

# SOTH Planning Process

## SPIRITUAL ISSUES

- Worship attendance declining
- Sunday School is underused
- Giving is 3.3% of median household income
- Care of struggling and straying is sporadic
- Mission zeal waning

## COMMUNITY

- Church perception is probably not great, except for SBC
- Lots of young family activities in Delta Township
- Senior outreach taking place

## SWOT ANALYSIS

### WORSHIP

87% rated the worship as inspiring (55%) or helpful (42%)

**Strengths** – Faithful preaching of God’s Word & applying law and gospel / Children’s Object Lesson / Easy to follow service in bulletin

**Weaknesses**- Sometimes noisy children make it hard to hear the sermon / difficult to sing hymns / too little contemporary music / Not enough variety in musicians and singers / choir not thriving / quality of video recording of services needs to improve

**Opportunities**- Gifted organists / many members with musical gifts /

**Threats**- Seeming growing apathy toward worship in culture / not as many guests attending / worship patterns of a significant number of members declining

### OUTREACH

65% rated Evangelism efforts as adequate, 18% as very little, 17% as aggressive

75% said they enjoy sharing their faith (37%), or try to share it regularly, but don’t feel confident (38%)

**Strengths** – Senior outreach / Soccer/Bible camp / Outreach related to key worship services in the year

**Weaknesses**- Broader congregation support/participation / more training for sharing the gospel needed / lack of space

**Opportunities**- Many opportunities to be more engaged in service or festival events in our community

**Threats** – Member engagement in outreach events like canvassing is declining / culture not as receptive to religion as a whole

### ELDERS

**Strengths** – Faithful inactive ministry / spiritually mature men serving as elders / Stephen Fund and food bank a blessing to the needy / newly formed women’s ministry serving others

**Weaknesses**- Christ Care Committee no longer functioning / irregular worship and BC attendance / No men’s ministry / discipline cases not dealt with in a timely manner / Members needing special care not always served adequately

**Opportunities**- We have men and women who would be willing to reach out to straying or to encourage others

**Threats**- Large number of members soon to be released or excommunicated / declining worship patterns of a significant number of members

## STEWARDSHIP

78% I give a regular, planned portion of my income / 65% have identified their spiritual gifts and are using them

**Strengths** – Some spiritually mature givers / regular stewardship instruction

**Weaknesses** – giving by 195 active giving units is 3.3% of median income for area

**Opportunities** – Build faith and increase stewardship lives as we go forward with building program

**Threats**- A number of individuals/couples seem less engaged since their kids were all confirmed

### **BIBLE STUDY**

**Strengths** – Many Bible study opportunities on topics, books of Bible, “support ministry” topics / email devotions / reaching out to inactive members / marriage enrichment classes / Bible Class attendance up 50%

**Weaknesses**- Don’t use technology like we could / Don’t incorporate various learning styles as we could / small group studies have not been launched as planned

**Opportunities**- Recent efforts to increase Bible Class attendance demonstrate that we can grow Bible Class

**Threats**-A significant number of former Bible Class attenders do not attend Bible Class

### **FELLOWSHIP**

96% rated our program of spiritual growth for adults as meeting (63%) or very efficiently meeting (33%) needs

**Strengths**- Congregation is warm and caring for the most part

**Weaknesses**- Our fellowship planning and actual events has suffered due to lack of leadership / There are members who need special support who are not always served as they could be / Relationship building could improve

**Opportunities**- People recognize the blessing of fellowship /

**Threats**- Lack of planning, leadership, and implementation / quite a few 20 and early 30s but unsure of how to engage them in fellowship

### **SERVICE**

**Strengths**- Effort made to use peoples’ gifts / probably ahead of the curve in actual numbers of members serving in some capacities / Too often still try to recruit with just a sign up sheet

**Weaknesses**- Hard to get volunteers / process for recruiting, engaging, training, overseeing volunteers needs improvement / could do more service with kids and teens

**Opportunities** – Lots of opportunities to serve in the congregation and in the community

**Threats**- Struggling with leadership for all the volunteer opportunities

### **YOUTH**

82% rated Christian education for children as meeting (66%) or very efficiently (16%) meeting needs

\*52% rated our program of spiritual growth for youth as meeting needs; 36% as barely passing

**Strengths** – Dedicated SS teachers and coordinators/ WELS grade school nearby / Kids outreach events / Support for children going to WELS schools / Camp LoRay Christian summer camp

**Weaknesses**- Attendance at SS low / Parental support and involvement / Too few service and fellowship activities for kids / Losing young people after confirmation / weak teen ministry / don’t reach out to teens in the community like we could/should

**Opportunities** – Great bunch of kids in youth Confirmation Class / parents willing to lead and support youth ministry

**Threats**- Kids come from many different school districts, so hard to get them all together at one time /leaders for pre-teen and teen groups

### **PULSE SURVEY- LEADERSHIP**

Of those appointed/elected to an office... 66% said there was a written plan for the work /15% considered themselves “well-trained” for their office / 42% said things got done at meetings, but the group also got bogged down

**Strengths**- We have had and currently have spiritually mature and loving leaders

**Weaknesses-** We do not always through on plans / we sometimes try to do too much / we have not spread out leadership to laity as we could / we can improve on making us of the gifts and talents of young and old, male and female leadership and talents / training can improve

**Opportunities-** Having just done self-evaluation, now is a good time to refocus on planning and implementation / the plans for facility expansion provide us with an excellent opportunity to make sure our ministry plans will support and benefit from expanded facility / Pastor Burger's work with the Synod's CCC gives us access to all kinds of planning and training resources that can benefit our congregation

**Threats-** Getting stuck in a "status quo" mentality / leaders "just doing it" instead of involving others