

CHRIST OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH CONSULTATION

May 4-6, 2012

Introduction: It has been a privilege to work with the Pastor, leaders and congregation of Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church. Everyone has been helpful and provided us with all the information that was required for us to conduct this consultation. Our prayer is that God will use this report to motivate the congregation to do great things for God in this community.

Strengths

1. **Pastor:** Pastor Keltner is adored for being so easily approachable, inclusive, and possessing a love for reaching out to and caring for people, especially in their times of need. He makes the Word of God relevant, understandable, and practical, both in preaching and teaching. He is able to bring a thoroughly Lutheran confession and perspective to those who have grown up in the LCMS, as well as to those who have come from other church (or unchurched) backgrounds.
2. **Worship Experience:** The Worship Team (musicians, preacher, and leaders) does an excellent job of blending a variety of musical styles, liturgical approaches, and practical messages into a Game Day experience that is enjoyable, nurturing, inspirational and sensitive to people that come from a wide spectrum of church backgrounds.
3. **New Building:** These new facilities are warm, clean, well-maintained, inviting and non-pretentious to all who come through these doors. Members feel at home here and want this place to be home to many others in the community, as well. (Mi casa su casa.)
4. **Outward Focus:** Pastor and congregation view outreach as their primary reason for existing (mission). Together they have formed an effective team in reaching the lost. No one feels like outreach is not part of their job description as disciples of Jesus.
5. **Inclusiveness:** The congregation is open to people of all walks of life and philosophy, without compromising the Gospel. People are quickly introduced to Jesus Christ, His abundant grace and personal love for them. This unique combination of backgrounds and personalities here at COS reflects the community in which it serves.

Concerns

1. **Hurt Feelings & Damaged Relationships:** Over the past year, much relational harm has been done that has damaged the work of the previous 7 years. Blame is being passed, responsibility denied, the worst in others assumed, and there is an absence of placing the best construction on actions, motives, and conversations. Repentance has largely not occurred and thus, forgiveness is not being received nor relationships restored in a God-pleasing fashion.
2. **Vision:** COS had a very clear vision, 8 years ago, for establishing a new LCMS church in Louisburg. With that original vision largely realized, there is now no clear picture of where the church should go from here. There is a need to write, articulate, and communicate the next

chapter of the church's future, clearly spelling out the preferred target, strategies, and ministries needed to achieve that vision.

3. **Leadership Development & Training:** God has blessed the gifts, diligence, and outreach efforts of the Pastor, Leaders, and Members of COS with rapid growth in the initial years of her existence. However, the Pastor and congregation do not currently possess the skills and training necessary to move the congregation to the next level of growth and maturity. In addition, the number of new leaders and participation of members has not kept up with the growth of the congregation. Finally, communication weaknesses and breakdowns have allowed for Satan to disrupt and break down confidences, trust, and corporate synergy within the Leadership of the congregation.
4. **Accountability:** The present system of governance has served the needs of COS and has allowed the church to get to its present level of growth. However, it does not provide an objective process for review, evaluation, and accountability in order to achieve long-term effectiveness in mission and ministry.
5. **Finances:** Financial distress is the most recognized consequence of the concerns listed above. Matters of money (or the lack thereof) seem to be the primary focus of the congregation at this time and has caused it to lose sight of the congregation's primary mission of proclaiming the Gospel. These financial concerns are exacerbated by lack of transparency and parties being conflicted between protecting personal interests and the financial health of the congregation.

Prescriptions

1. **Hurt Feelings & Damaged Relationships:** The Pastor, the Pastor's wife, and the Church Council will all participate in a weekend retreat facilitated by the Kansas District, in order to biblically and lovingly address these concerns. This retreat will be held as soon as possible, but no later than August 31, 2012. Following the retreat, there will be a Service of Reconciliation and Repentance for the entire congregation. This service will be lead by Rev. Terry Tieman. In this service, anyone in the congregation who has issues with another brother or sister in Christ will seek their forgiveness and be reconciled. Once this service is concluded, no one in the congregation will be allowed to discuss any sins or failures from the past. The pastor and leaders are expected to do all that is possible to get as many participants in the congregation to attend this day. It is assumed the congregation will be engaged in fasting and private prayer as preparation for this day. This Service of Reconciliation and Repentance will be scheduled as soon as possible, following the aforementioned retreat, subject to Pastor Tieman's availability.
2. **Vision:** Under the leadership of the Pastor and Church Council President, COS will engage in a comprehensive Visioning process, using guidelines provided by TCN and facilitated by Rev. Rick Twenhafel. This process will include, but not be limited to, interviews and surveys with people and leaders in the community, prayer walking in targeted areas, and an interpretation of the area demographics. An outward focused Vision Statement will be written by October 15 and adopted by the congregation no later than December 31, 2012. In addition, under the leadership of the Pastor, at least 4 new Interest Groups will be formed, by September 30. These groups will target the friends and neighbors of congregational members.

3. Leadership Development & Training: Pastor Keltner will continue to attend the Pastors' Learning Community provided by the Kansas District. In addition, he will be coached by Rev. Rick Twenhafel, in order to help him continue to grow in his leadership skills and behavior. These monthly sessions will be paid for by the congregation through the remainder of this year, at the rate of \$75 per month ($\$75 \times 8 = \600). This coaching agreement may be renewed by mutual consent of the Pastor and congregation in subsequent years.

In addition, the Pastor and Church Council President will organize two events designed to help the Church's leaders improve their leadership skills and behavior. The first event will focus on communication skills and the second will focus on team building. These events will be led by Rev. Rick Twenhafel and/or Rev. Terry Tieman. The first event will be completed by February 28, 2013 and the second by July 31, 2013. Finally, the Pastor & Church Council will read and discuss The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team. Pastor Keltner will lead these discussions, beginning with the July 2012 Council Meeting. Each subsequent meeting will feature one chapter of the book, until it is completed.

4. Accountability: Beginning in January, 2013, the newly elected Church Council will read and discuss the book Structure Your Church for Mission, in order to become more familiar with Accountable Leadership principles. This discussion will be led by the Council President. In addition, Ministry goals for the Pastor and all Boards shall be submitted to the Church Council by the Pastor, no later than December 31, 2012. These goals will include, but not be limited to, the number of new disciples, multiplication of leaders, and growth of specific ministries and will reflect the values of the new Vision Statement.
5. Finances: COS will complete The Consecrated Stewards process no later than October 31, 2012. The emphasis of this process will not be limited to debt reduction but will also embrace a wholistic approach to stewardship. Also, in order to free the congregation from paying rent, utilities, and maintenance on the Church Parsonage, Pastor Keltner will secure his own housing by December 31, 2012. Upon this move, Pastor's salary and housing allowance will be adjusted, in accordance with District guidelines. In addition, the Kansas District Business Manager will assist the Church Council in adopting financial Best Practices policies for the congregation. Finally, a summary of the church's Financial Report and Church Council minutes will be reported in each month's newsletter. A more detailed report will be available to members upon request.

The congregation will vote on accepting or rejecting this report by June 24, 2012. If the report is accepted, TCN & the Kansas District commit to "walk along side" Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church for a minimum of two years to help with the implementation of this report.

Conclusion: We want to thank you for the opportunity to consult with you. We believe your best days as a congregation are ahead of you.

Rev. Dr. Terry Tieman
Rev. Mark Frith
Rev. Rick Twenhafel

