer: the meaning of prayer, how to pray, types of prayer
- Provide an opportunity for prayer partners
- Seek ways through prayer to support people with special concerns
- In times of regional or world emergencies, open the church to the community and beyond, to pray together
- Establish prayer chains and/or prayer partners for those who seek comfort
- Consider a prayer box in which people can submit prayers of concern

Objective #4

To be a church that actively engages the world around it and nurtures its sacred task of community and disciple building within the church.

Examples

- Offer mentor programs such as: youth getting together with seniors for companionship, technology training, mobility needs
- Create a spiritual gifts assessment inventory among all of the church family
- Provide narrative budgets and in-year reviews that relate finances to ministries
- Broadly publicize (website, narthex, YP Centre) all volunteer opportunities, many of which should be small and project-oriented in recognition that people's lives are busy
- Broadly communicate prayer requests in order to understand needs
- Offer formal spoken and written affirmation of those who quietly serve
- Offer opportunities for sharing volunteer stories in newsletter, window on church, website
- Partner with another church/mission group on community outreach project
- Consider a Seniors drop-in centre
- Continue support groups such as singles, care-givers, young parents
- Create a community service hours registry for youth
- Increase awareness within the broader community about the mission work of Yorkminster Park
- Provide people with the skills to be more missional; teach them how to share their faith
- Seek out new mission opportunities as our world changes
- Offer opportunities for more people to gain a world view through Urbana and short term missions
- Partner with city agencies and charitable groups
- Seek new ways for our church facility to be used by the broader community for services such as seniors care, after school care, counselling and events with community appeal
- Offer more support groups to the wider community such as ESL
- Encourage community participation in the summer 'grounds' events

Objective #5

To be an intergenerational multicultural community of Christian faith where we are united as one on our journey of faith.

Examples

- Provide opportunities for young people to interact with other age groups (as per: Objective 4)
- Celebrate the knowledge, insights and achievements of all members of the congregation
- Provide opportunities for all people to share testimonies of their unique faith journey
- Develop intergenerational partnering initiatives such as: prayer, technology mentor/coaching, shut-in visitations
- Encourage all groups to contribute to the YP Newsletter
- Offer intergenerational retreats
- Maintain regular contact with college and university students
- Use 'the arts' in fellowship/worship opportunities as a means of expressing our diversity (drama, music, art, literature)
- Include the Youth regularly in the Sunday worship service as: greeters, ushers, Scripture reading, prayer with children, Window on the Church
- Create ways to tap into the interests and talents of our Seniors

Objective #6

To be a people of simplicity, releasing our time, talent and resources for connection with community and our families.

Examples

- There will be no regular meetings during Holy Week
- Investigate ways to improve our administrative efficiencies
- Offer Bible studies that focus on how to be a people of simplicity
- Offer courses/seminars on meditation
- Review our leadership succession practice