

# Pathway to Strategic Planning

On Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 26 members of the church's leadership team attended the *Pathway to Strategic Planning* retreat led by Pastor Don. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with a summary of what was achieved, and to keep you abreast of the work still to be done.

The objective of the *Pathway to Strategic Planning* retreat was to kick-off our journey to revitalizing OUMC's mission and vision statements against which all of our planning activities and resources--for this year and into the future, will be aligned. Our work began with a brief moment to mediate about the insightful dreamers and planners who have come before us at OUMC. We also gave thanks for the greater good that comes from those who share their dreams and stay focused on their divine purpose.



Beginning with a little bit of background about the concepts and principles contained in the book "How Churches and Leaders Can Get IT and Keep IT", we learned the more clarity of mission and vision we have, the easier it will be to guard what God has called us to do.

With this as a backdrop, and using the SWOT analyses completed prior to the retreat by the various ministry teams and administrative committees, the group engaged in a series of small-group conversations to identify the patterns and themes contained in the analyses provided. Below is a summary of the overarching strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified for OUMC:

## STRENGTHS:

- Worship (all components)
- Effectively utilizing talented people and their gifts
- Welcoming and friendly congregation
- Location and the environmental aspects around the church

## WEAKNESSES:

- Lack of a strong Christian Education program
- One united congregation demonstrated by a high degree of collaboration across ministries/services

#### OPPORTUNITIES:

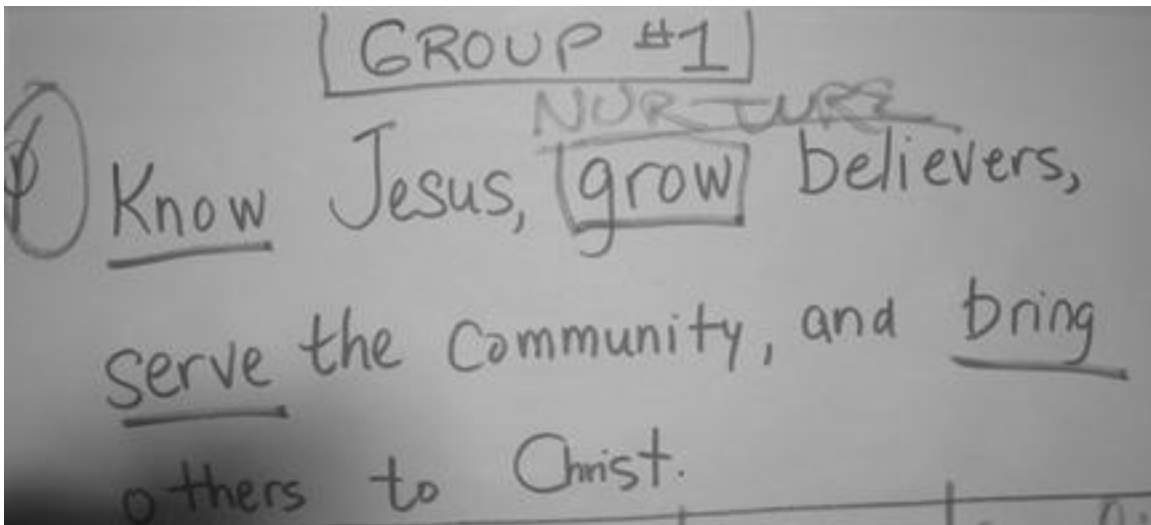
- Assimilate new families and visitors more effectively into the church
- Consider opportunities that might take us beyond Sundays, between the hours of 8-12, inside the walls of the church
- Better leverage our communication vehicles

#### THREATS:

- Too many “single-points of failure” leading to the possibility that something might not happen (i.e., we lack back-ups or contingency plans for the performance of many key roles)
- Physical security of the building
- Lack of church-wide coordination/prioritization of how to best use our physical and fiscal resources

After discussing where we are, the group began to focus on where we might go. To get there, we learned about what a mission statement is and what makes them powerful. After seeing a number of good and poor examples, small groups were formed and tasked with developing a “strawman” mission statement for Oakton church. Seven possible options were presented and the following statement was selected as being the most promising for the majority of attendees:

***Know Jesus, grow believers, serve the community and bring others to Christ.***



The day's activities concluded with a brief discussion of activity/event planning for 2009. Ideally, it was suggested that no planning be done until after we have concluded the work begun today. Once the Church Council adopts a vision and mission statement, each ministry team and administrative committee will be asked to define its purpose and direction in relation to those two documents and to convene their planning activities accordingly.

Attendees were asked to reflect on and pray about the proposed vision statement, and to attend the church council meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> to continue this work. All others are invited to attend as well.

Although it is impossible to name all those who contributed their time and talents in helping us reach this point—a special thanks is extended to those who helped prepare the SWOT analyses used in the planning retreat, those who attended the retreat, those who helped in the planning and preparing of retreat materials, those who ensured the retreat's participants were well fed and nourished, and of course Pastor Don who is helping us navigate this journey.