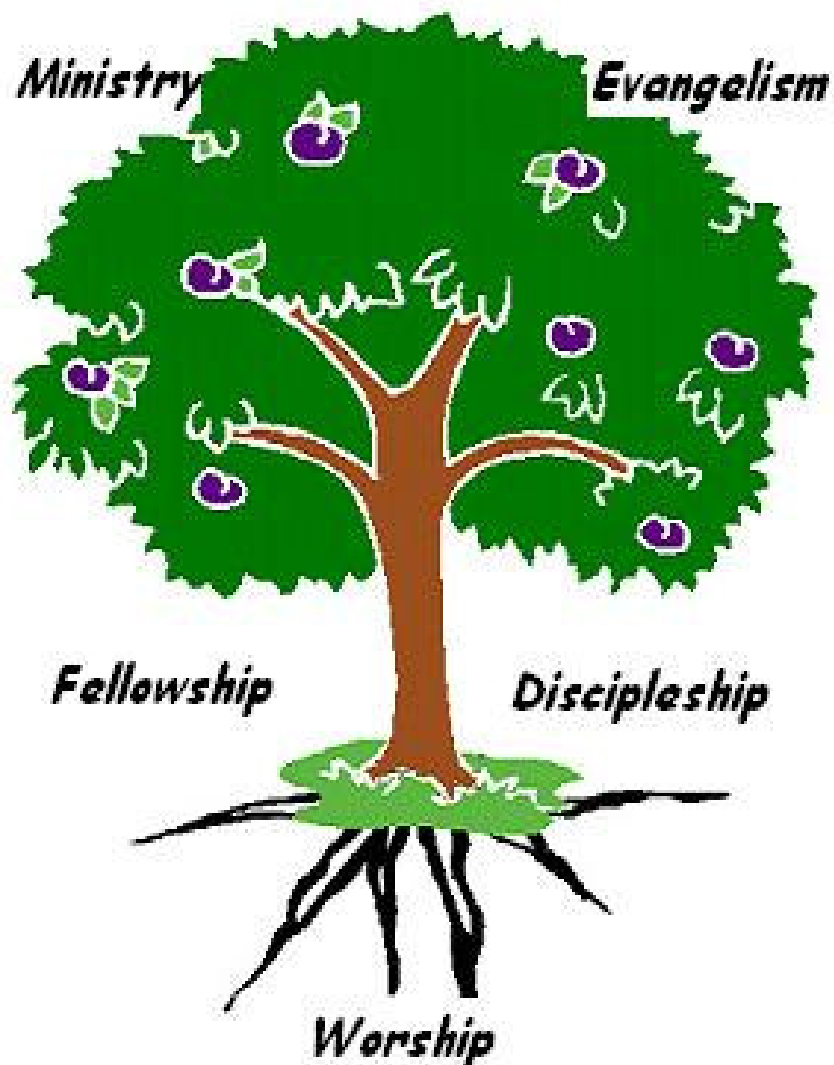


Growth Plan

for Atonement Lutheran Church

Our Mission:
Make Disciples, Grow Disciples



Deliver Invitations • Deliver Love • Share Blessings • Use Gifts

Our Vision

**We will GO to people in need
Not waiting for them to come
Delivering invitations to new life in Jesus
Delivering God's love
By sharing our blessing and using our gifts**

We believe that the following growth plan will serve the congregation well in recognizing our growth priorities and focusing our efforts on the most effective ways to pursue them. We invite all members to participate in the implementation of the plan.

The Growth Task Team: Steve Klaers, Convener; Bev Johnson; Marilyn Nelson; Pastor Tim Thompson; Tim Blank; Shirley Teig, Facilitator; with help from Ron Anderson and Erik Olson

August 2005

Introduction

The growth plan's underlying assumption is, if we grow individually and as a congregation, our numbers and financial resources will also grow. The guiding image for that growth is a "Tree."

Purpose	Tree	Explanation
Worship	Roots	Our relationship with God in Jesus
Fellowship	Trunk	Our relationships with each other
Discipleship	Branches	Our faith practices, that shape our lives
Ministry	Leaves	Our unique service with gifts and blessings
Evangelism	Fruit	Our faith sharing through love and invitations

There is a natural growth progression "from root to fruit" in the Tree and in our congregation. This metaphor helps us identify the **current priorities** for our overall growth and development. Like the roots and trunk of a tree, Worship and Fellowship form a necessary foundation for the work of growing as a disciple, serving others and sharing our faith (evangelism).

Where are we now?

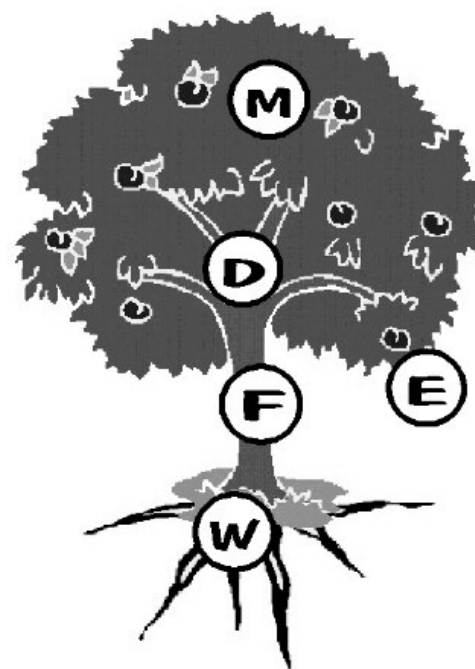
Worship – Atonement's corporate worship life has been greatly strengthened in recent years. It's critical that we maintain that momentum and keep working to expand and develop our worship life. The Council has acted on this by designing a Worship Director position and our search team is contacting potential candidates.

Fellowship – Developing and deepening relationships throughout the congregation remains a foundational priority. Small Groups will continue to be an important part of this commitment. We have a coach and apprentice who will continue to identify and train leaders and grow groups. They are also working to nurture "Group Life" more broadly by planning an opportunity for all of the congregation's groups to tell their stories and invite people to join them.

Discipleship, Ministry, Evangelism – are addressed in this Growth Plan, which sets out strategies for us to grow as disciples, develop our unique gifts and ministries, and become more intentional in sharing our faith with others. These strategies are organized around Atonement's Vision Statement:

- Deliver Invitations
- Deliver Love
- Share Blessings
- Use Gifts

In each of these four areas following, you will find:



- Specific strategies to increase both individual and congregational growth
- Suggested action steps and/or examples
- Suggested groups or individuals to facilitate the task (either do it or delegate it)
- Cost estimates

Suggested timelines Strategies for **delivering invitations** to new life in Christ:

Strategy	Action Steps/Examples	Who will facilitate it	Cost	Timeline
Equip and support members to discover and share their faith stories.	Create a small group to find and develop resources on faith stories and effective faith sharing (Bible studies, CDs, audio files, etc.)	Outreach Committee	None	Sept 2005-Jan 2006
	Generate excitement for faith sharing through sermons, special ceremonies, newsletter articles, posters, celebrations	Pastor, Nancy Maeker, Synod Outreach Committee	Minimal	Sept. 2005 and continuing
	Challenge all groups to study faith sharing and intentionally invite non-members to join them.	Council	None	Sept-Dec. 2005
	Review learning opportunities (Sunday School, Adult Forum, Classes, etc.) for inclusion of: small group membership; spiritual gifts; faith stories; faith sharing.	Education Committee	Minimal	Sept. 2005 and continuing
	Surround faith sharing efforts in prayer.	LAMS, Prayer Ministers, Prayer Chains	None	Sept. 2005 and continuing
	Review new member classes to include: small group membership; faith stories; and faith sharing.	Pastor	Minimal	Jan. 2006
Create materials to support members' efforts in faith sharing.	Create Atonement Brochure(s) that supports invitation efforts & includes: our phone #s, web site, e-mail address, map, worship and office hours, mission, vision, values, and prayer, education, small group opportunities.	Shelly McDonald or recruit volunteer	\$20-\$500 ask for donor/printer	Completed by December 2005
	Create and distribute Atonement business cards for all members to share with seekers.	Volunteer	\$20-\$150 ask for donor or printer	Completed by May 1, 2006
Expand and formalize follow up with visitors	Recruit volunteers to help Bonnie with this ministry so visitors know they're recognized and valued and that there is a place for them here.	Outreach Committee and Bonnie A./Virginia B.	Minimal	Dec. 2005
Pastor greet visitors between services	Free pastor of other tasks & encourage visiting	Staff Support Committee	None	Completed by October 2005

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Strategies for **delivering love:**

Strategy	Action Steps/Examples	Who will facilitate it	Cost	Timeline
<p>Challenge every group to make at least one “delivery” each year outside of Atonement.</p> <p>Create space to report/record these visually.</p>	<p><u>Examples:</u> Education: Sunday School delivers May Baskets & service schedule to Meadowood Shores.</p> <p>Singers: Deliver music to nursing homes</p> <p>Contemporary Worship Team: deliver Christmas gift bags to Silver Oaks Apartments.</p> <p>Property: Invite community to “Housecleaning Tips from a Professional” (workshop offered by Marni at Brite Services for no charge).</p>	<p>Team Leaders with support and encouragement from Council Liaisons and Small Group Coaches</p>	<p>Variable</p>	<p>Sept 2005- May 2006 and continuing</p> <p>Teams bring reports of their deliveries to the May 2006 Congregational Meeting.</p>
<p>Formalize a Christian Care Ministry to ensure that those not involved in Small Groups are cared for.</p>	<p><u>Examples:</u> Expand and formalize visitation of bereaved and ill members beyond pastor and a passionate volunteer to teams of care ministers (preferably 2 members to a team).</p> <p>Create a “Connection Tree” (recruit 10 members of the congregation to contact people by phone whose mailboxes are full or who have not been active to intentionally build relationships).</p>	<p>Pastor and Lynn Miller develop and conduct training/recruitment.</p> <p>Outreach or Recruit volunteers</p>	<p>\$500/year for flowers/gifts</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Fall 2005</p> <p>Fall 2005</p>
<p>Musical groups routinely go out to the community.</p>	<p>Include in new music staff job description</p> <p><u>Examples:</u> Hold rehearsal in nursing home, Meadowood, etc.</p> <p>Create a quarterly song fest with other community groups/churches & invite community.</p>	<p>Council & Music staff</p>	<p>\$100 for music</p>	<p>Sept. 2005 continuing</p>
<p>Hold annual community needs forum</p>	<p>Renew community contacts from 2004 forum (city government, schools, food shelves, etc.)</p>	<p>Charitable Giving Team</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Fall 2006</p>

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Strategies for **sharing our blessings:**

Strategy	Action Steps/Examples	Who will facilitate it	Cost	Timeline
<p>Make Stewardship a year-round focus, not just a few month campaign.</p>	<p>Offer member classes that include: tithing; communication of Atonement’s financial needs for operations, mission opportunities, & dreams. Include these classes in Adult Forum, New Member Classes, & Sunday School.</p> <p>Sponsor “Counting our Blessings” classes for all members (also open to the entire community), which include: how to budget; how to save; how to establish priorities; how to align resources with priorities; how not to be your child’s ATM; debt reduction; good sense money management.</p> <p>Use resources from Thrivent (booklets, banks, etc.) to help members implement their money management plans.</p>	<p>Stewardship Committee</p>	<p>\$500-\$1,500 for training and materials</p>	<p>Dec. 2005 and continuing</p> <p>Jan. 2006 and continuing</p>
<p>Implement a fall Stewardship campaign to support Atonement’s mission.</p>	<p>Follow up written contacts with calls to every member to answer questions and encourage pledging and identify specific needs for which donations can be given.</p> <p>Financial targets (with weekly visual updates):</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Commitments will meet operating expenses</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Commitments will meet operating expenses, benevolence, new mission and staff expenses.</p>	<p>Stewardship & Finance</p>	<p>Minimal</p>	<p>Sept 11 - November 2005</p> <p>January 2006</p> <p>January 2007</p>
<p>Optimize use of facilities in support of Atonement’s mission. Create an inviting, hospitable space for members and for our larger community.</p>	<p><u>Examples:</u></p> <p>Kitchen, sanctuary, fellowship hall, conference rooms</p> <p>Technology — Satellite broadcasts</p> <p>Fundraising activities</p> <p>Meals for those in need</p> <p>Market space to generate revenue</p>	<p>Property to continue streamlining facility use process.</p> <p>Council encourages all groups to seek opportunities to use facility to maximum support of our mission.</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Minimal</p>	<p>Sept-Dec. 2005</p> <p>Sept. 2005 and continuing</p>

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Strategies for **using our gifts:**

Strategy	Action Steps/Examples	Who will facilitate it	Cost	Timeline
Develop a process for discovering and deploying people's gifts.	<p>Hire a part time 2-year-term staff person in collaboration with two other churches to train leaders on gift discernment and deployment</p> <p>Establish a small group responsible for training resources for putting individuals' gifts to use.</p> <p>Personally invite every person at Atonement to discover and utilize their gifts.</p>	<p>Council (collaborate with other church)</p> <p>New hire</p> <p>Council</p>	<p>Salary unknown</p> <p>\$500 for gift assessment instrument</p>	<p>Early 2006 and continuing</p>
Gather and distribute information on Atonement's committees, teams and service groups. (brochure, posters, etc.)	<p>Use a brief questionnaire so committees' needs are consistently identified (including to whom they are responsible)</p> <p>Determine and document what gifts are needed to serve on existing groups (include purpose, responsibilities, duties, etc.).</p>	<p>Bev J. initially Council in future</p> <p>Office Administrator from Small Group & Committee Leaders</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Minimal</p>	<p>January 2006, then annually</p> <p>December 2005</p>
Revise new member orientation (including transfers) to include gift discovery.	<p>Include expectations (giving/worship, etc.) and needs (music, usher, interior design, etc.) of the church in new member orientation.</p>	<p>Pastor</p>	<p>Minimal</p>	<p>May 2006</p>
Provide annual orientation, training and support for leadership.	<p>Example: ISAIAH membership</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>Unknown</p>	<p>October 2006</p>
Create an annual recognition/celebration for groups.	<p>Identify contributions and hours donated.</p>	<p>Council</p>	<p>\$100 for materials</p>	<p>April 2006</p>
Seek, identify and encourage musical talents/gifts to promote growth.	<p><u>Examples:</u> Choirs collaborate to share music between first and second service.</p> <p>Take choirs "on the road" to other venues.</p> <p>Joint choir concerts</p>	<p>Worship Team Music Staff</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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