

**CONSULTATION REPORT
NEW MCKENDREE UMC
JACKSON, MO
May 15-17, 2009**

INTRODUCTION

We, the consultation team, would like to thank Pastor John Rice, the lay leadership and congregation of New McKendree United Methodist Church for the invitation to consult your church as part of the Healthy Church Initiative. We read and digested the self-study document provided by the leaders, reviewed the Faith Perceptions report, conducted interviews with staff members and led a focus group on Friday night with members of the congregation. We conducted a workshop on Saturday with your leaders. Everyone cooperated with us and provided all the information we requested. Our prayer is that God will use this process to enhance the ministry of the Gospel in this part of the world.

STRENGTHS

1. **OFFERING DIFFERENT FORMS OF WORSHIP:** The offering of two distinctly different forms of worship is a strength. The traditional and contemporary services can reach different people and are different ways to give people choices to worship God.
2. **LOVE FOR YOUR PASTOR:** We heard over and over that the congregation loves their senior pastor John Rice and John loves this church. John has been a great asset for this ministry and has had a good extended ministry here.
3. **SOUTH CAMPUS:** The South Campus, built just four years ago to reach new people and offer different forms of worship and activities, is a real strength for the church to reach the mission field in this community.
4. **SPECIAL FUND RAISING EFFORTS WHEN THERE'S A NEED:** Our team heard over and over that the church is excellent at raising funds, when there is a special need. When needs are made known, the congregation members respond very positively.
5. **RESOURCES- PEOPLE, LEADERSHIP, FACILITIES:** We are excited about the congregation's future particularly because of the resources of people, leadership, and facilities. There is so much potential and a good foundation to do ministry into the future to reach people for Christ.

CONCERNS

1. **MISSION AND VISION:** There is no clear mission of the congregation as its stated purpose, nor a vision that is the unique way New McKendree will fulfill the mission. There are many programs and activities, mostly focused inward, but some focused outward but there is no clear focus on the Mission given to us by God of making new disciples.

2. **DISCIPLESHIP AND FOLLOW UP PROCESS:** Currently, neither location has any focused intentional plan for discipleship, identifying spiritual gifts and or spiritual development. Current members struggle to see how God has designed them to serve in the body of Christ and reproduce more disciples. Furthermore, an effective system to track and measure professions of faith and baptisms is lacking.

3. **WORSHIP AND SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE:** There is a lot of concern for the Saturday and Sunday Schedule for worship and Sunday School. The problem is that there is not a dedicated time for Sunday School, which is valued by this church, and the worship schedule does not seem to work effectively for as many people as possible especially for reaching new people.

4. **ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP AND STRUCTURE:** There is an absence of accountability for the staff, paid and unpaid. There is no program of regular evaluation and review leaving staff to draw their own conclusions as to their effectiveness and success. Without conscious awareness of the mission and vision, staff were hired to fill specific jobs for individual purposes. There is not a strong sense of teamwork among the staff, or of the staff with the lay leadership. The structure is not as effective to help the church serve the mission of "making disciples," as it needs to be for the future.

5. **OUTWARD FOCUS:** The congregation does not have a strong outward focus, since most activities, programs and staffing are geared to serving the existing membership. There is a need to "build bridges" to the community to make a difference more effectively and to reach new people for Christ.

PRESCRIPTIONS

1. **MISSION AND VISION:** . The congregation understands that the day this consultation report is accepted (should that be the case) at that point this congregation will take as its mission statement, " the making of new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." This means that every ministry in the congregation must demonstrate how it will accomplish the mission statement. This means the leaders will conduct a mission audit. Any ministries not doing the mission must then either be changed in order to fit the mission statement or be cancelled and no longer allowed to exist in the congregation. This audit must be completed by January 1, 2010. The audit will examine each ministry for how they implement the mission and vision of the church. Any ministry not fulfilling the mission and vision will be given a calendar year to redesign itself to implement the mission and vision or be discontinued.

The coach will conduct a day of envisioning for the congregation. The purpose of this day is to dream of how God might want to work through the congregation both individually and collectively to reach this community. This day will occur by August 1, 2009. Following this day the pastor in conjunction with the coach and the Mission Vision Team of the church will create a Vision statement. This statement will be presented to the congregation by September 1, 2009.

We recommend the Mission and Vision team continue for a year to assist in the implementation of these prescriptions.

2. **DISCIPLESHIP AND FOLLOW UP PROCESS:** - The pastor in consultation with the coach and SPRC chair will select a six-person search committee comprised of members from both locations, through prayer and careful consideration will hire a part time staff person to oversee small group growth and spiritual development plan. This person must be gifted in discernment, and be outwardly focused. Once in place, they will recruit a large team of leaders from the church to define the purpose, vision, goals and needs for the discipleship process. Together they will institute a comprehensive step by step process that communicates to both the guest and seasoned disciple what it means to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. This plan will include using a spiritual gifts assessment tool and developing a process that communicates clearly the commitment and expectations of the church when entering into membership. This individual will also need to implement a plan to track and measure those going through the discipleship process, as well as the professions of faith and baptisms. Quarterly reports of these findings will be given to the Senior Pastor and the Church Council.

Prior to the new staff person being in place, we encourage "follow up" in all areas, with new guests, new members, inactive members, and anyone else who can be followed up to seek to involve them. This effort needs to be communicated through all staff members and leaders for implementation as much as possible.

The Discipleship staff person should be in place as soon as possible and no later than January 1, 2010 and a full process in place no later than April 1, 2010.

3. **WORSHIP AND SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE:** A worship/Sunday School team will be appointed by Pastor Rice, in consultation with the Ad Council Chair and coach to implement changes in the Sunday schedule.

We recommend the following schedule be implemented by August 15, 2009:

- _ Saturday, Uptown- 5:00 pm
- _ Sunday, 9:00 am- Uptown, Traditional Worship
- _ 10:00 am- SS for children, youth and adults, both locations
- _ 11:00 am - South Campus, Contemporary Worship

The team will implement the new schedule working with all who are affected by this change, and evaluate it after 6 months for adjustments.

Establish a worship planning team by September 1, 2009, that plans in advance on a regular basis the themes of the worship services that are congruent to the direction of Pastor John's growth and leadership development plan.

We recommend that the Hospitality teams study the Faith Perceptions Report and make needed changes and begin regular training of the hospitality volunteers.

4. **ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP AND STRUCTURE:** If this report is accepted, the staff will immediately adopt the accountability model of leadership. Within the next four months, the whole staff will attend a staff retreat led by the coach to learn how to implement such a model and to evaluate any staff realignment needs which would result in a more effective mission accomplishment in conjunction with the SPRC. (The church will pay for this retreat.)

Pastor John will develop a Leadership Growth Plan for himself and the development of the staff and lay leaders of the congregation. A lay team of 3 people will be appointed by Pastor John and the Ad Council Chair to work with Pastor John in the development and implementation of this Growth Plan for the next 24 months. This team will help John with his accountability for his ministry responsibilities, as well as the development of the leaders of the church (paid and unpaid) and the implementation of the Leadership Growth Plan.

The Lay Leadership Team (Nominations) is charged with the responsibility of evaluating the committee structure looking for a simpler structure aligned with the mission and vision of the church. This team will visit and dialogue with 3-4 UMC congregations, brainstorm possibilities, and recommend changes that will align the structure with the mission and vision in the most effective way. Change recommendations and nominations will be presented to the annual fall Charge Conference of 2009.

5. **OUTWARD FOCUS:** Identify a Community Connections team leader (who is missional and possesses strong leadership skills) along with a core team of believers who are passionately committed to being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ locally and globally. This team will audit existing outreach events and determine any changes that need to be made to the current events to reach the unchurched. This team will meet monthly to develop and implement strategies to reach the unchurched including 4-5 outwardly focused Big events, to be held at the church or in the community.

Additional recommendation: A prayer ministry needs to be started with prayer teams developed at both locations that are praying for worship services, leadership, community needs, unchurched people and the needs of members of the church. There should be a full team for each location who would meet regularly, use emailing, and brainstorm meaningful ways to heighten the prayers on a regular basis for outward and inward focus.

We, the consulting team, want to thank you for the opportunity to serve your congregation in this Healthy Church Initiative Consultation weekend. If you accept these prescriptions, then the Conference will supply a coach to be available on a monthly basis with the Pastor and lay leaders for the next twelve months. Our prayers and our hope for your congregation is that God will use this process to help implement your mission effectively, as you create a compelling vision and make an eternal difference in Jackson and the surrounding communities, for the Glory of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev. Bob Farr, Director of Congregational Excellence
Dr. David Hyatt, Effective Ministries Coaching and Consulting
Mrs. Melanie Smollen, Lay Volunteer

Town Hall Meetings will be held to discuss this report:

Wednesday, May 27, 7:00 pm- South Campus

Sunday, May 31, after 9:15 Service, South Campus and after 10:30 service, Uptown

Wednesday, June 3, 7:00 pm, South Campus

Tuesday, June 9, 1:00 pm, Uptown

A Church Conference will be held on Sunday, June 14, at 7:00 pm to vote on the consultation report/prescriptions.