
SPANISH FORT UMC

Phase 1: Preparation and Foundation Setting

- 1. Select Visioning Team and Define Roles**
- 2. Establish Visioning Goals**
- 3. Orientation Retreat**

Phase 2: Listening and Data Gathering

- 1. Congregational and Community Feedback**
- 2. Community Context Analysis**
- 3. Spiritual and Strategic Reflection**

Phase 3: Vision Discovery and Drafting

- 1. Visioning Workshop**
- 2. Develop Core Vision Themes**
- 3. Draft Vision Statement**

Phase 4: Congregational Engagement and Feedback

- 1. Present the Vision Draft**
- 2. Refine Vision Based on Feedback**

Phase 5: Strategy and Action Planning

- 1. Define Strategic Priorities and Goals**
- 2. Develop Implementation Roadmap**
- 3. Allocate Resources and Support**

Phase 6: Launch Vision, Follow-Up and Accountability

- 1. Launch Vision in Worship**
- 2. Ongoing Communication and Engagement**
- 3. Annual Review and Reflection**

Resources:

- The Bible
- Discovering God's Future For Your Church (a tool kit for congregational discernment from the Lewis Center for Church Leadership)
- Advanced Strategic Planning by Aubrey Malphurs
- Church Leadership by Lovett Weems
- Leadership on the Line by Marty Linsky and Ronald Heifetz
- Rocking the Boat by Debra Meyerson
- The Seven Practices of Effective Ministry by Andy Stanley
- Made to Stick by Chip and Dan Heath
- 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership by John Maxwell,
- The Innovator's Dilemma by Clayton Christensen
- Give me an overview, summary, and key principles from The Courage to Teach by Parker Palmer
- Simple Church: Returning to God's Process for Making Disciples by Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger
- Essential Church by Thom S. Rainer and Sam Rainer
- God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates for Finding and Focusing Your Church's Future by Warren Bird and Will Mancini
- The Power of Vision: Discover and Apply God's Plan for Your Life and Ministry by George Barna
- Visioneering: Your Guide for Discovering and Maintaining Personal Vision by Andy Stanley
- Learning Change: Congregational Transformation Fueled by Personal Renewal by Jim Herrington and Trisha Taylor

Session 1: Orientation and Foundation Setting

Purpose: Introduce the visioning process, build team unity, and establish a spiritual and strategic foundation.

Duration: 4 hours (including breaks)

Session Outline

1. Welcome and Introductions (30 mins)

- Open with a prayer and a brief overview of the visioning goals.
- Reflect on the importance of this work for the church's future.
- *Icebreaker Activity:* "Life Maps" – Each person shares a personal journey map highlighting key moments that shape who they are. This fosters connection and appreciation of diverse backgrounds.
- Alternate Creative Icebreaker: "Imagining a New Beginning" – Inspired by "Vioneering," ask each person to imagine a significant change that would positively impact the church.

2. Overview of Visioning Process (50 mins)

- Introduce the goals, timeline, and resources.
- The balance between spiritual discernment and strategic planning.
 - "The Power of Vision" - Barna defines vision as a clear mental image of a preferable future imparted by God to His servants, based on an accurate understanding of God, self, and the circumstances.
 - Vision is not human ambition but a divine call, deeply rooted in prayer and Scripture.
 - "Vioneering" - Stanley defines vision as a mental picture of what could be, fueled by the conviction that it should be.
 - Vision is not merely a dream or ambition but a divine calling that resonates deeply with one's faith.
- The Technical
 - "God Dreams"/"Advanced Strategic Planning" - Mission (Why) - Values (Who) - Vision (How) - Measures (What we did)
- Watch "How To Discern Vision."
- Activity: Personal Vision Mapping – Each person reflects on their personal calling and values, connecting it to their vision for the church.

3. Leadership Insights (30 mins)

- *Workshop on Leadership Concepts:*
 - **Tempered Radicals - Rocking the Boat**
 - Definition: Tempered radicals are individuals who simultaneously conform to and challenge organizational norms. They seek change but do so in ways that don't alienate them from their colleagues or superiors.
 - Balance: These individuals tread carefully, using subtle strategies to introduce change without becoming labeled as outsiders or rebels.
 - Adaptive Challenges vs Technical Problems - **Leadership on the Line**
 - Technical problems can be solved with existing knowledge and procedures.
 - Adaptive challenges require people to learn new ways of thinking and behaving.
 - Leadership involves mobilizing people to address adaptive challenges.
 - Disruptive vs Sustaining Innovation - **The Innovator's Dilemma**
 - **Sustaining Innovation:** Incremental improvements to existing products or services.
 - **Disruptive Innovation:** Innovations that initially serve a niche market or a less-demanding customer base but eventually overtake established products.
- Church Life Cycle
 - Keep It Simple - **The Seven Practices of Effective Ministry, Simple Church**
 - Churches often overcomplicate their ministries with an overwhelming number of programs that lack alignment or purpose. Simplicity, not complexity, leads to greater effectiveness in disciple-making.
 - The Role of Systems Thinking - **Learning Change**
 - Congregations are emotional systems where patterns of interaction are deeply ingrained.
 - Leaders must understand and influence these systems to address resistance and foster healthy change.
 - Horizon - **God Dreams**
 - Beyond-the-Horizon Vision: A 5-20 year, bold, long-term dream inspired by God.
 - Background Vision: A 3-year strategy for progress toward the long-term vision.

- Midground Vision: A 1-year operational plan that connects daily efforts to the bigger vision.
- Foreground Vision: A 90-day focus on immediate priorities and tasks.
- This model ensures that churches have both a visionary dream and practical steps to achieve it.
- **SUCCEsS - Made to Stick**

4. **Spiritual Grounding (20 mins)**

- *Group Prayer and Reflection Exercise:* Use Lectio Divina on a scripture about vision and calling (e.g., Habakkuk 2:2-3). Encourage silence and sharing to open hearts to God's guidance. Encourage participants to write down any words, images, or scriptures that come to mind.

5. **Establishing Group Norms (30 mins)**

- Discuss Parker Palmer's principles from "The Courage to Teach" to cultivate authenticity and vulnerability.
- Establish ground rules for openness and mutual respect.
- Define group norms and expectations using principles from "**Leadership on the Line**" about building trust and vulnerability.
- Discuss the importance of candid conversations and confidentiality.
- Create a "Team Covenant" by brainstorming values for respectful listening, openness, and confidentiality. Make the covenant visible during each session.

6. **Setting Guiding Questions (30 mins)**

- Develop core questions for the process, such as "What is our purpose?" and "How can we uniquely serve our community?"

7. **Closing and Reflection (15 mins)**

Session 2: Congregational and Community Listening

Purpose: Prepare to gather insights from the church and community to understand needs, values, and potential areas for growth.

Duration: 3 hours (plus additional time for data analysis)

Session Outline

1. Devotion and Prayer (30 mins)

2. Congregational Identity (60 mins)

- *Cultural Identity* - Culture is in essence “who we are and how we do things around here.” Each congregation has its own unique cultural heritage that impacts behaviors and shapes the meaning of congregational life. When you walk into a congregation, you are entering a stream of culture fed by many other streams, such as the congregation’s denominational tradition, the church’s location within a particular region of the country, the ethnicity of the members, socio-economic factors, and so on. Anthropologists begin to understand the culture of a particular group by studying “artifacts” — which are observable items or behaviors that reflect an organization’s culture.
 - What makes us distinct in the eyes of others?
 - Most of us take for granted the culture that surrounds us. Like the air we breathe, we seldom stop to think about it. It can be helpful to think about these questions:
 - If someone of a different religious background visited our church, what might they notice that marks our church as part of a particular denominational heritage?
 - If someone from a different part of the country visited our church, what would stand out to them?
 - If someone of a different race or ethnicity than that of the majority of our members visited, what might they notice?
 - If someone from a different country visited, what might stand out to them as unique to our own national culture?
 - 1. Our congregation reflects the culture of our denomination in the following observable ways.
 - 2. Our congregation reflects the culture of our region of the country in the following observable ways.
 - 3. Our congregation reflects the culture related to the racial or ethnic heritage of the majority of its members in the following observable ways.
 - 4. Our congregation reflects our nation’s culture in the following observable ways.
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- *History Timeline*
- *1. Looking at the church's timeline, do you see distinct chapters in its history?*
- *2. What positive or negative implications are there for moving into the future?*
- *3. List what you feel are the most significant themes in the history of the church?*
- *Core Values*
- Values are the commitments that shape the way any organization does its work. If the mission defines what the organization exists to do, values describe the commitments that will be honored in fulfilling that mission. Values can be thought of as the guidelines and boundaries within which the organization will function to accomplish its mission. Each congregation has its distinct sacred bundle of core values. Some may not be lived out consistently, but those values still have great power if they are part of how the congregation sees itself. Thinking about core values helps a congregation get clarity about what is most important within its faith community.
- 1. Identify three to five values that are an essential part of the life and work of your congregation.
- 2. Define in writing exactly what each of these values means in the life of your congregation.
- 3. Prioritize them according to the degree of importance and meaning in the life of your congregation.

3. **Internal Data (30 mins)**

July 24 - March 25

Membership -

Worship Attendance - 230

Professions of Faith - 3

New Members - 63

Baptisms - 4

Deaths - 0

Children

- Avg Sunday Night - 20

- Avg Sunday Morning-

- High/Low -

Youth

- Avg Sunday night 45
- High/Low

Annual Budget

Funds Received toward Budget

Sometimes our perceptions of how things are going in our church don't match with reality. Facts and figures can be a helpful reality check. Spend some time reviewing the Data Trends Report. And then make note below of what you found to be significant to your congregation's current reality.

1. What did you find most encouraging in the report?

2. What did you find most concerning?

3. What one action or change would you prioritize given this data?

4. Community Research (45 mins)

- Go over Mission Insite Data. Present demographic data and community trends referencing "Essential Church" to highlight the need for relevance in a changing cultural landscape.
- 1. What did you find most encouraging in the report?
- 2. What did you find most concerning?
- 3. What one action or change would you prioritize given this data?
- Use **The Innovator's Dilemma** to identify potential "disruptions" (such as new social needs or technology shifts) and how the church might address these.

4. Designing Surveys and Interviews (45 mins)

- Set clear objectives for the listening process, emphasizing **"Defining the Win"** from **The Seven Practices of Effective Ministry**. What specific insights are needed?
- *Workshop on Crafting Questions*: Divide into teams to create open-ended questions for congregation and community surveys. Encourage "unexpected" questions inspired by **Made to Stick** to elicit honest and inspiring responses (e.g., "What do you wish was different about our church?").
- Pass out the Congregation Survey from "Lewis Center" and adapt for our context.
- Brainstorm creative ways to engage the congregation in listening sessions (e.g., small group gatherings, after-service Q&As). Assign responsibilities and timelines.

5. Closing and Reflection (15 mins)

- Group prayer and reflection on the upcoming listening activities. Invite volunteers to lead prayer for wisdom and open hearts in this stage.
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Session 3: Vision Discovery and Ideation

Purpose: Synthesize insights and begin forming themes for the vision.

Duration: 3.5 hours

Session Outline

1. Opening Reflection: The Church's Purpose (20 mins)

- Begin with a reading of Acts 2:42-47 as an example of a thriving church community.
- Reflect on how this biblical example might inform the church's purpose and direction.
- How have you participated in the church's purpose?

2. Debrief from Survey and Mission Insite (1 hour)

- *Data Presentation and Discussion:*
- Spend time reviewing survey results.
 - Share findings from surveys and community research.
 - Discuss any surprises and common themes.
- Observations
 - For what is our church rightfully known?
 - What do we really have going for us?
 - What is so good about our church that we hope it never changes?
 - What does our church do as well as any church anywhere?
- Come up with key themes from initial surveys.
- Creative Activity: **"Headline News"** – Summarize congregational feedback as if writing a newspaper headline.

3. Reflections and Creative Imagination (45 mins)

- Watch "Bringing it all together."
- Congregational Needs Survey
 - 1. What needs or issues should be addressed in the next twelve months?
 - 2. What are the most important needs or issues that will affect our church significantly five years from now?
 - 3. What are the most important issues or needs that will affect our church significantly ten years from now?
- Activity: "Future Story" – Imagine the church five years from now and write a story that describes its impact on the community. Encourage them to use elements from **Made to Stick** (simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness) to make these stories memorable. Create "elevator pitches" for each theme, keeping them short and impactful.
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4. **Identifying Core Vision Themes (1 hour)**

- Revisit how we find vision.
- Consider example vision statements.
- Based on the stories, use **Malphurs' vision themes** approach to brainstorm 3-4 guiding themes. Ensure each theme is clear, actionable, and aligns with the congregation's identity and values.
- Use "The Simple Church" principles to streamline ideas, making sure they are clear and focused.
 - Select the 3-4 core themes that encapsulate the group's highest hopes and greatest strengths and align closely with the church's mission and potential.

5. **Prayer and Reflection (30 mins)**

- Invite members to pray over the draft vision, asking for divine guidance. Reflect on what they believe the church is being called to, even if it's challenging.

Session 4: Congregational Engagement and Feedback

Purpose: Engage the congregation in the draft vision and gather feedback for refinement.

Duration: 3 hours (additional time needed for feedback analysis)

Session Outline

1. Opening Exercise (25 mins)

- Prayer and reflection.

2. Revisiting Our Work and Comparison (40 mins)

1. Themes from the last meeting.
 1. Worship
 2. Serve
 3. Discipleship
 4. Evangelism
 5. (Buildings)
2. Additional thoughts since our last meeting.
3. Review the comparison analysis.

3. Reviewing Other Vision Statements (25 mins)

1. Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, CA
 1. **Mission Statement** "To glorify God by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of the lost and edification of the church."
 2. **Vision Statement:** "To see our community transformed by the life-changing reality of the gospel, as people come to know Jesus as their lord and savior."
 3. **Comparison:** The mission statement focuses on the church's core activities and purposes—evangelism and spiritual nurturing—while the vision statement describes a future state where these activities result in widespread community transformation.
2. NewSpring Church (Anderson, SC)

1. **Mission Statement:** "To reach people far from God and teach them how to follow Jesus step by step."
 2. **Vision Statement:** "To create a place where people are genuinely welcomed and can experience the life-changing message of Jesus Christ."
 3. **Comparison:** The mission statement focuses on evangelistic outreach and discipleship, targeting people unfamiliar with the faith. The vision statement looks toward the community and atmosphere the church wants to foster—a welcoming space centered on transformation through Jesus.
3. Elevation Church (Charlotte, NC)
1. **Mission Statement:** "To see people far from God raised to life in Christ."
 2. **Vision Statement:** "To be a church that is culturally relevant but remains doctrinally pure."
 3. **Comparison:** The mission statement succinctly states the church's goal of evangelism and conversion. The vision statement outlines the desired balance the church seeks between engaging culture and maintaining theological integrity.
4. **Trinity Life Church**
1. **Mission Statement (Trinity Life Church):** "To connect people to God, grow disciples, and serve the community."
 2. **Vision Statement:** "A thriving church community that feels like family and serves as a beacon of hope and love to all."
 3. **Comparison:** The mission statement specifies the church's immediate objectives—connection, growth, and service. The vision statement paints a broader picture of the desired future impact and cultural feel of the church.
5. **Cornerstone Fellowship**
1. **Mission Statement** "To cultivate a community of believers dedicated to following the teachings of Jesus, nurturing a deep faith, and fostering spiritual growth."
 2. **Vision Statement:** "An ever-expanding community where all are welcomed, healed, and transformed through the love of Christ."
 3. **Comparison:** The mission focuses on internal community development and spiritual deepening. The vision aims for an inclusive and growth-oriented future, highlighting transformation and healing.

6. Harbor Light Church

1. **Mission Statement:** "To empower individuals through the teaching of God's Word and to create a community of faith that supports spiritual growth."
2. **Vision Statement:** "A community where broken lives are made whole, helping every individual to discover their purpose in God's plan."
3. **Comparison:** The mission is centered on empowerment through scripture and community support for spiritual development. The vision projects a future where the church's efforts lead to holistic restoration and a clear understanding of personal purpose within the congregation.

7. Unity Gospel Church

1. **Mission Statement:** "To provide a spiritual home that encourages strong, scriptural worship and a commitment to service and evangelism."
2. **Vision Statement:** "Envisioning a world transformed by God's love, where all are freed from oppression, and justice prevails for the underserved."
3. **Comparison:** The mission emphasizes practical activities such as worship, service, and evangelism that define the church's daily operations. The vision statement extends beyond the local community to a global impact, focusing on justice and transformation driven by divine love.

4. **Refining Vision Themes (30 mins)**

- Small group work: Use "Made To Stick" principles to refine each theme, making sure statements reflect the church's unique calling.
- Share drafts, incorporating language that is vivid, inspiring, and specific.

5. **Developing a Draft Vision (45 mins)**

- Combine the themes into a few versions of a vision statement using the "God Dreams" structure for a compelling, focused vision.
- Draft a preliminary vision statement including each theme. Discuss and refine.
- Share the vision in a storytelling format, including visuals and testimonies.

3. **Reflection and Prayer (10 mins)**

Overview: "Made to Stick" by Chip and Dan Heath

"**Made to Stick**" explores why some ideas endure while others fade away. The Heath brothers analyze the qualities that make ideas "stick" — memorable, impactful, and shareable — and provide a framework to craft messages that resonate with audiences. Drawing on psychology, neuroscience, and compelling real-world examples, the book outlines six principles for creating ideas that stick.

Summary

The core of the book is the **SUCCESs** framework, which identifies six key traits of sticky ideas:

1. Simple

- Strip ideas down to their core message.
- A simple idea is not dumbed down; it is profound and compact, guiding decisions and actions.
- Example: "Southwest Airlines is the low-fare airline."

2. Unexpected

- Grab people's attention by breaking patterns or surprising them.
- Surprise keeps audiences engaged, but it must tie back to the core message.
- Example: A fire-prevention campaign that starts with "Your house will burn down."

3. Concrete

- Use tangible, sensory details that people can easily visualize or relate to.
- Abstract concepts become memorable when grounded in real-world examples.
- Example: Instead of saying "high performance," say "our truck can tow a 10,000-pound trailer."

4. Credible

- Build trust through authority, statistics, or relatable personal stories.
- Ideas gain credibility when they are supported by real evidence or believable details.
- Example: A medical authority endorsing a health tip, or a "real person" story.

5. Emotional

- Make people care by appealing to their emotions, not just their logic.
- Frame ideas in terms of what matters to the audience.
- Example: Charity appeals that focus on helping a single child rather than abstract statistics.

6. Stories

- Embed ideas in compelling narratives that inspire action or illustrate key points.

- Stories help people remember and relate to ideas on a personal level.
 - Example: The story of Jared losing weight by eating Subway sandwiches.
- These principles often overlap, and combining them amplifies their effectiveness.

Key Principles

1. Focus on the Core Message

- A sticky idea has a central message that is easy to understand and remember.
- Avoid cluttering the message with unnecessary details.

2. Harness the Power of Surprise

- Breaking expectations grabs attention.
- To hold attention, the surprise should connect to a meaningful insight.

3. Make It Relatable

- Use specific, relatable details to make abstract ideas concrete.
- People need to see how the idea applies to their world.

4. Leverage Trusted Sources

- Authority figures, credible statistics, or even relatable personal experiences can make ideas more believable.

5. Appeal to the Heart

- Logic matters, but emotion motivates action.
- Show how the idea aligns with the audience's values or aspirations.

6. Tell Stories That Inspire Action

- Stories are powerful tools for teaching, inspiring, and persuading.
- A well-told story makes the message memorable and actionable.

Key Takeaways for Communicators

- **Be clear and concise.** Complexity is the enemy of understanding.
- **Tap into curiosity.** Start with a surprising or intriguing element to capture attention.
- **Anchor in real-world details.** People remember specific, vivid images better than abstract concepts.
- **Earn trust.** Credibility makes ideas believable and shareable.
- **Connect emotionally.** People act when they feel a personal stake.
- **Use storytelling as a delivery method.** Stories stick in the mind and inspire action.

"Made to Stick" offers a practical toolkit for anyone looking to communicate ideas effectively—whether in business, education, or everyday life.

Overview of *God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates for Finding and Focusing Your Church's Future* by Will Mancini and Warren Bird

God Dreams is a comprehensive guide for church leaders seeking to articulate and implement a God-inspired vision for their congregation. Will Mancini and Warren Bird build on their extensive experience with churches to offer a framework for crafting a clear, compelling, and actionable vision. The book is designed to move churches beyond generic mission statements and into strategic planning that energizes leadership, aligns ministries, and inspires the congregation.

The authors introduce several tools, including the **Vision Frame** and **Horizon Storyline**, to help churches clarify their mission and implement a vision over different time horizons. The book also provides 12 Vision Templates, each representing a different type of God-centered dream, to serve as inspiration for churches to find their unique calling.

Summary of Key Themes

1. The Vision Frame: Structuring Your Vision

The Vision Frame is a central concept in the book and consists of four components that provide clarity and focus for your church:

- **Mission:** The church's overarching purpose (the "what we do").
- **Values:** The guiding principles that define how the mission is carried out (the "why we do it").
- **Strategy:** The processes and activities that align the church's efforts (the "how we do it").
- **Measures:** Indicators of success (the "when we are successful").

This framework helps churches develop a focused vision, ensuring alignment between the church's activities and its biblical mission.

2. The Horizon Storyline: Planning Across Timeframes

The Horizon Storyline helps churches break down their vision into actionable plans over different timeframes:

- **Beyond-the-Horizon Vision:** A 5-20 year, bold, long-term dream inspired by God.
- **Background Vision:** A 3-year strategy for progress toward the long-term vision.
- **Midground Vision:** A 1-year operational plan that connects daily efforts to the bigger vision.
- **Foreground Vision:** A 90-day focus on immediate priorities and tasks.

This model ensures that churches have both a visionary dream and practical steps to achieve it.

3. The 12 Vision Templates: Inspiring Dreams

Mancini and Bird provide 12 templates that reflect different ways churches can live out their God-given mission. These templates include examples and case studies, helping leaders identify the most fitting dream for their context. (Details on these are expanded below.)

4. Clarity and Focus: Eliminating "Vision Drift"

The book emphasizes the importance of clarity and focus, warning against "vision drift" — when churches lose sight of their core purpose due to competing agendas or overcommitment to unnecessary programs.

5. Team Ownership and Congregational Buy-In

A vision will fail if it is not embraced by the leadership team and congregation. The authors emphasize the importance of building ownership at all levels through clear communication, collaboration, and consistency.

6. God-Sized Dreams: Vision as a Call to Faith

A compelling church vision is one that reflects God's mission for His people. It should be bold enough to require dependence on God, inspiring the church to trust Him for transformative results.

Key Principles for Churches

1. Focus on Mission:

Everything your church does must align with the mission to glorify God and make disciples.

2. Dream Big, Act Small:

Your vision should stretch the church while remaining grounded in actionable, short-term priorities.

3. Communicate Clearly and Consistently:

Vision is only effective if it is communicated in a way that inspires understanding and commitment.

4. Emphasize Alignment:

Align every ministry, program, and initiative with the church's vision. Cut or redirect anything that doesn't contribute.

5. Empower Leaders:

Equip and empower leaders to implement and communicate the vision in their specific areas of ministry.

6. Regularly Revisit and Refine the Vision:

Vision casting is not a one-time event. It requires ongoing evaluation and adjustment to remain relevant and faithful.

7. Measure What Matters:

Define clear metrics to evaluate spiritual growth, ministry effectiveness, and alignment with the vision.

Session 5 & 6: Strategy and Action Planning

Purpose: Create actionable steps for each vision theme and assign responsibilities.

Duration: 4 hours

Session Outline

1. Debrief from Listening Phase (30 mins)

- *Data Presentation and Discussion:* Share findings from surveys, interviews, and community research. Discuss any surprises and common themes. Gathering Congregational
- Ranked Choice Voting

1. Respite

2. Dinner

.....

3. Afterschool

4. Cline

- Additional Ideas
 - Twice a year rummage sale
 - Wheel Chair Ramps?
- More combined maybe fifth sundays
- Groups
 - Discipleship
 - Fellowship

2. Finalize a Draft Vision (45 mins)

- First Drafts:
- We are a loving church community that is devoted to authentically worshipping God, growing as disciples, serving others, and fostering fellowship that reflects Christ's love.
- Guided by the love of Christ to be a home for all people where hearts are lifted, lives are transformed, relationships deepened, and faith is nurtured.
- Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- Vision Statement: To be a home connecting all people through worship, service, fellowship, and discipleship, guided by Christ's love.

- Timelines
 - Vision Statement - August 17th
 - Mission Effort - Q1 2026
 - Worship Services - Plan fall 2025 for 2026
 - Fellowship Groups - Now, Soon, and Forever
 - Discipleship Groups - Now, Soon, and Forever

- Share the vision in a storytelling format, including visuals and testimonies.

- 3. **Getting Strategic Goals (1 hour)**
 - For each vision theme, brainstorm SMART goals based on **Malphur's strategic approach**. Define clear outcomes that are both inspiring and realistic.
 - Map out an action plan with key milestones and target dates.

- 4. **Prioritizing and Sequencing (30 mins)**
 - Identify immediate, mid-term, and long-term goals. Use **The Seven Practices of Effective Ministry** to narrow the focus and prioritize impactful initiatives.

- 3. **Defining Leadership and Resources (45 mins)**
 - Assign “champions” for each theme or initiative, inspired by **Maxwell's idea of leaders as influencers**. Discuss what resources are needed (budget, volunteers, training) and potential roadblocks.

- 4. **Final Vision Review and Planning (25 mins)**
 - Plan the vision launch in worship and through church communications. Discuss how to use **“sticky” messages** and visual storytelling to make the vision memorable.

- 5. **Prayer and Commitment (20 mins)**
 - Pray together, asking for guidance and courage as they move toward action. Have team members share commitments they feel personally called to.

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- **Use storytelling as a delivery method.** Stories stick in the mind and inspire action.

"Made to Stick" offers a practical toolkit for anyone looking to communicate ideas effectively—whether in business, education, or everyday life.

Overview of *God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates for Finding and Focusing Your Church's Future* by Will Mancini and Warren Bird

God Dreams is a comprehensive guide for church leaders seeking to articulate and implement a God-inspired vision for their congregation. Will Mancini and Warren Bird build on their extensive experience with churches to offer a framework for crafting a clear, compelling, and actionable vision. The book is designed to move churches beyond generic mission statements and into strategic planning that energizes leadership, aligns ministries, and inspires the congregation.

The authors introduce several tools, including the **Vision Frame** and **Horizon Storyline**, to help churches clarify their mission and implement a vision over different time horizons. The book also provides 12 Vision Templates, each representing a different type of God-centered dream, to serve as inspiration for churches to find their unique calling.

Summary of Key Themes

1. The Vision Frame: Structuring Your Vision

The Vision Frame is a central concept in the book and consists of four components that provide clarity and focus for your church:

- **Mission:** The church's overarching purpose (the "what we do").
- **Values:** The guiding principles that define how the mission is carried out (the "why we do it").
- **Strategy:** The processes and activities that align the church's efforts (the "how we do it").
- **Measures:** Indicators of success (the "when we are successful").

This framework helps churches develop a focused vision, ensuring alignment between the church's activities and its biblical mission.

2. The Horizon Storyline: Planning Across Timeframes

The Horizon Storyline helps churches break down their vision into actionable plans over different timeframes:

- **Beyond-the-Horizon Vision:** A 5-20 year, bold, long-term dream inspired by God.
- **Background Vision:** A 3-year strategy for progress toward the long-term vision.
- **Midground Vision:** A 1-year operational plan that connects daily efforts to the bigger vision.
- **Foreground Vision:** A 90-day focus on immediate priorities and tasks.

This model ensures that churches have both a visionary dream and practical steps to achieve it.

3. The 12 Vision Templates: Inspiring Dreams

Mancini and Bird provide 12 templates that reflect different ways churches can live out their God-given mission. These templates include examples and case studies, helping leaders identify the most fitting dream for their context. (Details on these are expanded below.)

4. Clarity and Focus: Eliminating "Vision Drift"

The book emphasizes the importance of clarity and focus, warning against "vision drift"—when churches lose sight of their core purpose due to competing agendas or overcommitment to unnecessary programs.

5. Team Ownership and Congregational Buy-In

A vision will fail if it is not embraced by the leadership team and congregation. The authors emphasize the importance of building ownership at all levels through clear communication, collaboration, and consistency.

6. God-Sized Dreams: Vision as a Call to Faith

A compelling church vision is one that reflects God's mission for His people. It should be bold enough to require dependence on God, inspiring the church to trust Him for transformative results.

Key Principles for Churches

1. Focus on Mission:

Everything your church does must align with the mission to glorify God and make disciples.

2. Dream Big, Act Small:

Your vision should stretch the church while remaining grounded in actionable, short-term priorities.

3. Communicate Clearly and Consistently:

Vision is only effective if it is communicated in a way that inspires understanding and commitment.

4. Emphasize Alignment:

Align every ministry, program, and initiative with the church's vision. Cut or redirect anything that doesn't contribute.

5. Empower Leaders:

Equip and empower leaders to implement and communicate the vision in their specific areas of ministry.

6. Regularly Revisit and Refine the Vision:

Vision casting is not a one-time event. It requires ongoing evaluation and adjustment to remain relevant and faithful.

7. Measure What Matters:

Define clear metrics to evaluate spiritual growth, ministry effectiveness, and alignment with the vision.