

RE:VITALITY

SERVING IN GOD'S MISSION

Strategic Planning for Congregations

“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established” (PROVERBS 16:3).

OVERVIEW

Serving in God's Mission (SGM) provides a comprehensive, consensus-based approach for guiding your congregation through a strategic planning process tailored to meet the unique needs of Lutheran congregations. The overall goal of *SGM* is to assist your congregation with developing a strategic planning mindset that goes beyond putting a plan together to integrating a Strategic Ministry Plan (SMP) into the planning and management of your congregation's role in God's Mission.



The expected outcomes of *SGM* include:

- A working knowledge of the strategic planning process and its supporting tools;
- Achieving consensus in the congregation at each stage of strategic planning; and
- A realistic, meaningful and useful Strategic Ministry Plan.

APPROACH



SGM begins with taking inventory of what the Lord has invested in your congregation and how He has shaped it as the Body of Christ in a place, at a time, for a people of His choosing. Using God's Word and this assessment as the basis for understanding God's Mission for the congregation, *SGM* guides you through a tailored strategic planning process to develop a Strategic Ministry Plan that addresses how to faithfully carry out your part in God's Mission in the unique context of your congregation.

DEVELOPING CONSENSUS

When, why and how to develop consensus highlights one of the key differences between secular strategic planning and the strategic planning process of *SGM*. While secular approaches typically begin with a vision cast by a leader which is then “sold” to the rest of the organization, *SGM* approaches strategic planning as an activity in which the congregation-at-large is engaged from the beginning. Consensus-building is begun very early in the strategic planning process and continues throughout

the process. The resulting Strategic Ministry Plan is not “sold” at a voters’ meeting, but owned by the whole congregation which has participated in developing it.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND TOOLS

The strategic planning process of SGM guides you through the steps of developing and implementing a Strategic Ministry Plan. The process and tools may be familiar to participants who have engaged in strategic planning in their workplaces. However, the process and tools will be applied in a different order, with a different emphasis and with a different goal than they might be in a secular context. Some of the tools used to support the strategic planning process include the resource inventory, SWOT analysis, essential core values of Lutheran congregations, mission statement, vision statements and SMART goals.



FORMAT

SGM is a self-directed workshop that takes place through a series of sessions that include video instruction, case studies for discussion, and the development of the Strategic Ministry Plan (SMP). Each session supports the spiral development of the congregation’s SMP through iterations that provide multiple levels of involvement and build consensus for the SMP as it is developed. The three levels are the Core Planning Team (CPT), the Expanded Planning Team (XPT) and the congregation-at-large.



WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

The CPT should include a cross-section of 4–6 key influencers in the congregation. This includes the pastor, other professional church workers, council members, board members and informal leaders (i.e., the people to whom other members look for direction). Participants do not require prior knowledge of strategic planning but do need to be willing to engage in planning activities. The XPT adds four or more people to the CPT. The congregation-at-large includes any and all members of the congregation who wish to participate in the strategic planning process. (*Note: smaller congregations may combine the CPT and XPT.*)

COST

SGM is available to LCMS congregations through the LCMS Office of National Mission at no cost.



GETTING STARTED

CONTACT US for more information about or to schedule *Serving in God’s Mission* for your congregation at

✉ WOR@lcms.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION about *re:Vitality* please visit

👉 lcms.org/revitalization

📌 facebook.com/LCMSreVitality