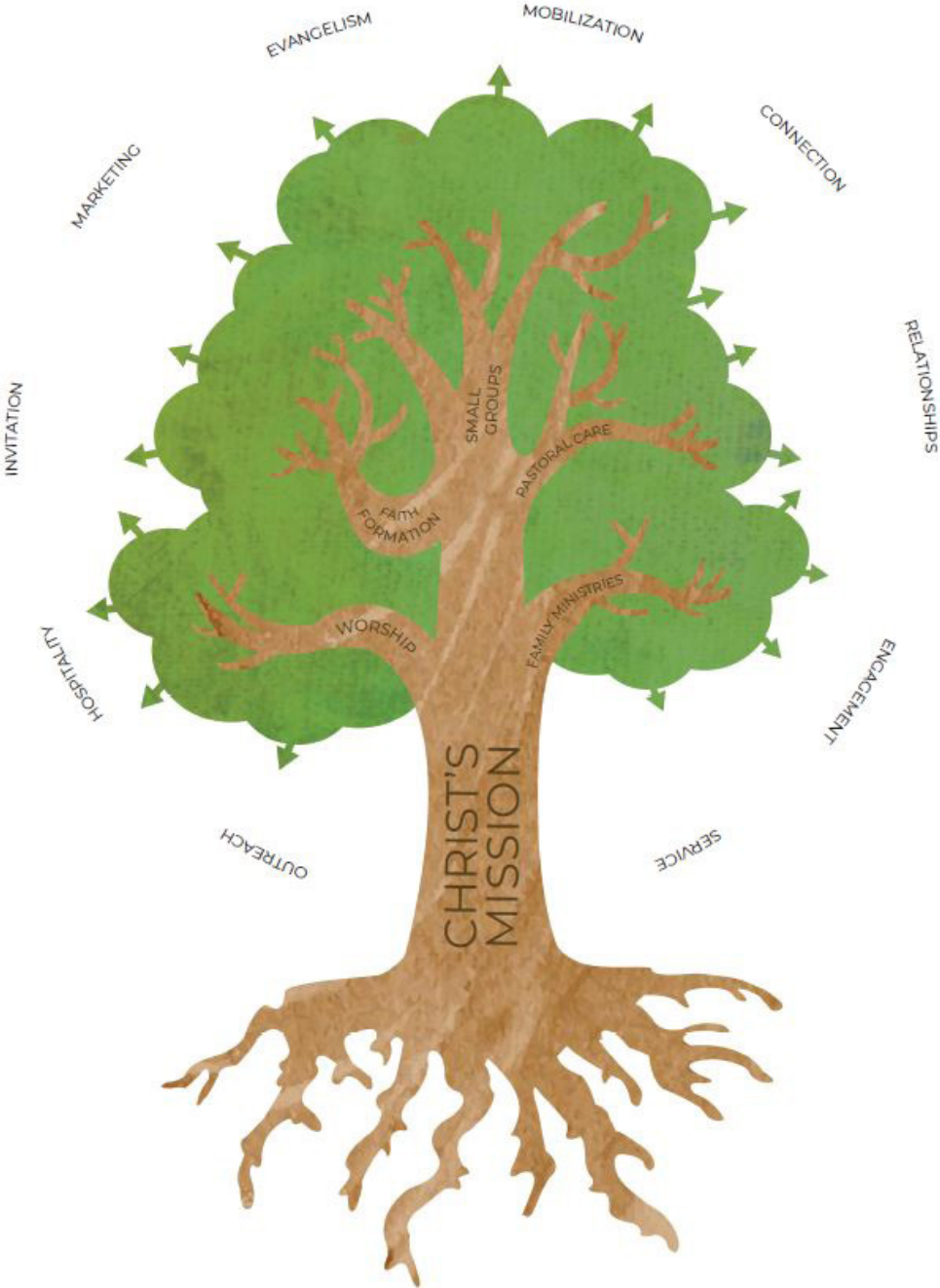


# The Great Report

*What it might look like if we tried to truly live out  
Christ's Great Commandment & Great Commission:*

To Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Self and Go Make Disciples



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# A Word from the Strategic Vision Team

Dear Second Family,

As we listened, prayed and worked on these hopes and plans for Second, we sought to remain open to whatever the Spirit of God might place in our path and wherever Wisdom might lead. We opened each gathering with prayer and took our meetings, readings, conversations and research seriously. We listened and sought to understand your experiences, questions, hopes and dreams. We looked for the work of the Spirit in the neighbors and neighborhoods that surround us. We engaged in open and honest dialogue with committees, congregation members and the Session.

We were not asked to produce a pallid, predictable report. We were empowered and encouraged to lovingly and honestly assess our ministries and structures and provide bold, thoughtful and challenging assessments and plans for the future Christ is calling us to.

## **A few things this report will do . . .**

- Reaffirm our identity and foundation as people loved, forgiven and transformed by God in Jesus Christ and committed to continuing the work of Christ in the world
- Establish a vision, core values and new mission statement for Second for the next 3-5 years
- Provide an analysis of current ministries, programs and structures
- Offer recommendations for adapting current ministries or attempting new ones, so that our mission, vision and core values are advanced across all of our ministries, including those that don't yet exist
- Offer recommendations for new leadership structures
- Recommend ways to utilize the new spaces we have created as a tool for sharing and connecting with those outside Second's family
- Reaffirm our commitment to meeting each person on their journey of faith and helping them grow as a disciple of Christ

## **A few things this report will not do . . .**

- Provide magic answers to the many challenges that have confronted Second and the larger church for decades
- Recommend that we leave our denomination; rather, this report will recommend that we should seek to lead our denomination
- Provide specific recommendations on staffing, stewardship or investment practices
- Provide a detailed action plan and timeline. We leave implementation to Session and the congregation over the next 3-5 years

We are thankful for the opportunity to provide both a pastoral and prophetic voice to this congregation we love. We thank you for your prayers and partnership. We are grateful for you and look forward to all that is to come.

With Hope and Courage in Christ,  
*Andrew Lee, Christie Nesbitt, Kristin Riegel, Paul Rock, Jeff Schroeder, Carol Taylor, Darcie Tramp, Susan Vann, Caroline Willis*

# Prophets of a Future Not Our Own

The Strategic Vision Team began each meeting with the following prayer<sup>1</sup>. This prayer challenged and comforted us. It filled us with hope and humility. It gave us courage and wisdom as we set about developing a new strategic vision for Second, a vision that seeks to participate faithfully in Christ's transforming work of love and reconciliation in the world. We hope this prayer will comfort and challenge you as you read this report and that you will join us in this work of being prophets of a future not our own.

*It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.  
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,  
it is even beyond our vision.*

*We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.*

*No statement says all that could be said.  
No prayer fully expresses our faith.  
No confession brings perfection.  
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.  
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.  
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.*

*This is what we are about.  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.  
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.*

*We may never see the end results,  
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.  
We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future not our own.*

# Strategic Vision Team's Process<sup>2</sup>

With the overwhelming success of 2017's \$2.6-million capital campaign and the approaching end of the Angel Gift, the Session and Deacons spent their January 2018 retreat celebrating the congregation's commitment to creating space for all people and discussing where Christ was calling us to go next. They settled on the idea of a new Strategic Vision Taskforce Team to discern how Christ was leading Second into the challenges and opportunities before us.

In February 2018, Session voted to establish a Strategic Vision Team for these purposes:

- To critically and prayerfully audit and review all ministries and structures of Second;
- To honestly and prayerfully analyze the demographic and cultural realities of our neighborhood and city to see where the Spirit of God is at work, noting the societal and denominational trends and if and how those should impact Second's future
- To determine if the mission and vision of Second, which has focused and guided our congregation for the last seven years, is still accurate and helpful ("A people being transformed by Christ to help transform the world")
- To make recommendations to the Session and congregation about how Second can continue to be a vital part of what the Spirit of Christ is doing in Kansas City and the world

The team of three men and six women was comprised of new and long-time members, students and retirees, people who had grown up in the church and some relatively new to Kansas City. Together, we developed an eight-month process of intentional listening, study, discernment and exploration.

Throughout this process, the team intentionally sought to stay open to the Spirit of Christ. We stepped outside of our comfort zones to follow Christ into an increasingly post-church, post-denominational world, seeking to listen, learn, and lean into the challenges and opportunities before us.

# Second's Unique History and Calling

By spring 1865, the Civil War had ended and the small City of Kansas was grappling with the shifting landscape. Recognizing the need to think and act in new ways, seven women and three men from First Presbyterian Church joined a preacher from the east, Timothy Hill, in creating a new anti-slavery church they called Second.

Moving quickly, this group began working diligently to advance God's mission in the young city. Dr. A.T. Norton, district secretary of home missions, encouraged Hill, writing, "This is a fast age. It is necessary to apply the spurs in order to keep in sight of God's providences." The ministries of this original group soon grew, attracting new servant leaders and expanding Second's impact throughout Kansas City. From its humble structure on 9th and Wyandotte, Second relocated to 13th Street, then to 15th and Broadway and finally in 1915 to its current location on 55th Street – the new frontier of the city.



Fortunately, throughout its existence, Second has continually been blessed with bright, gifted, imperfect, industrious, big-hearted members who have sought to embody God's love for our neighbors and world. Yet, if you plotted our narrative on a graph, you would not see a straight line of success after success. We have endured catastrophic loss and have perpetuated embarrassing and hurtful wrongs.

Despite these setbacks and missteps, God's faithfulness and Second's grit have made us the longest continuously worshipping congregation in the city. Over our history, we have embodied a frontier faith, planting numerous churches and living for purposes and needs beyond our own. From anti-slavery to women's rights, staying put in the midst of white flight to climate change, HIV/AIDS to economic and ethnic injustice, the people of Second have remembered this: **That the church doesn't have a mission, God's mission has a church.**

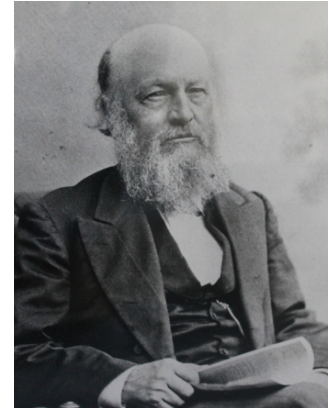
**And, we've always remembered the church is about Jesus,** God with us, the revolutionary rabbi from Nazareth who loves us and calls us to love one another and the world. Together we wrestle with what it means to follow and to be formed by, to love one another and to grow more in love with Jesus Christ.



Now 152 years later, as we lean into a future that is uncertain yet filled with hope, we

recall a story about our first pastor, Timothy Hill. Apparently, as he lay dying, gazing out the windows of his home on Quality Hill, undaunted at the wild frontier to the south and west, he said, “what a splendid prospect.”

Today we stand on another frontier. Many fear the the church is dying. But the church is not dying, it is being re-formed. While forms of worship and ministry change, God’s mission to heal and transform the world through Christ continues to creatively advance on the frontiers of our souls, cities and world.



While some congregations might be tempted to pull the reins toward pasture or lean on their oars and gaze at the past, it is not in Second’s DNA to do so. As we look back, we continue to march forward, into the exciting headwinds of our postmodern society. We apply the spurs as we seek to be agents of God’s mission. We now look upon this time, this city, this frontier, and say, “what a splendid prospect.”



# Why Second Matters

## Why a relevant, engaged, impactful church with a clear identity and mission is important today

We live in a society in which views on climate change and professional football are as polarizing as politics and religion; nearly half of Americans report feeling sometimes or always alone<sup>3</sup>; and over 130 people every day die from opioid-related drug overdoses.<sup>4</sup> Today, African-Americans are incarcerated at more than five times the rate of whites<sup>5</sup> and anxiety and suicide rates among adolescents continue to rise.<sup>6</sup> In addition, many struggle to find a work-life balance, care for children and aging parents and be part of something bigger than themselves.

At Second, we do not have easy answers or quick fixes to the many problems facing our world today. What we do have is Jesus. And love. And one another. And a commitment to be part of Christ's reconciling and transformative work in the world.



We believe the need for a strong, loving, inclusive, empowering, forgiven and forgiving community that displays greatness through service, admits mistakes, invites respectful dialogue and works for reconciliation and mutual edification is more important than ever.

We know that fear grows where love is not boldly lived out. Hateful and divisive rhetoric become the vernacular when grace and hope go unproclaimed. Atrophy and regression become our direction when leaders don't provide clarity, vision or a way into a confusing future.

The Jesus we follow at Second, the gospel we proclaim, the religion we practice, the love we share, the community we demonstrate is deeply needed today. God is calling us to be servant leaders, the community of grace, love, justice and reconciliation we hope for in our world.

**Our church matters.**



# Core Values, Vision, & Mission

## Who We Are

As part of its process, the Strategic Vision Team interviewed Second members to learn about who we are as a congregation, what we value about Second, and our hopes and dreams for our church. Here's what we found:

We are a community of curious, inquisitive learners and action-oriented doers. We are young and old, single and married, gay and straight. Our collars are white and blue. We are Republicans, Democrats and independents. We are long-time residents of Kansas City, recent transplants and students who are here for only a few years. We are new to the Christian faith and long-time disciples of Christ.

We are a community who loves and cares for one another deeply. We deliver meals to people after they have had surgery. We ask each other how we are doing and take the time to listen to the answer. We love to laugh and share stories. We have fun together. We are there for one another when life is hard and there are no easy answers. We welcome and accept one another with love.

We are a community that takes scripture seriously, but not literally. We seek to listen to the Spirit of God who continues to speak through scripture and to our lives and relationships today. We encourage questions and learning. We value our children and youth and seek to learn with and from them. We like being challenged. We see faith as a journey. We are committed to growing as followers of Christ.

We are a community that intentionally names and celebrates diversity--political, theological, physical, emotional, racial/ethnic, sexual orientation and gender identity--as a gift from God. We seek to listen openly to people with whom we disagree. We value relationships with people of different faiths, racial/ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, economic classes and life experiences.

We are a community that lives our faith in our daily lives through actions big and small. We share our financial resources, time and spiritual gifts to support Christ's transforming work in the world. We believe faith calls us out into the world to feed the hungry, care for the sick, build relationships with our neighbors and work for justice, dignity and peace for all people. We follow Jesus and practice love in our homes, workplaces and schools.

## Core Values

Through congregational surveys and one-on-one interviews with almost 40 people, we listened and learned what people value most about their involvement at Second.

Five main themes emerged, which we used to develop a set of five core values for Second. These core values are:

### **Relationships**

We value deep and meaningful relationships with one another. Friendships, connections and a sense of community are important. We care well for one another. We value relationships with our neighbors, including those of different faith backgrounds, life experiences, racial/ethnic backgrounds, and ages. People know we are followers of Christ by the way we love others.

### **Openness and Inclusiveness**

We value being open to different ideas, perspectives and life experiences. We are open, welcome and affirming of people with different physical, mental and emotional abilities, sexual orientations and gender identities, racial/ethnic backgrounds and theological and political beliefs. Following the example of Jesus, we seek to welcome all people, letting them know they are loved and valued.

### **Faith in Action**

We value putting our faith into action by working alongside communities, locally, nationally, and internationally. We believe transformation happens in us and in the world when we build relationships and work with our neighbors. We feed the hungry, care for those who are sick and provide hospitality to groups who use our church building for community gatherings. We are involved in peacemaking and social justice movements. We value working with others to build a more just, loving world for all people because this is what our faith in Christ moves us to do.

### **Spiritual Growth**

We value learning and spiritual growth. We ask questions, include room for doubt and seek to grow in our relationship with Jesus and one another. Spiritual growth and faith formation happen through worship, classes and small groups as well as through putting our faith into action. We meet people wherever they are on their journey of faith and support them to take the next step.

### **Risk-taking**

We value risk-taking. When the living God nudges our collective conscience and we feel compelled to address injustice, admit a failure, or set out on a new adventure, we like to think we're a church that listens and responds. Second has a history of making bold moves and statements which challenged the accepted norms of the times. While such risks don't always result in "success," we value being a community that is not afraid to be re-formed by Christ and take risks to live the gospel in bold, relevant ways.

# Vision

The five emphases of our vision for Second come from the hopes and dreams that bubbled up from the congregation as the Strategic Visioning Team discerned how Christ is calling us to step outside comfort zones to love God, ourselves and our neighbors with greater intention. Our corporate hopes for Second provide the foundation for the vision we feel God has put before us for the next three to five years. Recommendations in this report are intended to help Second live into the five emphases of this vision.



## **Greater diversity**

We understand diversity as a gift from God, and we recognize that we are a predominantly white church; we have work to do. We commit to engaging in anti-racism work as a community, including re-evaluating our leadership structures, ministries and work so we can become a more just, inclusive and loving church that welcomes all people. We will intentionally seek to listen to, learn from and work alongside people with different life experiences, races/ethnicities, gifts and theological and political beliefs. We commit to affirming and supporting people of all gender identities and sexual orientations and mental, physical and behavioral abilities.



## **Greater engagement with the local community**

We commit to stepping outside of our church building to engage with our neighbors and the community with greater intention and frequency. We seek to be a church that is known for loving others, living their faith and being part of the social movements that are happening to make Kansas City a more just and loving community. We commit to serving alongside our neighbors through hands-on service efforts such as Be the Church Sunday, Harvesters, and Crosslines on a more regular basis. Rather than expecting people to come to us, we will go out and meet people where they are. We will get to know the names, stories, struggles and joys of our neighbors. We will adopt a posture of listening and learning. We will seek ways to serve and care for our neighbors in Kansas City, especially those within a two-mile radius of Second.

Our successful capital campaign established that we are committed to creating space for all people. We seek to be a congregation known for both extending Christ's love beyond our walls and welcoming all inside. We commit to using our building as a tool for mission and ministry by opening our doors and inviting people to use our space for classes, meetings and other programs and events that advance the good work God is doing in our community.



## **Growth in numbers**

One of the primary dreams people had for our church was growth. We experience personal growth, authentic relationships and transformative community at Second and want others to have the opportunity to experience

the Spirit of Christ and the gift of our community, too. As a church, we can no longer expect to grow by simply assuming people will come to church after they have kids or when they move into the neighborhood. We must be willing to step out of our doors to meet people where they are. We commit to doing things and making changes that will help us grow and actively inviting people to experience the Spirit of Christ in and through Second.



### **Nurturing Relationships**

We are committed to nurturing real, authentic relationships and transformative community in our congregation. We will create more opportunities for people to get to know one another, share meals, tell stories, pray and worship together. We will offer more small groups and opportunities for people to connect and build deep relationships. We commit to faithfully accompanying one another through the seasons of life, sharing in one another's joys and sadness, sorrows and successes.



### **Spiritual Growth**

We commit to creating opportunities for people to learn, ask questions, express doubts and grow in their faith. Recognizing that faith is a journey, we will create opportunities that support, challenge, and encourage people in different seasons and stages of life and faith. We will offer classes, workshops, Bible studies and small groups that offer people opportunities to learn, ask questions, engage with scripture, pray, and put their faith into action individually and as part of a community. We commit to nurturing the faith, questions and gifts of our children and youth.

# Mission Statement

“A people being transformed by Christ to help transform the world” has served as Second’s mission statement for the last seven years. At the request of the Session, the Strategic Vision Team took a fresh look at this statement. After much prayer, discernment and conversation, we felt a new mission statement was needed to express more fully why Second exists and to help us live into a renewed vision for Second, which draws upon our core values, strengths and hopes.

This Mission Statement draws on the Great Commission, in which Jesus calls us to go and baptize and make disciples of all people, and the Great Commandment, which Jesus said summed up the law and the prophets: Love God and love your neighbor as you love yourself.

## **New Mission Statement**


*We exist to love God, ourselves and others  
—whoever, however and wherever they are—  
with a love that transforms us all.*






***We do this by . . .***

- Working alongside others in our city to build a more loving, just community
- Inviting people to find purpose and connection through sharing our own stories and God’s story
- Allowing people to question and empowering people to take risks
- Encouraging spiritual growth through learning, intentional action, and reflection
- Being a community that names and celebrates the gifts of diversity






# Executive Summary of Recommendations

The following is an executive summary of some of the recommendations that are shared in greater detail in this report. Each recommendation is intended to help Second live into its vision and embody its core values.






Leadership and Structures				
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS		Launch 2 New Worship Communities (like The Open Table)		
		Encourage pastors and program staff members to spend 10% of their time outside of Second		
		Overhaul Committee Structure		
		Rename “Westminster” and “Witherspoon”		
		Provide a Living Wage (\$15 or more) to all Second Staff		
 <b>Diversity</b>	 <b>Engagement with Local Community</b>	 <b>Numeric Growth</b>	 <b>Relationships</b>	 <b>Spiritual Growth</b>
Hire Persons of Color Into Staff Leadership Positions	Open a “Second Cafe” Host Front Porch Concerts  Rent Workspace and Meeting Space to Social Service Nonprofits	Launch 2 New Worship Communities	Open a Trolley Trail Stop for Water and Bike Maintenance	Share Second Teaching Content and Materials on a Wide Variety of Online Locations

Faith Formation				
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS		Change Sunday School Format and Schedule		
		Launch a Podcast or Video Series		
		Develop and Offer Foundational Theology Classes		
 <b>Diversity</b>	 <b>Engagement with Local Community</b>	 <b>Numeric Growth</b>	 <b>Relationships</b>	 <b>Spiritual Growth</b>
Invite presenters, speakers, and teachers to present to children, youth and adults across all programs	Develop Partnership and Support of Local Middle and High Schools	Launch a Podcast or Video Series	Collaborate closely with KCIFYA	Develop and Offer Foundational Theology Classes





## Outreach and Mobilization

<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		Develop and Operate a Social Enterprise Out of Second		
		Offer Be the Church Once a Quarter		
		Redesign or Eliminate Worship Service Bulletin		
 <b>Diversity</b>	 <b>Engagement with Local Community</b>	 <b>Numeric Growth</b>	 <b>Relationships</b>	 <b>Spiritual Growth</b>
Invite Diverse Array of Speakers and Presenters 6 Times a Year for Worship Services and Classes	Establish 7 Long-Term Local Social Service Mission Partnerships  Develop Social Justice Leadership Cohort  Be the Church Quarterly  Develop and Launch Social Enterprise	Redesign Second's Website  Redesign Second's Bulletin  Improve West Entrance Signage	Offer Annual Young Adult / Adult Mission or Service Trip Experiences	Develop and Offer Progressive Evangelism Training






## Hospitality and Engagement

<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		Develop "Connector" Team for Worship Services		
		Launch Year-Round Small Group Program		
 <b>Diversity</b>	 <b>Engagement with Local Community</b>	 <b>Numeric Growth</b>	 <b>Relationships</b>	 <b>Spiritual Growth</b>
Diversity in Decor, Exhibits and Advertisements	Welcome Packet for Groups Using/Renting Second's Space	Develop "Connector" Team	Launch Year-Round Small Group Program	

## Deacons and Pastoral Care

<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		Small Groups at Assisted Living / Retirement Communities		
		Launch a Rideshare Program		
 <b>Diversity</b>	 <b>Engagement with Local Community</b>	 <b>Numeric Growth</b>	 <b>Relationships</b>	 <b>Spiritual Growth</b>
	Small Groups at Assisted Living Facility Communities	Assign New Members to Service Teams or Task Forces	Develop a Social Media Pastoral Care Protocol	Develop "Care" Training

# Worship

<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		Specialize Sunday Services: “Traditional” and “Casual”		
		Change Chapel and Sanctuary Seating and Layouts		
		Change Worship and Education Hour Times		
		Update Tower Entrance and Lobby		
 <b>Diversity</b>	 <b>Engagement with Local Community</b>	 <b>Numeric Growth</b>	 <b>Relationships</b>	 <b>Spiritual Growth</b>
Incorporate Ethnic and Multicultural Music Styles, Specials, and Musicians	Offer Worship Opportunities Outside Sunday Morning	Offer Worship Opportunities Outside Sunday Morning	Promote Interaction in New Spaces	Promote Interfaith Dinners and Events



# Understanding the context in which we do ministry today

## Deep Societal Trends<sup>7</sup>

The following are not societal trends that we can ignore or nuisances we should seek to fix. These are gravitational shifts that the church must acknowledge, respond to and accommodate if we are to advance Christ's mission in the world.

### *The Digital Revolution*

However we feel about it, the digital revolution has reshaped much of our daily lives. People share life, stories, pictures and advice through phones and screens, and have immediate access to more facts and figures than ever before. Technology offers significant avenues for reshaping the way pastors lead, teachers teach and students learn. Yet at the same time, as virtual relations increase, their drawbacks become apparent. Although social media can serve as a surrogate for embodied relationships, relating through a screen also leaves many of us feeling strangely disconnected even as we grow more digitally connected. Any strategy churches develop must take into account the ways the digital revolution has changed basic patterns of remembering, perceiving, connecting and living daily life -- for good and for ill.

### *Multiethnicity and Missions*

In our globalized age, people from diverse backgrounds and cultures now interact with greater frequency and fluidity. This shift has generated new questions and issues at the intersection of ethnicity, church and society.

No American institution that has been primarily identified as White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) can ignore the rising influence of our multi-ethnic society. From linguistic and cultural considerations to issues of minority representation in leadership, the shift from a homogenous notion of church has created a new set of challenges and opportunities. Churches that invite, welcome and embrace diversity benefit greatly from the perspectives and voices of those who have long been on the margins, as our nation becomes a majority minority population that more closely resembles the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of the kingdom of God.

Ethnic diversity has also reshaped how we think about "mission work." For decades, the portrait of Christian missions has involved groups of white Western Christians traveling to "underdeveloped" nations to provide education, construction and medical services. Due to power shifts and a general ecclesial decline in the West, mission today looks quite different. As

the global Christian majority has shifted to the East and Global South, Korean Christians are sending missionaries to China and African missionaries are traveling to the U.S. and Western Europe. American churches are experiencing the fresh impact of the Spirit through immigrant communities' dynamic practices of worship and mission.

These significant shifts pose deep issues for the church and challenge -- in a good way -- conventional ways we have come to think about diversity and "mission."

### *Reconfiguring Institutional Denominations and Emerging Forms of Gathering*

For decades, a typical church would be described as a Methodist, Baptist or Presbyterian congregation of moderate size, dominated by one particular social or racial group, while adhering to denominational norms of doctrine, liturgy, polity and practice. In the past few decades, each of these descriptors has changed so significantly that a "typical American church" is unintelligible.

The decline of mainline Protestant church membership and cultural influence has opened the door for a range of new forms of worship and church, many of which differ sharply from the mainline model. Megachurches, driven by talented orators and musicians leading worship bands, are gathering members by the thousands and planting satellite campuses across the country. At many satellites (like United Methodist Church of the Resurrection campuses and Village Presbyterian's Antioch campus) the sermon is often delivered by the lead pastor through video. Most of these megachurches are evangelical and non-denominational.

On the other end of the spectrum, some young Christians have moved into intentional communities to live out their faith and in solidarity with people who have historically been marginalized. These Christ followers resist the church-growth metrics of megachurches. Their influence has grown significantly in recent years.

Finally, societal frustration with institutions has led to more and more people defining themselves as "spiritual but not religious." They have given up looking for a traditional church<sup>8</sup> and instead find ways to cultivate and nurture their faith individually or through community groups, such as book and running clubs, and non-overtly religious practices like yoga and meditation.

In our politically charged and polarized world, the terms "conservative," "liberal," "traditional" and "progressive" are more indicative of people's loyalties than "Methodist," "Presbyterian" or "Roman Catholic." The future of denominations is not clear; what is clear is that the old structures are deteriorating and changing dramatically. Institutions that have depended on

denominational loyalty for resources are having to reinvent their power structures and relationships as new movements create new, flatter and more nimble models of collaboration and leadership.

### *Economic Stress and Philanthropic Trends*

The combination of declining membership, rising health care and pension costs and outdated Christian institutions has resulted in tremendous economic stress on churches, especially those that have relied on having a professional, full-time, paid staff.

Furthermore, there have been significant shifts in the habits of philanthropists and regular “givers.” Rather than viewing the local church as the body through which people give to those in need, many now give directly to non-profits and expect high-impact programs oriented toward outcomes and the development of revenue streams that guarantee sustainability.

The most vibrant Christian institutions are revisiting their basic economic models, developing new partnerships and networks to broaden the scale and scope of their activities and impact and exploring new sources of revenue. The potential for experimentation and innovation to create sustainable economic development is great, but risk and anxiety are readily obvious. It is often more tempting to try to keep the old ship from sinking than to develop strategies to ensure we don't miss the new boat (or mountain path) that offers long-term life.

### *Shifting Lifestyles and Vocations*

Most churchgoers struggle to balance the demands of career, family and church life. Traditionally, commitment to the church has taken the shape of ushering, singing, teaching Sunday school or serving on a committee. Today, more and more people are seeking more personal spiritual fulfillment through the integration of faith, civic responsibilities, family, career and daily life. In response, the church must resemble less an organization that people come to and join, and more a community where one can belong, plug in and serve alongside others involved in transforming the world. In light of this, clergy must serve more as enablers and empowerers of laity rather than leaders of liturgy. And more of the church's imagination for ministry will come from lay people who are learning to integrate their faith into every aspect of their lives.

This should reinvigorate the importance of discipleship, Christian education and small groups for our youngest to our oldest as they grow in their knowledge and ability to practice their faith in the arts, education, business, community activism and many other settings.

## *The Lure of Cities*

In 1950, only 30 percent of the world's population lived in cities. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, by 2050, almost 70 percent will.<sup>9</sup> This development presents a mixed bag of opportunities and challenges for the church.

In cities, physical proximity brings talented and creative people together to collaborate, cultural diversity opens up new avenues for exploration and mutual growth and sharing resources forces people to experiment with creative alternatives to traditional solutions. Bigger cities also challenge and increase the need for effective social justice programs. McCormick Seminary professor Wayne Meeks entitled his book on early Christianity "The First Urban Christians," to signify that Christianity was, in its origins, very much a movement that grew in cities. The 21st century will be a test of the extent to which churches can once again capture the imagination of new generations of urbanites.

## *Challenging Trends in Membership and New Churches*

Over the past two decades, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s membership has dropped from 2.63 million in 1996 to 1.48 million in 2016 – a decline of 43 percent. In 2017, the PC(USA) lost 147 congregations, including 45 that were dismissed to other, more conservative denominations, primarily a response to the PC(USA)'s decision to ordain gay and lesbian ministers and perform same-sex marriages. Other substantial losses came as small congregations, unable to financially sustain themselves, closed their doors. That trend will likely continue and accelerate in the years to come.

Another challenge for our denomination is a lack of racial diversity. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than half of Americans under 18 will be part of a minority race or ethnic group by 2020. While our nation's diversity continues to grow, Presbyterians as a whole remain over 90 percent white, while Second's membership is roughly 97% white.

## *In Conclusion*

The more we understand and attend to deep trends such as these, the more vibrant and innovative our congregation will become. All of this presents a massive challenge and a crucial opportunity for Second to take a lead in advancing a gracious, creative and expansive expression of the gospel. Rather than wishing the future would be different than it likely will be, we are called to innovate and practice our traditions in ways that offer life and faithful witness to the God who continues to make all things new.

## How We Respond to These Trends

In response to the trends above, there has been a drumbeat of dire predictions for the church in America, and denominations like ours in particular. While there is no denying the steady decline in membership, attendance and prominence on the national landscape, the interpretation of such trends is where we distinguish ourselves and find hope and renewed purpose.

Rather than assume our church is on a trajectory that will lead to death, we fully believe what J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the PC(USA), said at the 2018 General Assembly in St. Louis, that although we are declining in many respects, we are not dying; rather, we are re-forming; and reforming sometimes feels a bit like dying.

Reforming, as we learned from our recent study and commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, is hard and painful work. It takes many, many years and requires a litany of tactical and transformational changes to give the Spirit room to evolve and advance a new way of being and doing church. Reformation is also exciting and affords us the opportunity to reassess and lay to rest ministries and ways of doing things that are not producing fruit. It reminds us to celebrate the unique values and characteristics of our tradition and congregation that, renewed and reapplied, will serve us well as we navigate uncharted territory in the years ahead.

However, not all problems are the same. And applying the wrong response or solution to something we see as a problem can often exacerbate or extend our frustrations.

### *Tame Problems*

Tame problems are ones we have experienced before and we can apply solutions or fixes that have worked previously. We draw on tradition and past information to find and implement solutions to achieve success. A flat tire or employees who are underperforming because they don't have the right experience both fall on the spectrum of tame problems.

### *Gravity Problems*

Gravity problems are not actually problems, they are a reality. Gravity can make falling painful or walking up a hill exhausting, but gravity is not a problem, it's a reality. Increasing multiculturalism, reliance on smart technology, the rise of people moving to cities are all simply facts and realities of today. While they may be different or challenging, we cannot solve them. They just are. The problem comes when we view these things as problems and spend time and energy complaining or trying to solve them rather than accepting them (and even celebrating them) as the conditions into which God has placed us to be Christ's church.

## *Wicked Problems (aka Adaptive Challenges)*

Wicked problems, also known as adaptive challenges, are problems for which we do not know the solution or the answers are always changing. They are either so new or so nuanced that we learn to solve them in the process of trying to understand and address them. In solving Wicked problems, mistakes should be welcomed as part of the learning and discovery process.

Many congregations have sought to address the gravitational “problems” or the wicked, adaptive challenges of societal change and demographic trends with tame, tactical solutions. As a result, most emerge tired, frustrated and even more anxious. New gravitational realities and wicked problems require changes of the heart and mind, the transformation of long-standing habits and deeply held assumptions and values. Wicked challenges are messy.

While we recommend a few tactical solutions in this report, we also point out gravitational realities we must accept, and present disruptive, creative attempts to solve the wicked challenges that a progressive, traditional, urban church like ours faces as we move further into the 21st century. Accordingly, we expect that some of our recommendations will seem confusing or unnecessary, and when implemented, will not immediately succeed. But the Spirit will teach and guide and create new things through us as we try, fail, succeed and remain supportive of each other and in communion with our Creator.

# Findings & Recommendations

## Leadership & Structures

### *Church Planting, Governance, and Building*

Second is gifted with a congregation of creative, talented and forward-looking leaders who dedicate their time, finances and passions to helping Christ's mission expand and thrive. The following recommendations are intended to foster greater creativity, collaboration and growth as well as more meaningful partnerships within and beyond our congregation.

## Nurturing New Expressions of Church

### Current State

Since the middle of the 20th century, the body primarily responsible for planting new churches (or new church developments) in our denomination has been the presbytery. Historically, Presbytery leaders would determine where a new church should be started, draw from a new church fund and tap into a denominational mission agency money to raise a few million dollars. They would hire and fund a professional Presbyterian pastor and eventually construct a church building. The presbytery would then support the new congregation until it became a fully "chartered" church. For the past 100 years, almost all new Presbyterian churches (and other denominations) were planted further and further away from city centers in growing suburbs.



However, before it was presbytery's job, congregations were primarily the initiators and supporters of new church plants. For the first half of our congregation's life, Second was the most prolific church planting congregation in the Kansas City area. Beginning in 1882, Second helped launch Third Presbyterian Church (West Bottoms), Fourth Presbyterian (1882, 1747 Bellevue), Fifth Presbyterian (1883, 12th and Brooklyn), Grandview Park (1889, KCK), Linwood (1890), Covenant (1903), Immanuel (1907), 1st Welsh, Hill Memorial, Mellier Place/Roanoke, Prospect Avenue, Shadyside/Trinity Grace, Van Brunt and Marlborough/Paseo Presbyterian Church.

In the past 25 years, as funds have diminished, the presbytery's ability to provide leadership, funding and support for new church plants has been greatly diminished. Currently, the Church Planting and Revitalization Committee of Heartland Presbytery has an annual budget of \$20,000 for planting new churches.

Understanding denominational and membership trends, as well as trends of people moving back to urban centers, Second's Session made the decision in 2013 to allocate roughly \$75,000 a year of its \$1,000,000 Angel Gift to fund a new expression of worship. Eventually, The Open Table (TOT) was born. After some initial success, Paul Rock and Nick Pickrell reached out to leaders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s 1001 New Worshipping Communities (NWC) initiative and submitted a grant request. After a \$7,000 grant was awarded, Heartland Presbytery responded with \$8,000 to support the hiring of an assistant curator.

In the past two years, Session, Heartland and 1001 have continued to support The Open Table with grants. In 2017, Duke Divinity School awarded TOT a \$50,000 grant and this past summer our denomination placed two 1001 residents at Second to work with and be mentored by TOT's leadership team with the hope that they will launch two new worshipping communities in late 2019. Finally, earlier this fall, the Synod of Mid-America awarded TOT a \$30,000 grant to further their work of advancing and supporting an active social gospel rooted in spiritual practices.



## Societal Parallels & Learnings

The trends we are seeing in New Worshipping Communities launched around the country are quite heartening. Whereas the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) continues to decline in membership and many local churches rely on Presbyterian transfers or transplants for growth, New Worshipping Communities are connecting and resonating with people who did not grow up Presbyterian. These communities are also younger and more racially/ethnically diverse.

- 78% of New Worshipping Community participants were not attending a PC(USA) congregation before participating in a NWC
- 68% of NWC participants are under the age of 45
- 53% of NWC participants are people of color
- 46% of NWC leaders did not grow up Presbyterian

The success of The Open Table has been an echo of other gatherings and initiatives Second has launched or supported in the past 50 years, including the Agape Fellowship, which met at Second for many years; the Hope Care Center, the first 24-hour skilled nursing facility west of the Mississippi for people suffering from HIV and AIDS; and Covenant Presbyterian Church's Community Health and Wellness Center.

Given all of the above, it is our recommendation that Second continue to celebrate, support, and allocate resources to planting and supporting new expressions of church to advance our mission and vision. We feel strongly that we should continue to build on our legacy and strengths as an established, metropolitan congregation



that takes risks to initiate, incubate, and support new types of worship and reconciling communities that advance a powerful, gracious, and much needed expression of God's love for the world today.

## Recommendations

- **Support The Open Table** | Continue to encourage, support, and house The Open Table, providing administrative, staffing, and building resources
- **Develop New Professional and Lay Leaders** | Continue the process of actively seeking out, supporting, and developing leaders, in concert with Heartland Presbytery, other non-profits, and 1001 New Worshipping Communities
- **Launch Two New Worshipping Communities by 2020** | Launch two more new worshipping communities or expressions of church by 2020
- **Increase Staff Diversity** | Seek to hire people of color into key leadership positions

## Committee Structure

### Current State

Second currently has fourteen committees and subcommittees plus the Session and Board of Deacons. Session members and Deacons are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the congregation. Nominees are required to be members of Second and are asked to serve a three-year term.

Session members serve on one or two committees, plus the Session, and participate in the life of the church by regularly attending worship, giving of their financial resources and time and helping to lead congregational events, programs and ministries. Committees generally meet once per month, meaning Session members are asked to attend two to three different meetings per month (1-2 committee meetings plus the Session meeting) along with helping with various events and programs.

The expectation of attending multiple meetings per month, serving a three-year term and providing leadership at various events is a big ask. It can serve as a barrier to people who are working full-time, have families or have other caregiving or personal commitments. The membership requirement excludes people who are actively involved in the congregation and have leadership capabilities and passions, but who have not formally joined the church.



The Strategic Vision Team reached out to Second's committees along with various classes, small groups and ministry programs and asked them to articulate their mission, reflect on their ministry and evaluate their effectiveness. The Strategic Vision Team also looked at different committee and leadership structures that have been utilized by other churches. It is from these conversations and research that we recommend Second consider restructuring its committee structure to make it more collaborative, accessible and meaningful to those who are involved.

## Societal Parallels & Learnings

In many non-profit organizations, an intentional move has been made to deconstruct more formal, corporate models of governance. One way this is done has been done is by reducing the number of standing committees and asking a smaller executive board to focus on overall issues of mission and strategy. In turn, project or seasonally focused teams are empowered to create and lead initiatives and programs in line with the mission. Teams operate in a more informal and collaborative style and relieve the board from the stress of micromanaging projects. These teams stay in conversation with the board, sharing updates, engaging in collaborative evaluation and seeking input about upcoming events and initiatives. The board provides continual feedback, support and direction to these teams. This model helps the organization address strategic questions and make practical adaptations as ministries evolve.<sup>10</sup>

## Recommendations

To create more collaborative, meaningful and accessible leadership opportunities for people at Second, as well as to create more intentional ministries that support Second's mission and vision, we recommend Second experiment with a hybrid model, which utilizes both standing committees and a new Seasonal Leadership Team, for a three-year trial basis. We also recommend the Session, along with all committees, teams, and task forces, intentionally utilize technology (i.e. Zoom, video conferencing, texting, live chats, Skype, etc.) to enable people who are traveling or unable to be physically present at a meeting to participate. Intentional planning should be undertaken to ensure that people have the opportunity and technological tools necessary to fully participate in meetings.

This hybrid model incorporates aspects of Second's current committee structure while allowing for more collaboration, creativity and meaningful involvement for the congregation. This approach will also:

- Allow for shorter-term volunteer commitments
- Decrease burnout for volunteers
- Encourage the use of technology (video conferencing - Zoom, texting, email, Skype, live chats) to enable people to participate remotely
- Intentionally utilize scripture, prayer, discussion and discernment as part of the planning process

- Increase collaboration between Second’s various ministries and more cohesiveness around our shared mission, vision and core values
- Help people to develop closer working relationships while learning and leading together
- Allow for actively engaged members to be more involved in leadership
- Create more meaningful and hands-on leadership opportunities for people at Second

### **Standing Committees**

Second would maintain a Session and the following standing committees whose purpose, mission and functions would remain similar to what they are now. In addition, Second would also maintain a Board of Deacons, which would report to the Session as it currently does.

- Buildings and Grounds Committee
  - The Memorial Gifts Committee would combine with Building and Grounds and have its expenditures be approved by the Finance Committee
- Finance Committee
- Worship Committee
- The Worship chairperson would also serve on the Seasonal Leadership Team
- Stewardship 2.0 Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Mission Giving Committee
  - The Mission Giving Committee would oversee the Mission Endowment allocation, facilitate the mission partner grant application process and organize special offerings and seasonal donation drives (i.e. back to school supplies). Some members of the Mission Giving Committee would sit on the Seasonal Leadership Team and plan hands-on mission and service events each season. The Mission Giving Committee would organize Be the Church Sunday and provide support to Crosslines and Harvesters volunteers.

Session would also add the following committee:

- Hospitality and Engagement Committee (formerly the Outreach and Hospitality Committee)
  - The Hospitality and Engagement Committee’s mission would be to offer hospitality, follow up with visitors and work with the Seasonal Leadership Team to create “easy-entry” and “hand-off” events for community members and new visitors. In addition, this committee would be responsible for:
    - Training, recruiting, and supporting greeters and ushers for Sunday worship services and special events
    - Organizing First Look events and New Member Breakfasts
    - Following up with visitors and guests and inviting them to upcoming events
    - Collaborating with the Board of Deacons to reach out to guests, new members, and long-time members on a regular basis
    - Updating and maintaining Second’s CCB database with accurate contact information
    - Working closely with the Seasonal Leadership Team to develop “easy-entry”

events for visitors along with “hand-off” events, where visitors would be invited to become more involved at Second

- Working closely with the Director of Communications on visitor outreach and engagement, especially marketing
- Updating spaces and signage at Second to make them more welcoming, intuitive, and friendly to visitors

In addition to these standing committees, the Session would form a Seasonal Leadership Team that would develop, coordinate and implement different ministries, classes and events throughout the year in conjunction with smaller teams of collaborators (the terms “Seasonal Leadership Team” and “collaborators” are described in greater detail on the following page). This Seasonal Leadership Team would combine the work of the current Family Ministries, Faith Development, Congregational Life, and Social Justice and Peacemaking committees. We recognize that fewer standing committees and a collective Seasonal Leadership Team would be a radical shift in the governance structure at Second and how ministries are currently carried out; this could also, over time, result in a smaller Session. To help ease into this change, ***we suggest that for 2019***, the Family Ministries, Faith Development, Congregational Life and Social Justice and Peacemaking committees be continued and that the chairs of these committees, along with pastors and program staff, serve as the first Seasonal Leadership Team members.

### **Seasonal Leadership Team (SLT)**

The purpose of the Seasonal Leadership Team (SLT) would be to develop, plan, organize and implement ministry initiatives, programs, classes and gatherings for a given year (August to June). The SLT would consist of Session members (the exact number to be determined) plus the pastors and program staff. The Seasonal Leadership Team would enlist “collaborators” -- small teams of people -- to work with them on specific projects, classes and ministry initiatives.

### **How SLT Would Operate**

The SLT would meet in late May/early June for an initial planning retreat. Prior to the retreat, Second’s pastors would send out scripture passages, music, art, media, and/or articles to help the team begin thinking about a possible theme for the year ahead.

The “year” would be defined as August to May/June (depending on Pentecost) and would be broken into four seasons:

1. Autumn (late August to November)
2. Advent and Christmas (December)
3. Lent (February/March to Easter)
4. Easter to Pentecost (March/April to May/June)

At the initial planning retreat in late May/early June, the SLT would engage in prayer,

reflection, discussion and discernment. Together, they would develop a unifying theme for the year ahead. In addition to establishing a unifying theme for the year, the SLT would begin planning specific events for the Autumn, Advent and Christmas seasons. In October, the team would meet for another retreat to plan specific events and programs for the seasons of Lent, Easter and Pentecost.

For example, if the SLT developed “Love Your Neighbor” as the theme for the year, the team would brainstorm and plan ways for the congregation to learn about and explore it through classes, events, worship services, small groups, and service opportunities throughout the year. The SLT would be responsible for developing the following types of programs, events and ministries:

- Adult Faith Formation classes, workshops and events
- Community events for people to gather together, share stories, have fun and build community
- Small groups
- Mission, social justice and service opportunities in the local community
- Classes, workshops and gatherings for children, youth and families
- Sermon series
- Partnerships with local community organizations, neighborhoods, churches, and communities of faith

At the initial planning retreat in late May/June and the second planning retreat in October, SLT members would be invited to serve as the organizer (leaders) for different ministry areas, programs and events. Each team member would be asked to invite a few other people (“collaborators”) to work with them. After each retreat, these leaders would set up meetings with their team of collaborators to work on further developing, organizing and implementing programs and events. The length of commitment for collaborators would depend on the project, program or initiative they were being asked to help with. Staff members would lend logistical support to the leaders and teams of collaborators.

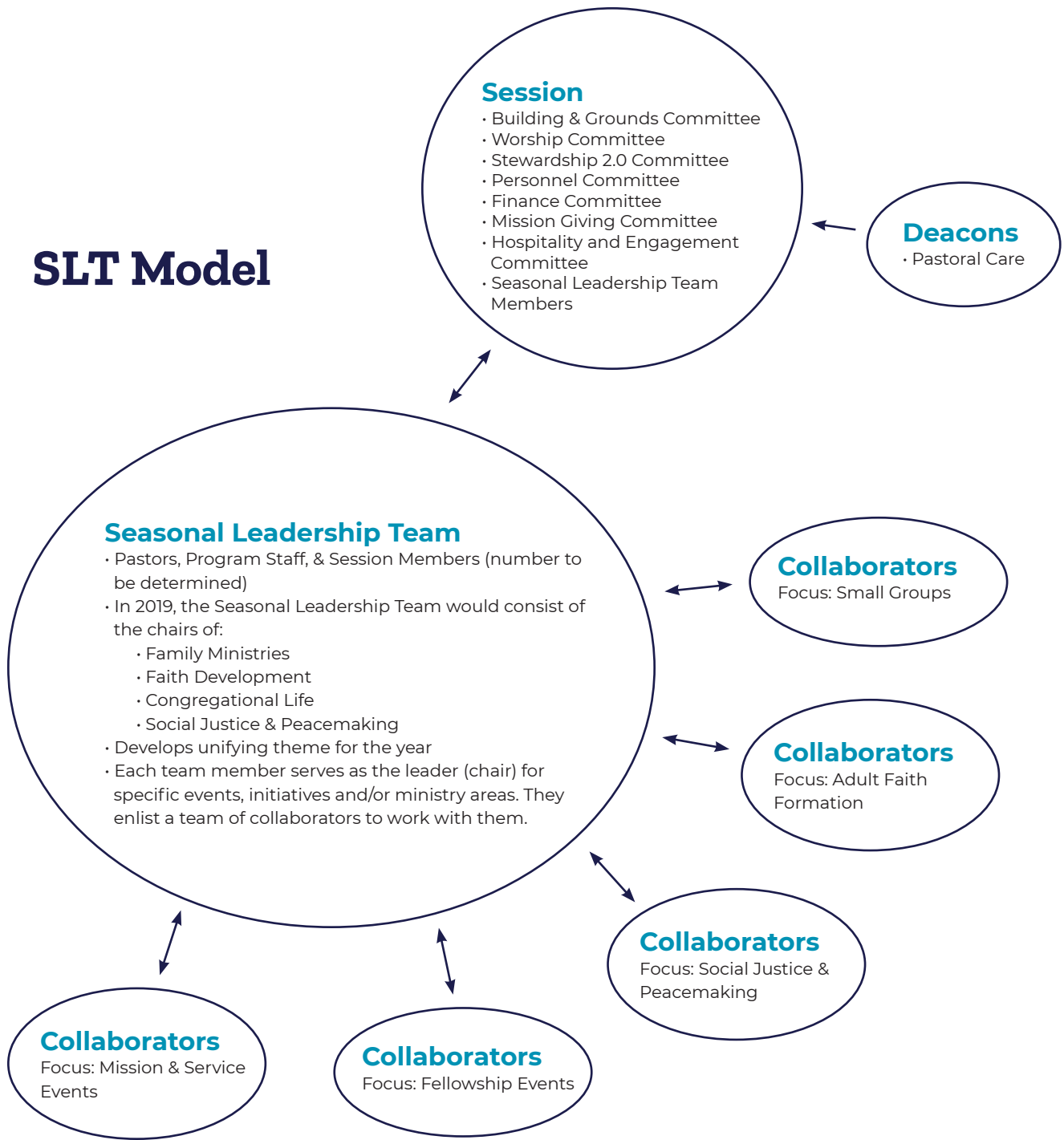
Throughout the fall, the SLT would meet on a regular basis to share updates, engage in additional planning, receive input and evaluate different programs and events. SLT members would also attend Session meetings to share updates and receive input from the larger board.

In October, the SLT would meet to brainstorm and plan for Lent, Easter and Pentecost. Similar to the fall, these organizers (leaders) would be asked to invite a few other people (“collaborators”) to work with them on specific ministry areas, projects, classes and programs throughout the spring. The SLT would continue to meet regularly and check in with the Session.



See the next page for the SLT Diagram

# SLT Model



Each Seasonal Leadership Team member would work with a team of “collaborators” on specific events, classes, initiatives. For each season, the Seasonal Leadership Team would be responsible for working with collaborators to create programs and ministries, such as:

- Adult Faith Formation classes, workshops, and events
- Gatherings for people to come together, share stories, have fun, and build community at Second
- Small groups
- Mission, social justice, and service opportunities in the local community
- Classes, workshops, and gatherings for children, youth, and families

“Collaboration Team” – a team, led by a Seasonal Leadership Team member, made up of Second members and supported by staff member. Length of commitment would vary depending on the project.

# Building (Creating Space for All People)

## Current State

Second's building is in a fortuitous location and for its age and size, in very good shape. The building is used nearly every day of the year. Our calendar logged 594 separate events in the building this year; this included church events and events held by 23 outside groups which brought thousands of visitors (non-church members) into the building.



## Parallel Learnings

Four years ago, one main focus of Second's Next Steps Report was our building. The congregation shared that parts of our building did not reflect the warmth and welcome of who we are at Second. Next Steps recommended we thoroughly review our space, focusing on aligning our intentions for radical, intentional hospitality with our built environment and identify ways our space might meet the needs of our neighborhood.



As we look back at the aspirational recommendations of Next Steps, it's exciting to see how far we've come. Next Steps asked: What If . . . ?

- Calvin Center could welcome everyone, even those with physical limitations?
- Our entrances were welcoming from the parking lot and street?
- People could enter the church during the day without knowing the door combination?
- People entering the church were greeted by a warm face, not a narrow, dark foyer?
- Members with physical limitations could be liturgists or choir members?
- What if we created a partnership with Kansas City Parks and Recreation to co-use our facility?



*Sneary Architectural Illustration*

## Recommendations

### • **Community Partnerships and Events** |

In order to think intentionally and regularly about the use of our space as a tool for connecting with our neighborhood, empower our Outreach and Mobilization Team to make a quarterly report to session on events and partnerships that utilize our new building in this way. A number of recommendations can be found in their section of this report.

- **Simplify Room Names** | Rename Witherspoon Room *The Community Room* and Westminster, *Pillar Hall* (or something else). The existing names, while historic and Presbyterian, are confusing and unhelpful for visitors and members alike.
- **Community Leaders** | Use the new Community Room to host an ongoing series of conversations with business and community leaders.
- **Host Community Conversations** | Host conversations on issues affecting our community and people of different faith traditions, backgrounds, and life experiences to engage in dialogue.
- **Support ECLC** | Continue supporting ECLC and provide ways for it to grow, perhaps with a more creative use of our choir and robing rooms on the second floor. Continue to develop and increase opportunities for crossover activities where ECLC families are invited to Second events.
- **Second Cafe** | Host a non-profit, pay-what-you-can cafe in The Community Room in collaboration with Thelma's Kitchen on 31st and Troost.
- **Trolley Trail Water & Bike Maintenance Stop** | Host a water and basic bike mechanic stop on our front porch staffed by volunteers during peak hours in the summer months with signs welcoming people off the Trolley Trail.
- **Front Porch Concert** | Host a front porch concert and invite the neighborhood. Have drinks, snacks and chairs set up in the parking lot. Invite people inside to explore our new facilities and have other musicians playing in the sanctuary and Calvin Center.
- **New Uses for Sermons, Lectures, Classes** | Take note of our best lectures/classes offered throughout the year in Worship, TOT or our Sunday Speaker Series and repackage and market them to the community as a special presentation on Wednesday or Sunday night in our new Community Room or, weather permitting, on the front porch.
- **New Space for The Open Table** | Move The Open Table's meal and opening gathering to The Community Room and the worship/conversation half of the evening to the chapel.
- **New Chapel Seating** | Replace the pews in the chapel with chairs, so the space can become more flexible and used for different events.
- **More Offerings in Calvin Center** | Make use of our stage and kitchen in Calvin Center to host bands or theater groups from UMKC, the Conservatory or the neighborhood
- **More Life-Skill Offerings (like La Causerie)** | Partner with La Causerie, the language school that rents our building, and create other opportunities for learning that builds bridges and fosters communication and understanding. These could include life-skill (i.e. car mechanics, bike repair, etc.), cooking, sign language and art classes.
- **More Hosting of Non-Profit Events In House** | Second currently has a relationship with many local non-profit organizations. Second could house non-profit organizations' offices, events and activities and grow to be known as a Christian center for peace and interfaith understanding in Kansas City.
- **Expand Relationship with Cultivate KC** | We currently host Cultivate KC's annual meeting which draws 350 people. In the spring and fall, we could partner



with them to use our front porch for a produce and herb exchange and market.

- **Rent Space for Family Events** | Using tools like the Nextdoor app, begin advertising our new Community Room as a space where families can hold events (birthday parties, etc.) for a fee.

### **The Overall Look and Feel of our Building**

As we continue to open up spaces and remove walls so people can gather and form community more easily, we recommend that Second both own and celebrate its gothic, historic expression and continue to incorporate styles that will connect us with a young, growing urban population. A few people from Project Antioch noted the aesthetic of the new Whole Foods: “Physically it’s open and welcoming, hip and modern and the music and colorful seating and exposed ceiling made it feel expansive and like you’re a part of something big and healthy and modern and interesting. It’s similar in that it’s in our same neighborhood but clientele was refreshingly diverse. These same people live and walk and work right around Second. Probably similar people would come to Second if we were more welcoming and open and colorful.”

## **Faith Formation**

### ***Faith Development, Family Ministries***

Faith formation is a process of spiritual growth and personal transformation that takes place in and as part of a larger community. Second is committed to forming and equipping people to be disciples of Christ. Meeting people on their faith journey and creating spaces for people to learn, ask questions, and deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and others has been and continues to be a central commitment of Second. From the youngest child to the most seasoned adult, Second creates opportunities for people of all ages to learn and grow.

### **Current State**

Second currently offers Sunday School classes, bible studies, interfaith gatherings, an Advent devotional and short-term classes and small groups for adults. For children and youth, Second offers Sunday School classes, weekly Sunday night gatherings (Youth Nights), Second Tweens, Godly Play, Worship Alive, mission trips and retreats. In addition, Second hosts special workshops, speakers and events, including Family Camp and Second Kids Camp. Second has invested heavily in these ministries and generations of individuals and families have benefitted from these offerings.

Although attendance in Lenten C3 small groups, Youth Night and mission trips has grown over the past few years,



Sunday School attendance for children and adults has remained flat. Creating more flexible and abundant opportunities for individuals and families to engage with scripture, learn spiritual practices, engage in meaningful conversation and build intergenerational relationships is essential.

## Societal Parallels & Learnings

Today “one-fifth of the U.S. public – and a third of adults under 30 – are religiously unaffiliated.”<sup>11</sup> However, many of the 46 million unaffiliated adults still identify as religious or spiritual. For many people, church is no longer seen as the primary place to experience God, grow spiritually or learn about ethical living. Rather, spiritual development is often undertaken as an individual pursuit (through books and podcasts) and community is found through yoga studios, hiking clubs and social justice organizations.

Similarly, Sunday mornings are no longer reserved for church. Many families find themselves faced with the reality that softball tournaments, soccer practices and other extracurricular activities are regularly scheduled on Sundays. In addition, many families are led by a single parent or two working parents, students are taking more rigorous coursework than ever before and school teams and activities fill families’ weeks, making it appealing to some to sleep in on Sundays so they can regroup and recharge as a family.

Rather than faith formation being something that happens on Sunday mornings in classrooms at the church, opportunities for people to learn, connect and grow in their faith should be offered throughout the week and in a variety of settings. Partnering with other churches, organizations and communities of faith; hosting small groups in local coffee shops and restaurants, and meeting in places that are easy to reach, public and less intimidating than a church may create less of a barrier for people who are interested in spirituality but who may be reluctant or intimidated to enter a church building. Similarly, Second can no longer assume that everyone has grown up in the church or is familiar with the Bible. It should consider offering more introductory or 101 classes for people who are new to or interested in topics such as Christian prayer, the Bible, worship, Christian spiritual practices, and ethics. Similarly, offering short-term classes, workshops and retreats as well as hybrid offerings of programs that meet online and in-person may also help to engage people who consider themselves “spiritual but not religious.”

Both individuals and families need opportunities to learn about and serve God that are flexible and abundant. Second should not give up on or judge individuals or families who are not always able to be at church at 9 a.m. on Sundays but rather find new ways of connecting with and supporting them.

## Recommendations

### ***Children & Families***

- **Change Sunday School Format and Schedule** | Change the structure/format

of Sunday School to be more reflective of families' schedules, needs and commitments on Sunday mornings. Provide opportunities for families to be in and out of church in 90 minutes if necessary. (See "Worship Services" in Appendix)

- **Neighborhood Children's Events** | Offer 4-6 children's events throughout the year that are geared towards engaging the larger neighborhood.
- **Build Relationships with Other Churches** | Partner twice a year with neighboring churches and communities of faith to give children opportunities to learn from and build relationships with children of different socioeconomic, theological, religious and racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- **Parenting Classes** | Offer one parenting class per semester and offer opportunities for parents to connect with others during and after the class.
- **Infant and Toddler Spirituality** | Develop and launch early Christian education program for infants and toddlers. Explore programs that use special classroom settings, songs, sounds, stories, finger play and toys to teach about God's love.
- **Stewardship Training for Children and Teens** | Talk about the practice of tithing with children, youth, and parents. Involve children and youth in deciding how their offerings will be used each year.
- **Parents' Group** | Start a small group or offer a class for parents that helps them to understand how to better nurture Christian spirituality within themselves and their children.
- **Christian Faith Practices at Home** | Offer classes, workshops, and events to teach parents how to model their faith and facilitate religious learning at home.

### ***Youth & Families***

- **Youth Group Partnerships** | Partner with a youth group from another church and meet once a quarter to make and share a meal together.
- **Sex Education** | Offer sexuality education for children, youth and adults annually.
- **Partner with Kansas City Interfaith Youth Alliance** | Deepen relationship with Kansas City Interfaith Youth Alliance to help youth learn about other faith traditions, engage with youth from different faith backgrounds, and serve the local community. Partner together on a minimum of three initiatives a year.

### ***Adults***

- **Utilize Technology** | Intentionally utilize technology to offer classes, workshops and events that focus on bible study, Christian theology, ethics, and spiritual disciplines throughout the week.
- **Social Media** | Use social media to connect with people throughout the week. For example:
  - Send a daily prayer reminder text to encourage people to stop and take a moment to pray. Offer prayer ideas (i.e. "pray for a family member." "Pray for a co-worker who annoys you." "Pray for a teacher.").
  - Offer email devotions on a regular basis.
- **Launch a Podcast or Video Series** | Create a podcast or use Facebook Live to offer short reflections on scripture, Christian spiritual practices, and ethics.

- **Respond to Current Events** | Utilize current events as topics for workshops, classes, and series. Explore these topics through a lens of Christian theology and ethics.
- **Integrate PW Circles into Faith Formation** | Integrate the Presbyterian Women's Horizons Circles into faith formation at Second.
- **More Experiential Learning** | Offer workshops, retreats, and trips that incorporate action and reflection as well as hands-on servant leadership and community building (fellowship).
- **Collaborative Training with Multicultural Partners** | Partner with other churches and communities of faith to co-host events, bible studies, and other programs.
- **More Diversity in Presenters** | Intentionally invite speakers of different theological, racial/ethnic, and religious backgrounds to speak and lead at Second.
- **Offer Foundational Theology Classes** | Offer Bible 101, Church 101, Theology 101 classes on a regular basis. Some of these classes could take place outside of the church building.
- **Space for "Spiritual But Not Religious" Individuals** | Intentionally create programming that invites people who are "spiritual but not religious" to explore different Christian spiritual practices and beliefs.
- **More Small Groups** | Commit resources and staff and/or lay leadership time to ensuring that thriving small groups/ministries exist for people of all ages. These include:
  - 20s/30s/40s - A core group already exists here, but needs further support. This could include a dedicated staff person and identifying 2-4 volunteer leaders/cheerleaders within the congregation. A consistent time for this age group should also be set with regular meeting times for education, faith discussions, dinners, or social gatherings. The group also should further define its purpose: how can it contribute to advancing Second's mission?
  - Second Friends - This group relies largely on volunteer leadership and works well with this model. Second needs to publicize this group's activities and let visitors and members know this group is open to everyone.

## Outreach & Mobilization

### *Mission, Social Justice & Peacemaking, Outreach*

Second connects with and supports the well-being of our community through Be the Church Sunday, volunteering at Harvesters and Crosslines, participating in social movements, like the Poor People's Campaign, and partnering with other churches and organizations, including Covenant Presbyterian Church, Grandview Park Presbyterian Church, ReStart, and Amethyst Place. We step outside the doors of church -- and our comfort zones -- to meet people where they are by volunteering at Cherith Brook and handing out water during the Hopkins Skip & Run 5K. Second builds relationships with our neighbors through hosting community events such as Art on Oak, Second Kids Camp, an Easter Egg Hunt and Journey to Bethlehem. As a church, we

seek to love people -- whoever, however, wherever they are -- because we believe this love transforms us all.

## Current State

Our current “outreach and mobilization” efforts are best summarized in four categories:

1. Mission Partnerships
2. Advocacy and Social Movements
3. Service and Mobilization
4. Invitation and Connection



### ***Mission Partnerships***

When Second’s Mission Committee was formed in 2013, it inherited a grant process whereby over 40 agencies were being awarded small amounts of funding out of the church’s mission budget and endowment. Through the leadership of Keith Anderson and the inaugural Mission Committee, that list was evaluated and culled; this allowed for Second to focus its efforts and develop more meaningful relationships with a handful of organizations.

Second has nurtured a wide network of local and international partnerships. These partnerships provide opportunities for our members to learn about and work alongside the community on addressing a variety of issues. In 2013, Second committed to focusing its mission efforts on four main priorities:

- Ending cycles of poverty
- Supporting the protection of vulnerable women and children
- Education initiatives, especially for children
- Supporting social service enterprises and new visions for addressing needs in KC and the world

Today, Second works with “Mission Partners,” organizations whose work focuses on one of these four priorities. Second’s relationships with other churches, non-profit organizations and social service agencies around the KC metro area have grown and deepened through hands-on mission efforts such as Be the Church Sunday and regular visits and sustained communication throughout the year.

### ***Advocacy and Social Movements***

Second’s Social Justice and Peacemaking (SJP) ministry has existed separate from its mission efforts for a variety of reasons. SJP provides an important role at Second by keeping the congregation informed about local, national, and international social justice issues. It also provide opportunities for people to get involved in movements for social change. Over the past three years, SJP has focused addressing a variety of issues including racism, access to affordable housing and climate change.

## Service and Mobilization

Be the Church Sunday is Second's largest service mobilization effort with almost 200 people participating annually. Since its inception in 2014, Be the Church Sunday has grown to include multiple churches and hundreds of people throughout Kansas City.

In addition, Second regularly serves our neighbors and cares for those in need. Each month, 30-45 members volunteer at Harvesters and Cross Lines, helping to feed people who are experiencing hunger and food insecurity.

Youth mission trips have grown in participation every year for the last four years. Second members continue to travel to Guatemala and Pakistan to build relationships with our international partners.

## Invitation and Connection

With the diverse makeup of the area surrounding Second and the multitude of organizations, classes and programs that exist nearby, Second faces a challenge in helping the larger community know who we are, why we exist, and what we do. Following the recommendations of the God's Plan for Second (GPS) report, Second worked to re-introduce ourselves to the neighborhood through various methods including postcards, a block party, yard signs, banners, an improved website, videos and a greater presence on social media. While these efforts helped to increase our visibility in the community, we have found that our marketing is most effective when it is targeted and focuses on a few key messages.

One of our most successful campaigns in 2018 involved the promotion of our sermon series on mental health issues. In response to our boosted Facebook ads, a number of community members attended worship, contacted our pastors or watched the sermons online. Our external audience also



accessed a list of mental health resources that we made available on our website. It's clear that Second's message resonated, and we helped to meet an important spiritual need. The takeaway is that our external messaging should meet people where they are, but not leave them there. Our messaging should include a clear call to action.

The importance of clear, succinct messaging was reaffirmed in summer 2018 when Rivet marketing agency performed a comprehensive audit of The Open Table's marketing and communications activity. Rivet made several communication recommendations. The following recommendations are applicable to Second as well.

- **Hierarchy of messaging** - Lead with what you are trying to accomplish (your why), followed by how you are doing it (events, etc.), and then the what of how you are set up and your values.
- **Keep Facebook post copy concise and impactful** - Focus on the core message/ hook and lead.

- **Develop gateway events and materials** - content and marketing materials should support a user pathway to engage more with the organization.
- **Make a strong push for email signup** - Ongoing email is a great way to keep people engaged and informed.

## Societal Changes & Learnings

For generations, the church has served as a gathering place for the community, a place to learn and grow in one's faith, and an agent of social change. The church has also historically been a primary recipient of charitable giving, which allowed it to build institutions like hospitals and schools. Historically, charitable giving was funneled through the church and churches then supported various feeding, housing, and healthcare programs.

Today's reality is far different. The church is no longer viewed as the primary channel for charitable giving. There are currently 1.5 million non-profits in the U.S. today. While the for-profit sector has grown by 2-3 percent since the mid-1990s, the non-profit sector has grown by 40 percent.<sup>12</sup> Because of their focus, not only are non-profits more adept at fundraising, direct marketing and networking, their services are far more expertly curated than social services offered by the local church.

Along with the trend in charitable-giving going directly to organizations and projects rather than the church, Second faces the reality that many people today would rather be directly involved in service and social change by engaging in advocacy, hands-on service, and interpersonal relationship building than by attending services and writing checks to a denomination. More people today want to live out their spirituality through volunteerism, being involved in movements for social change, engaging in personal growth through books, podcasts, blogs, etc., and/or by forming groups and community around shared causes, interests or social enterprises.<sup>13</sup>

Sharing the good news of Christ's transforming love is part of our call as Christians, but talking about our faith in a meaningful and authentic way remains a challenge for many of us. Today, evangelism has become a loaded term. As a result, even the most well-meaning Christians have a reluctance to share their faith or invite someone to church. That said, we believe many today are still searching for a purpose, community and a place where they can be a part of something bigger than themselves. We believe the Christ we follow here at Second and the way we seek to embody and live out Christ's love and hope is compelling, good news we need to share.

## Recommendations

### **Mission Partnerships**

- **Long-Term Local Partnerships** | Establish three to six mission partners and develop 3-5 year partnerships with them, which include extended funding for projects and initiatives that align with Second's mission priorities.

- **Deeper Local Partnership Relationships** | Deepen relationships with mission partners and increase visibility by:
  - Using the Call for Offering to sharing about these organizations and their work.
  - Facilitating regular opportunities for Second members to visit, learn from and volunteer with our Mission Partners (resulting in at least two visits to each Mission Partner a year).
  - Utilize materials and media provided by our mission partners to showcase stories of need and impact.
- **Review International Partnerships** | Review and assess international mission partnerships in Guatemala and Pakistan.
  - Develop a potential plan for financial support.
  - Plan and facilitate opportunities for Second members to travel, meet, learn from and work alongside our mission partners in Pakistan and Guatemala.
  - Change mission partnerships to be focused on more than financial giving.
- **Offer Multicultural Worship Opportunities** | Offer opportunities for Second members to worship, learn with and serve alongside people in different neighborhoods throughout Kansas City.

### ***Advocacy and Social Movements***

- **Long-Term Social Justice Partnerships** | Develop partnerships with local organizations and movements working for social justice and peacemaking in Kansas City; network with other churches and organizations.
- **Mobilize Congregation for Social Justice Events** | Attend public rallies, events and meetings to learn from, support and listen to the needs of our neighbors and demonstrate that we are partners in leaders in advancing God's loving kingdom in the world.
- **Host Social Justice Events at Second** | Volunteer to host at least six public meetings, town halls, rallies or similar gatherings each year, where the larger community can gather to learn, organize, share feedback and/or network with one another.
- **Environmental Impact Task Force** | Develop a task force to assess the environmental efficiencies of our building, educate the congregation about environmental issues and make recommendations to the Session on ways Second can reduce its environmental impact.
- **Anti-Racism Training Opportunities** | Offer regular anti-racism classes and trainings for Second members and the larger community.
- **Advocate and Build Partnerships** | Partner with local networks of faith leaders, churches and communities to advocate and work together on issues of racism, affordable housing and a living wage.
- **More Diversity in Guest Speakers Across All Programs** | Intentionally invite speakers, teachers and preachers of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, theological, ecumenical and sexual orientations to lead worship and teach classes.

### ***Service and Mobilization***

- **Be the Church Quarterly** | Make Be the Church a quarterly event, perhaps happening on evenings and Saturdays.



- **More Local Volunteer Opportunities** | Provide monthly opportunities for people, including youth and families, to meet, learn from and serve with our Mission Partners. Incorporate a time of learning, service and reflection into each event.
- **Support Youth Mission / Service Trips** | Provide continued financial assistance and material support for annual youth mission trips.
- **Young Adult / Adult Missions** | Offer Young Adult Service Trips, intergenerational and/or domestic and international service opportunities every other year
- **Develop and Launch Social Enterprise at Second** | Develop a social enterprise to address a need in the larger community (*Social Enterprise defined as: a revenue-generating business model that addresses or supports a humanitarian cause through its operation*).

### **Invitation and Connection**

- **More Social Media Marketing** | Devote more resources to boosted social media advertising and targeted marketing efforts. Direct fewer resources toward direct mail.
- **Evaluate Online Marketing** | Develop systems to evaluate online advertisements and their effectiveness. Utilize this data to improve online marketing.
- **External Audit of Second's Website Effectiveness** | Hire an advertising or consulting company to evaluate Second's website and offer recommendations.
- **Redesign Second's Website** | Redesign Second's website to make it more visitor friendly.
- **Redesign Second's Bulletin** | Redesign Second's bulletin to give it a more modern look and to make its content more accessible, especially to visitors.
- **More Marketing Materials** | Provide welcome brochures and information about the congregation and upcoming events throughout the church.
- **Progressive Evangelism Training** | Offer classes, workshops and trainings for people to learn about how to articulate and share their faith in authentic and meaningful ways.
- **Empower Congregation to Invite Guests** | Empower and encourage members to invite friends and neighbors to events, classes and worship.
- **More Swag** | Utilize vehicle stickers, new shirts and other accessories to brand Second in the community.
- **More Neighborhood Events** | Partner with local organizations, bands, schools and artists to host neighborhood events (i.e. Block Party, Easter Egg Hunt, lectures, recitals/concerts, game/trivia/theme nights, etc.).
- **Use New Front Porch** | Utilize our new front porch as a place to screen movies, hold potlucks or offer events and activities. Use these events to meet and get to know our neighbors.
- **Improve West Entrance Signage**

# Hospitality & Engagement

## *Hospitality, Congregational Life*

Earlier this year, Second's Outreach and Hospitality Committee launched a Secret Shopper program where people from the community came to worship and then filled out an anonymous survey about their experience. Multiple secret shoppers mentioned how friendly the congregation was, with one person noting that she was greeted by four different people before worship began. Second is a welcoming congregation that seeks to extend hospitality to everyone who enters our doors.

Although many people feel welcomed and cared for once they enter our doors, today less and less people are choosing to go to--or even looking for--a church. Today "one-fifth of the U.S. public – and a third of adults under 30 – are religiously unaffiliated."<sup>14</sup> A survey by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, conducted jointly with the PBS television program Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly, found that of unaffiliated Americans:

- *Two-thirds of them say they believe in God (68%)*
- *More than half say they often feel a deep connection with nature and the earth (58%)*
- *More than a third classify themselves as "spiritual" but not "religious" (37%)*
- *One-in-five (21%) say they pray every day<sup>15</sup>*

This suggests a significant shift in how Americans understand and practice spirituality.

Today, fewer and fewer people are connected to a faith community, many leave or transfer in a world that has become increasingly transient and many faithful, lifetime congregants are passing on. Second, like many churches in America, is not immune from the reality that the word "church" is a polarizing semantic carrying as much pain and baggage as it does hope and love in the world today.

If Second is to grow, we need to move beyond being a welcoming church to being one that actively shares our faith, intentionally invites people into the life and fabric of our community, and helps people to find their voice and role in helping to build communities of reconciliation, healing, and hope.



## Current State

Second has a number of hospitality and engagement processes in place as well as many dedicated people who serve as greeters, ushers and friendly faces on Sundays and at special events.

Second's Church Community Builder (CCB) database gives us the ability to input data and track a number of metrics, including attendance at worship, small groups and classes. It also has processes that allow staff members to track engagement and follow up with visitors and guests.

Second's current means of acquiring contact information from Sunday visitors and guests is the "Connection Card." E-mail is used almost exclusively as a means for following up. Each week, Second follows up with Sunday visitors who have left their contact information and invites them to come back to worship or join us at other upcoming events.

Every quarter, Second holds a First Look at Second class where visitors and guests can come to learn about Second, ask questions and meet with pastors and staff members. Guests and visitors are encouraged to join a class, small group, or attend an event to get to know others at Second and learn more about the community.

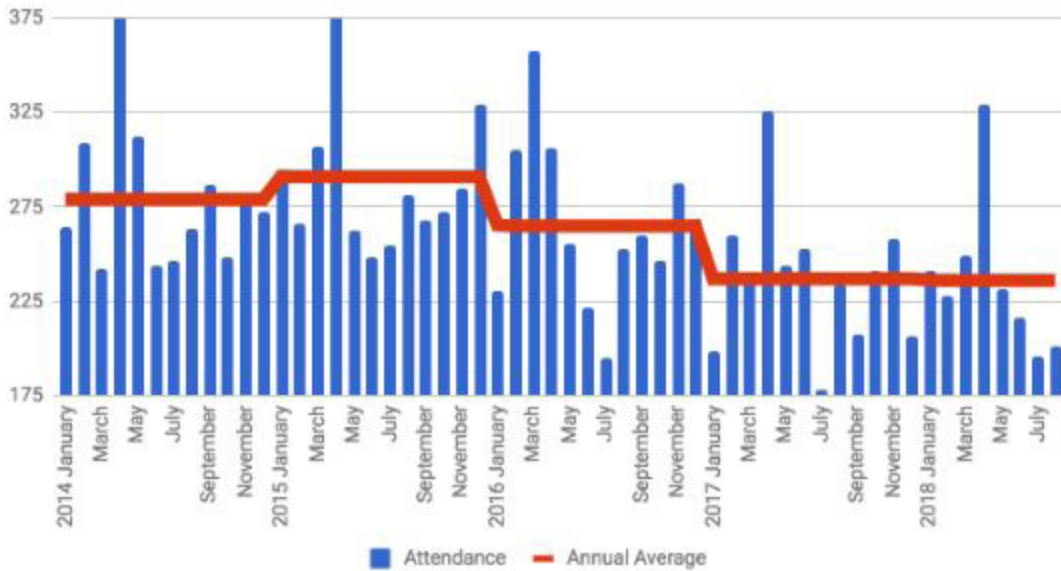
New member breakfasts are held three to four times a year. People who have attended First Look at Second and have been involved in the life of the church are formally made members at this breakfast which is attended by Session members and Deacons.



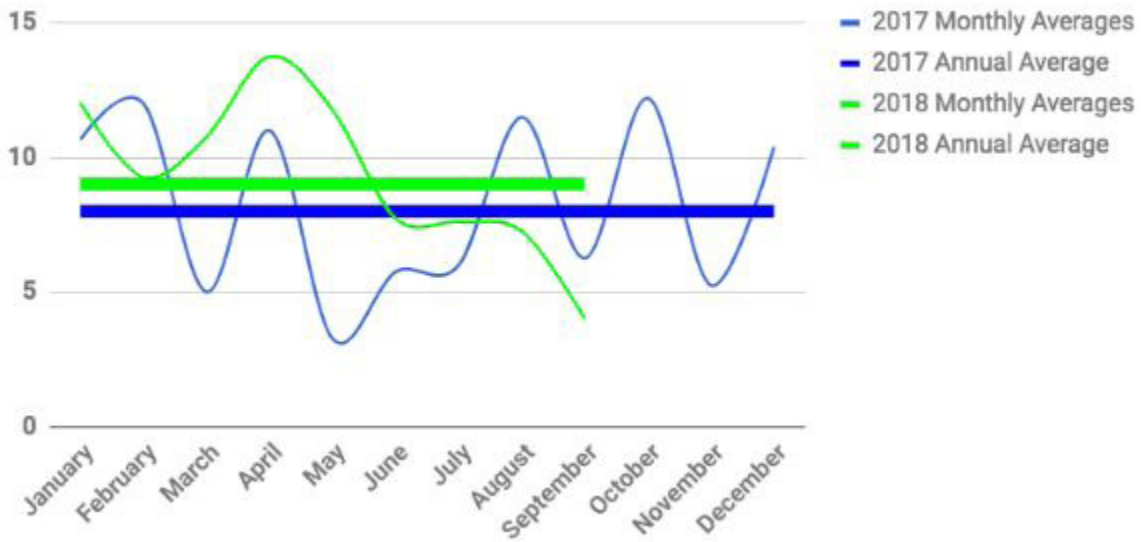
## Societal Changes & Learnings

Although Second's Sunday morning worship attendance has been static or slightly declining the last few years, Sunday morning worship is still the best attended event each week. On average, 10 visitors (first or second-time guests for 2018) attend Sunday services. While this is good news, that number is not enough for a church of Second's size to recover the normal losses from transfers or deaths. As shown in the data below, Second is not adding members at rate in which it is able to maintain its size or grow. In order to grow, Second, like many churches in America, has to make invitation, outreach, mobilization, and visitor engagement priorities.

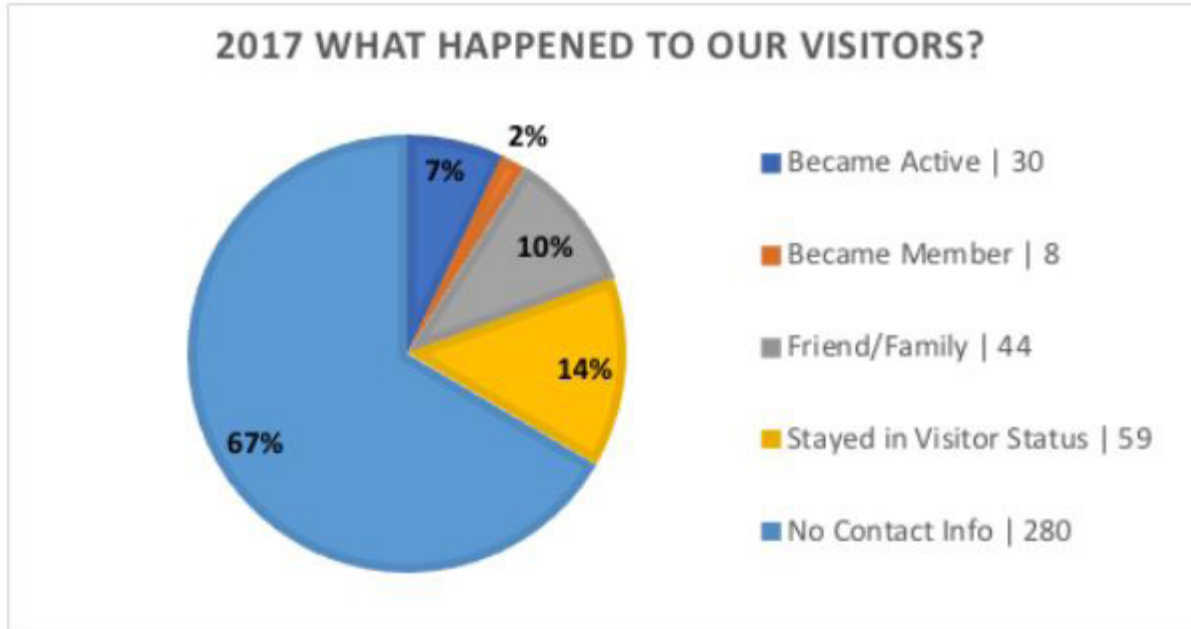
### Worship Attendance (8:15 and 10:15 a.m., January 2014 - July 2019)



### Visitors in Worship (2017, 2018)



## What Happened to Our Visitors? (2017)



## Attendance and Membership, 2013-2017

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Average
Average Weekly Attendance			301	283	266	
Average Weekly Visitors					9	
New Members	20	13	17	11	22	16.6
Confirmands	0	4	0	12	10	
Deaths/Transfers	20	15	28	8	16	17.4
Removals	30	5	27	35	28	
Births	4	4	8	2	6	4.8

## Recommendations

- **Develop “Connector” Team** | Organize a “Connector” team of people who will intentionally look for and welcome first time/second time guests each week. Their role will be to connect, introduce, gather contact information and (equipped with details of upcoming events and sermon themes) invite visitors to attend worship or an upcoming event that may be of interest to them.
- **Better Visitor Follow Up** | Increase intentionality of visitor follow up by adding phone calls from front-desk volunteers, Deacons or dedicated team of hospitality people. Build better visitor profiles in the church database from these interactions.
- **More Mail and Invitations to Visitors** | Begin to include handwritten cards, advertisements and invitations to visitors.
- **Welcome Packet for Groups Using / Renting Second’s Space** | Create a “welcome” card, packet or script for any group using our space to distribute to participants of any first or second-time gathering. Make sure invitations are visible, upcoming event advertisements are current and follow up information is provided.
- **Diversity in Decor, Exhibits, Advertisements** | Include quotes, photographs and artwork that reflect inclusion and diversity.
- **More Entry-Level Events for New Visitors** | Offer regular “low-threshold” events and groups for visitors and guests.
- **More Small Group Offerings** | Organize regular small groups for visitors, guests and new members to get to know and connect with other people.

# Deacons & Pastoral Care

## *Deacons, Pastoral Care*

Second’s Deacons and pastors, along with many individuals, care for our congregation through notes, phone calls, home visits, prayer, home communion and meal support during times of illness. In addition, the Deacons provide opportunities for people to find hope and experience healing through special worship services and Faith and Grief gatherings. Second nurtures relationships, cares for people and supports individuals and families through the joys and challenges of life.

## Current State

The Deacons’ ministry is one of care and compassion. Second’s Board of Deacons is made up of 20 Deacons, each of whom serves for three years and is responsible for helping to care for the congregation. Every person, who is actively involved at Second, is assigned a Deacon and receives ongoing pastoral care. Deacons and pastors care for church members through sending cards, providing meals to people in times of illness or transition, checking in, making hospital and home visits and providing home communion. In addition, the Deacons also provide leadership at monthly Faith

& Grief gatherings, host a Longest Night Worship Service in December, welcome new members at New Member Breakfasts and organize “Living with Grace, Dying with Dignity,” a series of classes on end-of-life issues.

## Societal Parallels & Learnings

Human connection, caring for others and feeling cared for are important for individuals’ well-being and the well-being of the larger community. However, a recent study of over 20,000 Americans found that “46% felt alone either sometimes or always”<sup>15</sup> and “only 53% have meaningful in-person social interactions, such as having an extended conversation with a friend or spending quality time with family, on a daily basis.”<sup>16</sup> In addition, many people experience the challenges of caregiving, mental and emotional health issues and the stress of balancing work, family and other commitments. Still others are dealing with illness, grief and the transition to new living situations.



In the congregational survey, people said that two of the things they value most about our church are the relationships and sense of community they experience here. The Deacons provide welcome, facilitate connections, foster community, and provide care, especially in times of illness. They help people to feel connected, well cared for, and less alone. This is important and necessary work, especially with folks who are living by themselves, unable to drive, not well-connected with other communities, and/or experiencing illness and transition.

Second can expand its pastoral care ministries by connecting with not only members of the church, but also guests and visitors. It could also offer community workshops on spiritual, physical and emotional well-being. Finding ways to nurture relationships, not only between Deacons and their flock members, but also among congregation members could help to deepen relationships and increase a sense of community as Second seeks to grow.

## Recommendations

- **Gatherings at Retirement/Assisted Living Facility Communities** | Organize fellowship gatherings for members who live at retirement/assisted living facilities.
- **Provide Rides to People Unable to Drive** | Provide rides to worship service and church events for members who are no longer able to drive.
- **Utilize Social Media for Pastoral Care** | Utilize social media to reach out to and care for members.

- **Home Communion** | Better publicize home communion in the bulletin.
- **Advertise Faith and Grief Luncheon on Funeral Bulletins** | Share Faith & Grief luncheon meeting times on funeral bulletins.
- **Grief Ministry & Support** | Send cards and grief resources to people 6-8 weeks after the death of a loved one. Reach out again on the one-year anniversary of a loved one's death.
- **Birthday Celebrations** | Gather birthday information from congregation members, so Deacons can send birthday cards and greetings.
- **Follow Up With Those Who Miss Worship** | Reach out to members who haven't attended worship or other church events in more than two months.
- **Better New Member Assimilation** | Reach out to and provide ongoing support to new members, including inviting them to upcoming events, small groups, etc.
- **Thematic Relationship of Discussed Topics with Community Events** | Plan special worship services in conjunction with other churches and community organizations (i.e. Longest Night Worship Service, Blessing of the Animals, Service of Healing & Hope).
- **Offer Workshops and Trainings for the Community** | Offer workshops and classes for the congregation and community on topics such as caregiving, mental and emotional health, grief, etc.
- **New Prayer List** | Create a digital prayer list or prayer notification, so congregation members can be reminded to stop and pray for members of the congregation.

# Worship

## Current State

While members of Second's are fairly unified in our vision and hopes for mission and ministry, one area in which we continue to see a divide is worship. This is not uncommon or surprising. Worship is very personal and intimate. How we connect with God and what we expect from worship varies greatly depending on taste, style, background, tradition, etc. Second has loving members who would be very happy if every service began with a reverent organ prelude, the procession of robed choir and clergy, with traditional prayers and sermon delivered from the pulpit. Second is also filled with many who appreciate a more casual style, don't read music and find hymns inaccessible--people who appreciate interactive sermons and songs more in line with their Spotify playlist. Then there are those who don't mind a mix of it all. Rather than focus on differences, it helps to back up, take a broader look and determine what God might want to do in and through this unique and blessed congregation.

### First, What is Worship?

Old Testament Professor and biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann points out that from a scriptural perspective, worship is an act of God's people that must be understood



and interpreted through historical, theological and cultural lenses. Throughout the Bible, Israel's and the early church's worship consisted of exuberant praise, honest complaint, statements of hope, confession of sin, attentiveness to neighbors, remembering God's goodness and declaring and imagining God's future. Obviously, there are countless styles and ways these biblical objectives can be reached through worship events, services, meals, etc.

Faced with many biblically and theologically legitimate options for "worship", we must ask, who is God longing for us to connect with through the worship we offer? Who are we trying to reach? To paraphrase Vera White, from the PC(USA)'s Mission Agency, how we imagine church and worship and how we do church and worship really depends on who it is we're trying to reach. Second's unique setting and history play into this determination.



### **Where We Worship**

One's first introduction to worship at Second takes place long before the call to worship or opening hymn. Our 100 year old, stone, gothic sanctuary makes an impression. Two massive oak doors open into a narthex with tile floors, arched doorways, low lighting and stained glass. Well dressed ushers greet people with a warm smile and cream bulletins with order of worship, helpful information and upcoming events. Our sanctuary soars up to wooden beams hung with traditional, liturgical banners and our stone walls are interrupted by beautiful stained glass windows. Red carpet covers the floor and red cushions cover wooden pews that face forward.

Our chapel is also nice but far smaller and not nearly as dramatic as the sanctuary. It has a more puritanical feel with white walls and no banners, but the space still feels formal with stained glass windows, red carpet and the pews with red cushions that face forward.

Second's church plant, The Open Table, gathers corporately in Westminster (Pillar Hall) and the Parlor every second and fourth Sunday at 6:30. While some members of Second attend TOT, its attendees are almost all new. TOT begins with a meal around tables and the feel, music and format is more informal, interactive and quite different than either of our Sunday morning services.

Finally, and very importantly, roughly 60 people per week view our service or sermons at home on their computers or listen to our sermon podcasts. And this number continues to slowly grow.<sup>18</sup>

### **How Sunday Morning Worship Works Currently**

Our pastors, with input from the music director, other staff and the Worship Committee, plan our two Sunday morning services. Both are traditional in order and style, with prelude and postlude, organ and piano accompaniment, hymns sung from a hymnal, a time of greeting, written prayers, a responsive call to worship, sermon, benediction, etc. In the past few years we have added a time to shake hands and connect, a time for silent prayer and a time of reflection after the sermon.

At 10:15 our choir sits up front, facing the congregation, leading hymns as well as performing an anthem. We have become more casual since the Rev. Paul Rock arrived, with less formal attire, occasional secular music and the use of audio/visual aids. Sermons are bold and challenging, and they invite engaged and critical thinking. Sermon topics relate to real life issues faced today. We are encouraged at times to talk back during the sermons and we all read Scripture from our own or pew Bibles. Communion has slowly moved from seated, with passing plates, to standing and coming forward (if possible) for intinction. We have a Celebration of the Young Church during the 10:15 hour before they leave for Worship Alive or Godly Play. Sunday school happens between the services from 9:00-10:00 a.m.

### **Music**

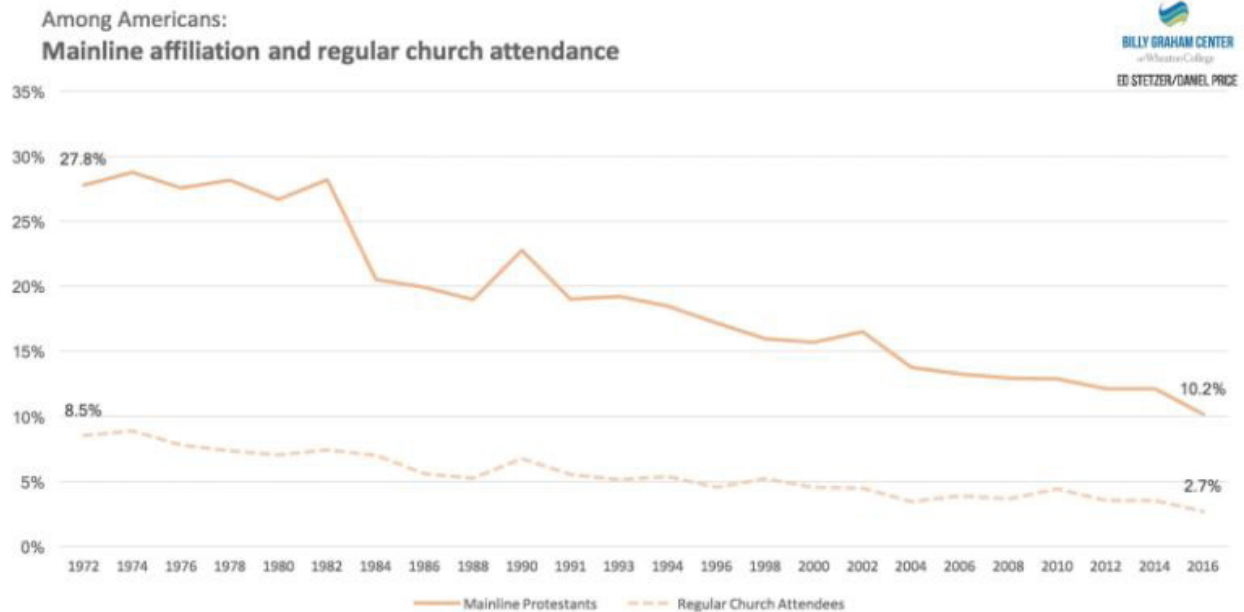
For the last 10 years, Second's worship has been supported by a volunteer pianist at 8:15, roughly 10-15 volunteer choir members at 10:15, four professional section leaders, a part time choir director and a part time organist/accompanist. All together, our music personnel costs \$60,000/year. Advent and Easter we employ extra singers and musicians. The additional cost for musicians on Easter is roughly \$1,700.

While our volunteer choir is filled with talented, faithful members who read music, sing well and enjoy their weekly rehearsals and regular anthems, our choir has, over the years, decreased in numbers and long-time choir members' voices have aged with time. Almost all volunteer voices are women's. While mostly singing traditional, sacred pieces, our music directors, section leaders and choir have been intentional about introducing new songs in our anthem or reflective slots. Roughly once every 4-6 weeks a guitar or drum or other instrument are used to accompany a more contemporary song.

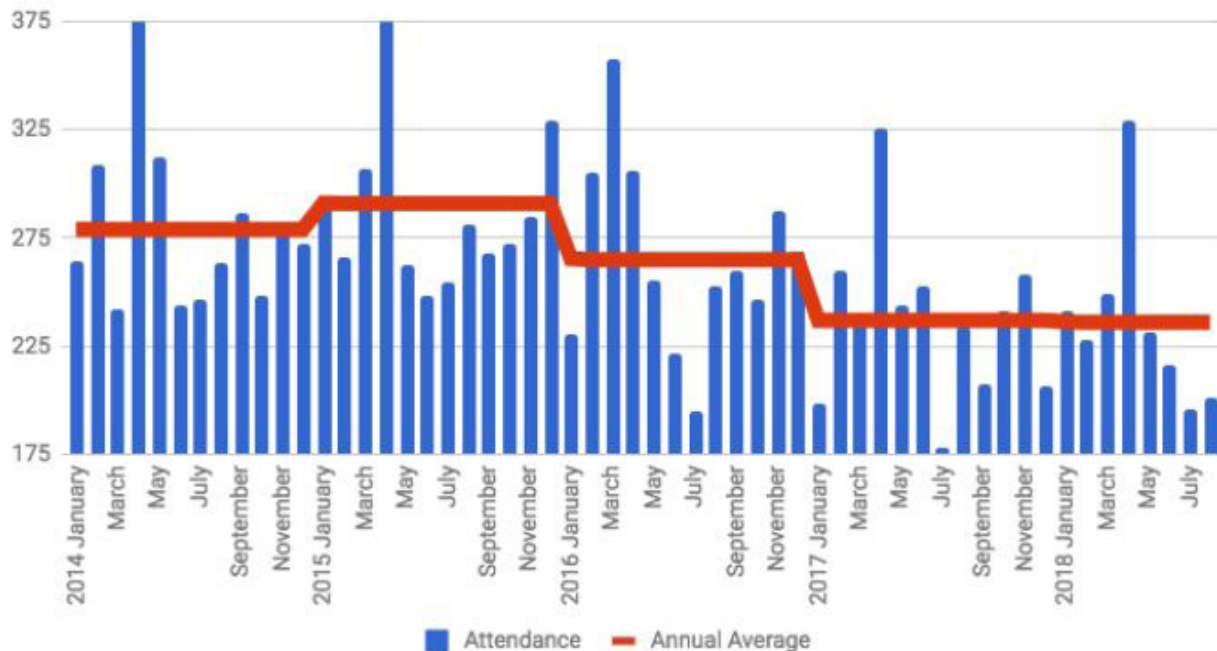
## **Societal Parallels & Learnings**

Much has already been said about the declining role of church in American society and declining trends in church membership and worship attendance across denominations.<sup>19</sup> Sunday morning church is now one of many excellent options (cultural, service, religious, social) available to people who are looking to connect with others and the world spiritually and socially. As universities and concert halls have

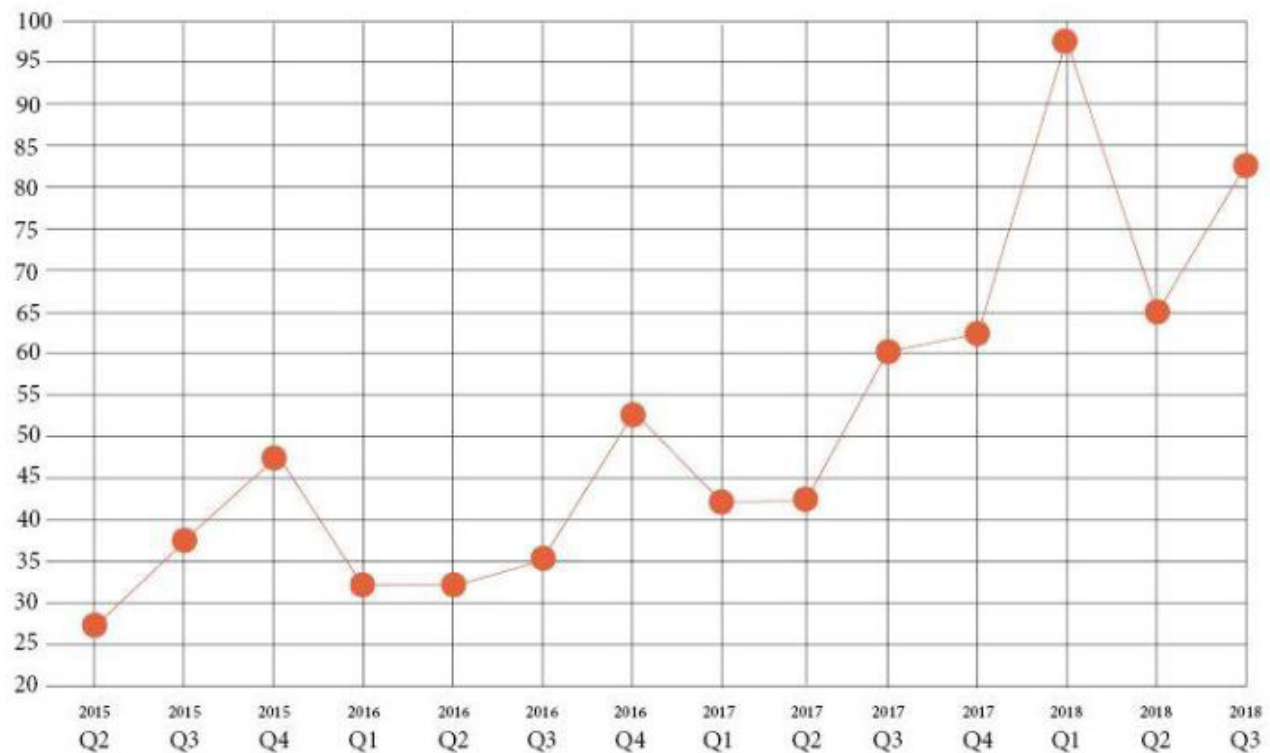
had to adapt to the changing needs and tastes of the public with more interactive and modern offerings, traditional churches find themselves needing to do the same with worship. The old tools formerly used to solve a problem such as worship decline no longer work due to the fact that basic family structures, time constraints, societal values and cultural mores have changed.



**Second’s monthly worship attendance 2014 - Aug 2018 - not including The Open Table**



## The Open Table, Average Attendance by Quarter



## What We've Learned

In general, if Second's worship attendance is going to grow, we must be willing to provide an expression of worship that is not beholden to the traditional liturgy and music of a Presbyterian service. As one of our "secret shoppers" (first time visitors to worship who were asked to fill in a survey afterwards) wrote about our 10:15 service, "It was great service overall — appreciated making the connection to our lives today. I would just tweak the hymns a bit (not the words)... the organ is pretty old school so not as engaging for someone who is young and trying to get connected. Felt a little outdated. Beautiful. But outdated...making me feel a little disengaged at times."

One finding that has remained consistent from the God's Purposes for Second report to Next Steps to this study, which incorporated reports from Project Antioch, is that churches that have found success in attracting new worshippers have done so by expressing the gospel through less traditional liturgy and more accessible music, while maintaining excellence in worship. A few examples are The Cause, Church of the Resurrection Downtown, Jacob's Well and Redeemer Fellowship.

However, to no one's surprise, we've found that many members at Second still thoroughly enjoy and are deeply, spiritually fed by traditional worship, formal prayers and singing from hymnals accompanied by organ. We do not want to eliminate

crucial aspects of traditional worship if it means eliminating a beloved, personal expression of faith and commitment for many in our wonderful community.

## Recommendations

- **Specialize Worship Service Offerings** | Change our two Sunday morning worship offerings so that they provide a more distinct feel and approach to worship. One service would be more traditional and organized around the order of worship, hymns, organ and choral anthems; the other would be more casual, not reliant on hymnals or a choir and free to experiment with different forms of music and interaction to connect with and appeal to a community that is less and less churched.
- **Change Worship Service Times** | Adapt our Sunday morning worship schedule to better accommodate the needs of contemporary schedules and life. See *Appendix for possible Sunday morning structure p. 57.*
- **Increase Support and Quality of Traditional Music** | Understanding that we may need more help from section leaders to make our traditional service as good as possible, approach sponsors who would be willing--in addition to maintaining their annual pledge--to provide funds for Second to increase the number of musicians for a period of time (2 years?) to see if a more traditional service might attract more visitors and members.
- **Change Sanctuary Layout and Seating** | The traditional but rigid seating and layout of our sanctuary and chapel force a sense of individuality, rigidity and conformity and limit the ways we can use those spaces.
  - We recommend removing three rows of pews from the back of the sanctuary. Keeping the doors open between our small narthex and the sanctuary with the back rows gone, would open up a nice area for people to gather before or after worship. During the few services that fill up our sanctuary, this space could be filled with chairs.
  - We recommend removing three rows of pews from the front of the sanctuary, moving some to the northwest corner so they face toward the transept. This would allow for more space and area in front of the steps for gathering around the communion table, musicians or other activities or needs that pews can't accommodate. The remaining pews should be adjusted so they angle more toward the center so worshippers aren't staring at the backs of heads but at the community of faith.
  - In the chapel, remove all pews and replace with chairs that can interlock if need be, stacked against the wall or arranged to fit the need of the class, service or gathering.
- **Combined Worship During Year** | Six times a year, combine services so we all worship together. This already happens for Be The Church and 3 Sundays in Advent, but add two "Feast Sundays" when we worship together and share Communion in a more informal and celebratory way as we did this last summer during the sermon on "Babet's Feast".
- **Promote Interaction in New Spaces** | Use our new creative space on the second floor for gathering together before and after services for coffee and conversation.

- **Multicultural Music Exchanges** | Establish a relationship with another congregation of color and have regular pulpit and/or choir or youth exchanges.
- **More Interfaith Dinners and Events** | Continue twice yearly interfaith dinners and conversation.
- **Improve Tower Entrance** | Redesign our newly improved tower and narthex entrance to feel more welcoming.
  - Provide good, self-serve coffee.
  - Move the sound room into the sanctuary and open that booth to the south to serve as a place where people could ask questions and access information about Second.
  - Add a flat screen with scrolling announcements in the narthex or tower.
  - Opening the doors to the sanctuary with the back 3 rows of pews removed would provide a nice space for people to talk, greet and hang out before and after worship, or, during worship, to stretch their legs without leaving the sanctuary.
- **Diversify Musical and Artistic Elements of Worship Culturally** | Introduce music presentations, selections and liturgies from different cultural backgrounds to create a welcoming environment to all who attend.
- **Incorporate Art and Artistry Into Worship** | Invite an artist to illustrate the sermon as the sermon is being presented.
- **Eliminate Paper Usage in Worship** | Go paperless: Utilize digital projection, Second Pres App and oral announcements to eliminate need for bulletin and printed Order of Worship.
- **Worship Opportunities Outside Sunday Morning** | Offer worship services outside during the summer time.

\*See more information and ideas in the Worship portion of Appendix.

## Where we go from here

*On September 30, 2018, a special session meeting was held to receive edits and approve disbursing the report to the congregation in advance of the October 14, 2018, congregational meeting.*

Following the congregational meeting, the Strategic Vision Team's responsibilities will be complete.

Everyone involved at Second should read through the report and highlight the recommendations and ideas that intrigue and excite them. A form will be made available around the church building and online (a link contained in each Second Helpings for 3-4 months) where people can fill in their name and contact information and which idea they are interested in. Those names will be shared with staff and committee chairs who can follow up them about how to get involved with a team or as a collaborator to make things happen.

Each existing committee of Session and the Deacons, should spend considerable time at their fall meetings considering the report and what aspects of it impact them and excite them. At the December meetings they should bring recommendations to their boards about which recommendations they would like to focus on for 2019.

The January 2019 Elder and Deacon Retreat will focus on this report and its recommendations and set forth a structure and timeline for carrying out its various ideas.

We recommend Session appoint a Great Implementation Team that would meet quarterly to assess progress and report to the Session with scoresheet similar to the GPS report. This will help keep the Session and congregation on task and on track.

To ease into the new committee and team structure, we suggest that for 2019, the Family Ministries, Faith Development, Congregational Life and Social Justice and Peacemaking committees continue and that the chairs of these committees, along with pastors and program staff, serve as the first Seasonal Leadership Team members.

Another strategic vision will likely be needed five years from now. However, it is our hope that the session, with a broader focus and attention to the mission and vision, Second will continually adapt and recommend changes as it thinks strategically and prayerfully about God's leading and the overall trajectory of Second.

# Appendix

## Strategic Vision Team's Full Process

Six years ago, Second's Session received and adopted God's Purposes for Second, a report that offered recommendations to help Second live into a new way of being the church. The Session adopted the GPS report and established a Shepherding Team to oversee the implementation of its recommendations. Less than three years later, the Next Steps Team was assembled to update GPS and recommend how best to utilize a \$1,000,000 anonymous Angel Gift given to further the recommendations of the GPS over five years. As a result of the gift, GPS and Next Steps, Second was able to expand ministries to children and youth, improve financial oversight and stewardship efforts, hire a director of communications, and launch a new worshiping community. Session also designated roughly \$100,000 of the Angel Gift to our mission endowment and \$90,000 to help seed what was at the time, a yet to be determined project to improve our facilities. This project ended up being "Creating Space for All People," a capital campaign to fix our historic bell tower and reorient our building and our congregation to be a more welcoming, accessible and engaged community.

With the overwhelming success of 2017's \$2.6-million capital campaign and the approaching end of the Angel Gift, Session and Deacons spent their January 2018 Retreat discussing where Christ was calling us to go next. They settled on the idea of a new Strategic Vision Taskforce to discern how Christ was leading Second into the challenges and opportunities before us.

In February 2018, Session voted to establish a Strategic Vision Team for these purposes:

- Critically and prayerfully audit and review all ministries and structures of Second;
- Honestly and prayerfully analyze the demographic and cultural realities of our neighborhood and city to see where the Spirit of God is at work, noting the societal and denominational trends and if and how those should impact Second's future
- Determine if the mission and vision of Second which has focused and guided our congregation for the last 7 years is still accurate and helpful "A People Being Transformed by Christ to Help Transform the World"
- Make recommendations to the Session and congregation about how Second can continue to be a vital part of what the Spirit of Christ is doing in Kansas City and the world.

The team of three men and six women was comprised of new and long-time members, students and retirees, people who had grown up in the church and some relatively new to Kansas City. Together we developed a process of intentional listening, study,

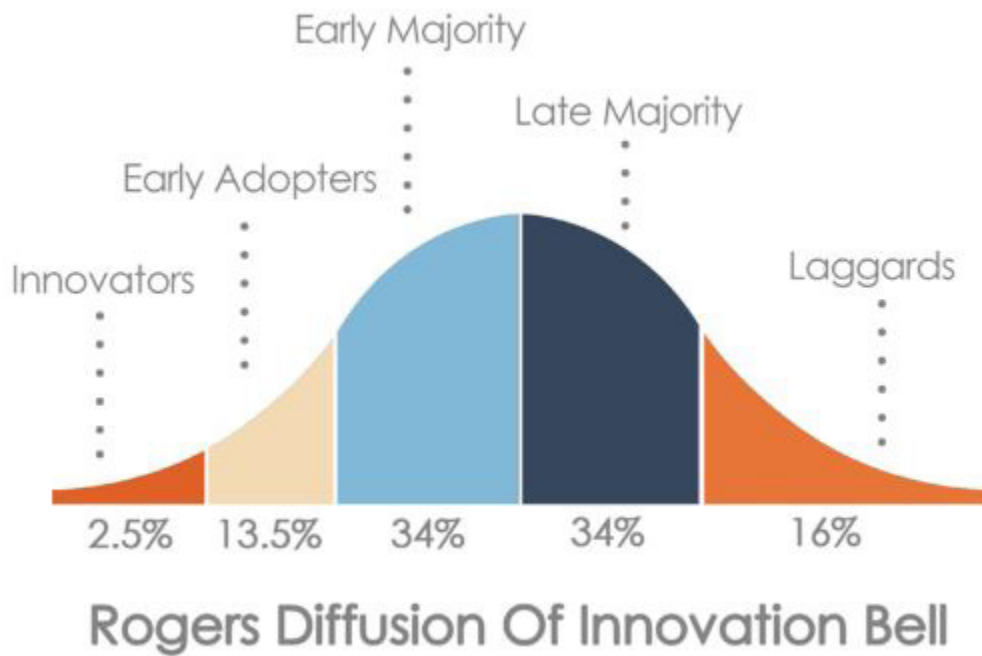


discernment, and exploration, which included the following steps:

- In April 2018, the team conducted 35 in-depth interviews with Second members and active attenders of various ages, experiences, and levels of involvement at Second. The team used an Appreciative Inquiry process to learn about what originally brought people to Second and kept them involved, what they valued most about this community, and their dreams for Second.
- In April and May, the team hosted two congregational listening sessions and distributed a congregational survey to Second's members and regular attenders to learn about their experience at Second, what they valued most about Second, and their dreams for the congregation.
- In May and June 2018, the team reached out Second's committees, small groups, and classes to learn about their mission, ministries and impact as well as to hear ideas about ways that these ministries could be changed or improved. The team reviewed, discussed, and analyzed the responses from each group.
- In May (on Pentecost), the team invited the congregation to participate in Project Antioch, a project designed to help Second members experience and reflect on the ways the Spirit of Christ is alive and at work in Kansas City. In small groups, people visited different community centers, events, and churches in Kansas City and shared reflections on their experience along with recommendations about what Second could learn from the work being done in the larger community. The team reviewed and analyzed these responses, especially ideas about what Second could learn.
- The team met with local and denominational leaders including Rev. Landon Whitsitt, Executive and Stated Clerk of the Synod of Mid-America, Rev. Sally Wright, Acting Associate Executive Presbyter of the Heartland Presbytery, and Nick Pickrell, Curator of The Open Table. We read denominational reports on trends and adaptations recommended and happening in the United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), United Church of Christ (UCC), and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- The team read *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* by Tod Bolsinger and hosted three open book discussions with the congregation. It also participated in Second's Book Group's discussion of the book. The discussions coincided with a four-week "Canoeing the Mountains" sermon series that shared insights from the book and some of the Strategic Vision Team's findings.
- The team learned about and studied different leadership and organizational structures, ministry programs, and ways of being the church that are happening around the country.
- The team met with the Session and Deacons and invited them to share their feelings and ideas about where the church is strong and needs to grow and where we could use change or adaptation to remain vital.
- The team visited other churches and talked with other church leaders who have experimented with changes and have experienced growth.
- The team met bi-weekly starting in late March and then weekly, starting in August, to learn, pray, discuss, develop recommendations, and write The Great Report

Throughout this process, the team intentionally sought to stay open to the Spirit of Christ, which calls us to leave behind structures and ways of doing ministry (canoes) that no longer work, and follow Christ into an increasingly post-church, post denominational world that is filled with new challenges and opportunities. We were grateful to have each other and the support of the Session, Deacons, and congregation throughout this process.

## How We Will Respond to this Report and its Recommendations



# Personnel Review & Findings

During the second quarter of 2018, the Personnel Committee undertook a study of current and potential staffing configurations for Second Presbyterian. There were several reasons for doing so including planned retirements, the turnover of existing staff, the end of the Angel Gift in 2018, which has been used to support staffing, and the prospect of a new strategic vision requiring different staffing configurations. In addition to reviewing written materials, including current organization charts, job descriptions, staff style descriptions, we sought in depth input from the staff.

## *Methodology*

- Ask staff to track time daily for one month (mid-April through mid-May).
  - The staff took initiative to develop work categories and create summary graphic displays.
  - Staff created narrative projections on how their time is affected by seasons (budget season, major holidays, etc.)
- Hold follow up meetings with most staff members to discuss the following topics: what observations did they have about how they spent time, what is the purpose of their job and how does it support Second's mission; obstacles to getting job done, ideas for improvement and what's their personal passion.
- Personnel interviewed: Johnnie Baker, Christi Paschang, Marsha Kirsch; Derinda Moore, Willie West, Alex Treaster, Nick Pickrell, Wendie Brockhaus, Kristin Riegel, Jimmy Itczak-McCarty, Emily Nelson Dixon, Micah Horton.

## *Observations*

- The staff is extremely committed to the mission of Second. They think about the big picture as well as how to execute their specific responsibilities well. They can articulate their thoughts and often don't draw the same conclusions about what the church should be doing; this is good because there is no group think and they aren't suppressed by leadership.
- At the same time, without leading questions, they expressed respect for team members and their capabilities. Several spoke up about specific strengths and talents their peers contribute. They also volunteer examples of how the head of staff, Rev. Paul Rock, leads, mentors, and coaches. Several members described their work environment as "healthy."
- Several of the staff members have performed multiple roles beyond their original assignments. They described with enthusiasm how they learned new tasks. Overall, they demonstrate high learning agility which suggests that they will successfully adapt if strategy calls for them to change.
- Most staff members feel they are stretched thin and don't have ability to focus as much as they would like. They were able to support that feeling with examples.
- Staff members are aware of need to improve processes and increase efficiency.

They could give examples of where they have done so. They also had examined their own time tracking and identified things they could do differently.

- Staff members express appreciation for contributions of volunteers in congregation. They value that contribution and want to make sure they are asking for the right things. Different people expressed this differently: are we asking volunteers to do too many mundane tasks? Are we harnessing capabilities? Are we risking burnout?

### *General conclusions and recommendations*

- The communications role will continue to be important no matter what our strategic direction. Today it provides a consistent messaging. Our website is noted by job applicants and visitors. We are developing a social media presence that has expanded our mission reach.
- We need to continue the transition from paper to digital. Many hours of staff time are devoted to producing paper communications.
- Volunteer hours are a valuable resource, and we need to carefully allocate them.
- Our custodial staff is called upon to be flexible, stay late, adjust to schedule changes. This is not a function that could be economically or easily outsourced.
- Our finance office serves Second Presbyterian, the ECLC and The Open Table. Payroll has been outsourced. There are no further outsourcing opportunities available in this function at this time.
- Marsha Kirsch has done a commendable job with the building administration. A looming question for Second is how to reconfigure this position when Marsha retires. No one person has either interest or skill set to replace her in this role; we think we need a strategic look at our needs here in 2019.
- Our Sunday School programs need a relook. Witherspoon, while often high quality program, has low attendance; three other options exist for adults in same time frame. No programming exists for 20s/30s. Children's and youth ministry have been running in a maintenance rather than growth mode. As one staff member expressed, if we don't provide robust program, "where will they (children and youth) get their theological education?"
- Committee structure is unwieldy. Staff are in multiple meetings, sometimes with overlapping activities, and a small number of volunteers are heavily depended upon and burnout is a very real result.
- If we want to grow, staff will need to be intentional about connecting with non-members. Encourage pastors and program staff members to spend 10% of their time developing relationships, attending events and building partnerships with people and organizations outside of the church.
- In terms of pay and justice, Personnel will continue its plan to move all hourly wage employees to a living wage of \$15/hr minimum by 2020.
- Second will need to develop a staffing model to support the approved recommendations and operational timeline.

## Stewardship, Finance & Giving

While no specific recommendations are given regarding stewardship and finance, the philanthropic and mission giving trends noted in this report should be taken seriously. They are gathered here:

- The combination of declining membership, rising health care and pension costs and outdated Christian institutions has resulted in tremendous economic stress on churches, especially those that have relied on having a professional, full-time, paid staff.
- There have been significant shifts in the habits of philanthropists and regular “givers.” Rather than viewing the local church as the body through which people give to those in need, many now give directly to focused non-profits and expect high-impact programs oriented toward outcomes and the development of revenue streams that guarantee sustainability.
- The most vibrant Christian institutions are revisiting their basic economic models, developing new partnerships and networks to broaden the scale and scope of their activities and impact and exploring new sources of revenue. The potential for experimentation and innovation to create sustainable economic development is great, but risk and anxiety are readily obvious.
- For decades, Christian missions have involved groups of white Western Christians traveling to “underdeveloped” nations to provide education, construction and medical services. Due to power shifts and a general ecclesial decline in the West, mission today looks quite different. As the global Christian majority has shifted to the East and Global South, Korean Christians are sending missionaries to China and African missionaries are traveling to the U.S. and Western Europe. These significant shifts pose deep issues for the church and challenge—in a good way—conventional ways we have come to think about “mission.”

## Possible Sunday Worship & Education Configurations

	<b><u>Option 1</u></b> <b><u>(CURRENT)</u></b>	<b><u>Option 2</u></b>	<b><u>Option 3</u></b>	<b><u>Option 4</u></b>	
8:15	8:15am Early Service				8:15
8:30					8:30
8:45					8:45
9:00	Sunday School Hour	9:00 Traditional Service (in Sanctuary, Organ) AND Some Sunday School	**Casual Service Starts at 9:30 with everyone - SS Teachers and kids leave after 20 min - Service continues until 10:30	*Traditional Service AND Children/Youth Sunday School Second Cup and or Other young parents group?	9:00
9:15					9:15
9:30			9:30		
9:45			9:45		
10:00	(Transition)	(Transition)	Adult and children's SS goes from 9:50 until 10:45 - Those who attended early service and their kids depart	(Transition)	10:00
10:15	10:15am Late Service	"Casual" Service AND Sunday School AND Worship Alive/Godly Play		"Casual" Service AND Adult Sunday School AND Worship Alive/ Godly Play	10:15
10:30					10:30
10:45			10:45		
11:00			11:00		
11:15	Fellowship Hour	Fellowship Hour	Second Service is from 11-12:00		11:15
11:30			11:30		
11:45			11:45		
12:00			12:00		
12:15			Fellowship/Lunch Hour	Fellowship Hour	12:15
Early Service Attendance: 25 -70    Avg: 30    Capacity: 100					
10:15 service Attendance: 180-280    Avg: 225    Capacity: 600					
* Choir, robes, organ, liturgy		** No choir, no robes, piano, guitar-led songs, casual liturgy, interactive			

## Children and Youth Christian Education Configurations (Sunday Morning)

<b>Church Name</b>	<b>Children's Education</b>	<b>Youth Education</b>
<b>Central UMC</b>	Children begin service with congregation then released to age-specific worship. Unclear if Sunday School available <a href="http://www.connectatcentral.com/children-s-ministries">http://www.connectatcentral.com/children-s-ministries</a>	No Advertised Youth Programming <b>No separate Education Hour</b>
<b>Church of the Resurrection</b>	Children attend Sunday School concurrent with all offered worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="https://cor.org/leawood/kids">https://cor.org/leawood/kids</a>	Youth attend Sunday School concurrent with one offered worship service. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> Mid-week programming offered. <a href="https://cor.org/leawood/students/middle-school">https://cor.org/leawood/students/middle-school</a>
<b>Grace Covenant Presbyterian</b>	Separate Education Hour offered for all ages. <a href="http://www.gcpc.org/families/">http://www.gcpc.org/families/</a>	Separate Education Hour offered for all ages. <a href="http://www.gcpc.org/families/">http://www.gcpc.org/families/</a>
<b>Kaw Prairie Presbyterian</b>	Children attend SS concurrent with all worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour.</b> <a href="https://kawprairie.org/kpkids/">https://kawprairie.org/kpkids/</a>	<b>No separate Education Hour</b> Sunday Evening Youth Worship <a href="https://kawprairie.org/wild/">https://kawprairie.org/wild/</a>
<b>Rolling Hills Presbyterian</b>	Children attend Sunday School concurrent with all offered worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="https://www.rollinghillsskc.org/worship">https://www.rollinghillsskc.org/worship</a>	<b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="https://www.rollinghillsskc.org/worship">https://www.rollinghillsskc.org/worship</a>
<b>St. Andrews Episcopal</b>	Children attend Sunday School concurrent with all offered worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="https://www.standrewkc.org/our-services/formation/children-s-ministry">https://www.standrewkc.org/our-services/formation/children-s-ministry</a>	<b>No separate Education Hour</b> Infrequent Youth Gatherings <a href="https://standrewkcyouth.com/calendar/">https://standrewkcyouth.com/calendar/</a>
<b>St. James UMC</b>	Separate Education Hour offered for all ages. <a href="http://www.stjamesumc.com/">http://www.stjamesumc.com/</a>	Separate Education Hour offered for all ages. <a href="http://www.stjamesumc.com/">http://www.stjamesumc.com/</a>
<b>The Cause Church</b>	Children attend Sunday School concurrent with all offered worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="http://thecausechurch.com/causekids/">http://thecausechurch.com/causekids/</a>	No Advertised Youth Programming <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="http://thecausechurch.com/causekids/">http://thecausechurch.com/causekids/</a>
<b>Village Presbyterian Church</b>	Children attend SS concurrent with all worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="http://www.villagepres.org/children-families">www.villagepres.org/children-families</a>	<b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="https://www.villagepres.org/overview.html">https://www.villagepres.org/overview.html</a>
<b>Visitation Church</b>	Children attend SS concurrent with all worship services. <b>No separate Education Hour</b> <a href="http://www.visitation.org/faith-formation">http://www.visitation.org/faith-formation</a>	<b>No separate Education Hour</b> <b>Confirmation Class Offered</b> <a href="http://www.visitation.org/faith-formation/religious-education/sunday-pre-school">http://www.visitation.org/faith-formation/religious-education/sunday-pre-school</a>

## Further Findings on Worship

### *More feedback from secret shoppers*

- “From the parking lot, the building is a bit narrow and confusing, but there were several friendly people there to help us find our way to the Sanctuary. I really appreciated seeing nametags on those people.”
- “The service itself was pretty traditional, which reflects the older population a bit. I think adding some contemporary touches could bring in more young folks. But overall, it was very accepting, open and we felt very welcome.”
- “It was great service overall — appreciated making the connection to our lives today. I would just tweak the hymns a bit (not the words)... the organ is pretty old school so not as engaging for someone who is young and trying to get connected. Felt a little outdated. Beautiful. But outdated.. making me feel a little disengaged at times.”
- “The service: I liked how it felt like a community gathering instead of an ‘I talk, you listen’ type of service. The pastor did an excellent job of making everyone feel welcome and set the tone for a more informal service. I grew up in a Presbyterian church, so I know some of the motions around the service. However, I feel that it could be made a bit clearer when to sit/stand/respond for newcomers who might not be as familiar with the service. Also, it could be helpful to use the screens in the church to display the lyrics or at least the hymn number for different hymns. I’ve been to several churches where the hymn lyrics and congregational responses are on the screen, either solely or in addition to the printed bulletin.”
- “Everyone I spoke to was very proud of the church, and seemed familiar (like a family). That was nice, although I can see how it could be intimidating if you didn’t know anyone.”
- “I liked how friendly everyone was. The people sitting near me all seemed comfortable and happy to be there. Having something visual to look at was good too. It was nice to have visual aids during the sermon and I’m glad they didn’t take away from the architecture when turned off.”
- “I found the hymnal music hard to follow along. I am not used to reading sheet music, and the choir was too quiet for me to follow. I like that you played the verse once before the singing began, but the rhythm was too complex for me to understand.”
- “I was also greeted 4 times on my way to the pew! Which helped make me feel welcome. I liked that people wore name tags, which helped me know who to talk to if I had questions.”
- “I felt like the church had a really strong foundation, and lots of people who love and care for it. But overall I think the energy and the passion from the people didn’t meet the appearance. Just looking at the church, or the bulletins, it surprised me how many kids and young families were present, and the wide range of ages. The classes were very interesting to me. It seemed like there was something for every interest. I was particularly interested in the Tiers of Joy, Sound Healing Workshop, and the Interfaith Prayer Service.”



### *Other churches' attempts and successes*

Leawood Presbyterian Church - When Ryan Kappal was called 10 ½ years ago there were 15 people in worship and 40 on the rolls. Now the church has one very full service (sanctuary seats 250) at 10:30 and they're thinking of launching an earlier service at 9:00. It's the only Presbyterian church in our area that has recently and substantially grown. Ryan said he hadn't done anything radical, but noted he had to let the part time organist go soon after he got there due to funding. So, he pulled some singers and guitar players together and slowly built a new type of service led by a part time musician/guitarist who also leads their youth ministry. Ryan said they poured as many resources as they could into children's and youth ministries and have stayed flexible and open. Ryan's father was a pastor in Overland Park and Ryan went to K-State. Over the years they've grown and are starting a small capital campaign to update their Sunday School building.

A church that is larger than Second but with a similar heritage, Country Club Christian on Ward Parkway has launched a new service called 9:01 that is intentionally more casual and family friendly than their two very formal services.

### *The church of 2030 and new evangelicals*

Almost all churches of the not too distant future will be younger, racially diverse, and socially active, especially as the "New Evangelicals" discover and adopt the call and challenge of the social gospel and mesh with the mainline commitment to social issues.

*...growing trend of young Christians who view themselves as theological conservatives rather than political ones. To them, this shift marks a return to a more authentic way to follow the teachings of Jesus, without the taint of the conservative politics with which older evangelicals have imbued the text. These younger believers contend they aren't looser in any way in their approach to scripture—in fact, they say the opposite. By following the words and actions of Jesus as revealed by God in the Bible, they believe they are being more faithful believers, eschewing worldly politics altogether... But their emphasis is different from that of older white evangelicals who frequently turned to scripture verses—often out of context or in isolation, believers like Uwan argue—as a weapon in the culture wars of the eighties and nineties. These younger believers focus more on the example of Jesus's life in the Gospels. Jesus practiced a radical love, Colón-Laboy told me on the stoop. "This dude was breaking down gender roles and taking on racial issues that made people around him hate him," he said. For younger evangelicals, the political fights waged by previous generations no longer hold the sway they once did. Many told me that their focus in reading the Bible is on broader questions, such as, How shall I live?<sup>20</sup>*

Second can learn from these young evangelicals and their more effective evangelism and relevant worship styles.

## Simple Analysis of Existing Programs/Ministries by Leaders

red/yellow/green

decrease/maintain/increase

<u>Ministries</u>	<u>Success of</u>	<u>Funding/Resources</u>
Ushers & Greeters	Yellow	separate and increase
Godly Play	Green	maintain
Worship Alive	Green	maintain
Family Camp	Green	maintain
Second Kids Camp	Green	increase
Session Committees	Yellow	re-organize, decrease
Deacon Board	Green	maintain
Sunday Lunch	Yellow	maintain
20s/30s/40s Group	Green	increase
Presbyterian Women	Red	decrease
Second Friends	Green	maintain
Current Adult SS classes	Yellow	maintain
Crosslines/Harvesters Volunteer Groups	Green	maintain
Choir/Traditional Music	Yellow	maintain
Diverse/Casual Music	Yellow	increase
The Open Table	Green	increase
Middle and High School Students	Green	increase
Children's Sunday School	Orange*	maintain
Faith & Grief Ministry	Green	maintain
Journey To Bethlehem	Reevaluate, on hold w/ bldg changes	
Small Groups (Ie. creative spirits, C3...)	Green	increase
8:15 service	Orange	maintain/decrease
10:15 service	Yellow	maintain/increase
Social Media/Web Presence	Green	increase
Be the Church Sunday	Green	Increase
Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC)	Green	maintain
Christ and Cocktails	Green	increase
Serving walk ins with needs	Yellow	decrease

\*Orange = between yellow and red

<sup>1</sup> *Prophets of a Future Not Our Own* is an excerpt from a homily drafted for Cardinal Dearden by then Fr. Ken Untener and presented by Cardinal Dearden in 1979 on the occasion of the Mass for Deceased Priests. It was later quoted by Pope Francis in his remarks to the Roman Curia on December 21, 2015. <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prophets-of-a-future-not-our-own.cfm>

<sup>2</sup> Full process explained in the appendix

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/02/cigna-study-loneliness-is-an-epidemic-gen-z-is-the-worst-off.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.naacp.org/criminal-justice-fact-sheet/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.johnshopkinshealthreview.com/issues/fall-winter-2017/articles/the-rise-of-teen-depression>

<sup>7</sup> List of societal trends adapted from an article by L. Gregory Jones and Nathan Jones <https://www.faithandleadership.com/l-gregory-jones-and-nathan-jones-deep-trends-affecting-christian-institutions>

<sup>8</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/155258/confidence-public-schools-new-low.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.faithandleadership.com/l-gregory-jones-and-nathan-jones-deep-trends-affecting-christian-institutions>

<sup>10</sup> <https://alban.org/2016/01/20/dan-hotchkiss-board-staff-collaborations> and <https://alban.org/archive/great-committees/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/>

<sup>12</sup> according to a report published by the PNP Staffing Group.

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/religiously-unaffiliated-nones-community\\_us\\_55afe508e4b0a9b948535f3a](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/religiously-unaffiliated-nones-community_us_55afe508e4b0a9b948535f3a)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucelee/2018/05/01/here-is-more-evidence-that-americans-are-lonely-and-what-should-be-done/#1eccc17f3194>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucelee/2018/05/01/here-is-more-evidence-that-americans-are-lonely-and-what-should-be-done/#1eccc17f3194>

<sup>18</sup> <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SKUx4koTUj0-lrfZokdGleQh81j9Zuy8c7UPeXGYNWA/edit?usp=sharing>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/04/28/if-it-doesnt-stem-its-decline-mainline-protestantism-has-just-23-easters-left/?noredirect%3Don%26utm\\_term%3D.b49613134b5e&sa=D&ust=1536170511917000&usg=AFQjCNEaTa-AqKkEN0m2symwRWITfWt4hg](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/04/28/if-it-doesnt-stem-its-decline-mainline-protestantism-has-just-23-easters-left/?noredirect%3Don%26utm_term%3D.b49613134b5e&sa=D&ust=1536170511917000&usg=AFQjCNEaTa-AqKkEN0m2symwRWITfWt4hg)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.newyorker.com/news-desk/on-religion/millennial-evangelicals-diverge-from-their-parents-beliefs>