

First Baptist Church New Liskeard



Five Year Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028

STRATEGIC PLAN

A “Strategic Plan” is a document used to communicate goals, the actions needed to achieve those goals and all of the other critical elements developed during the planning exercise. It is a disciplined effort that produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what we are, who we serve, what we do, and why we do it, with a focus on the future. While it is a blueprint to achieve a future state, it is also dynamic; allowing us to evaluate as we go and make necessary adjustments

New Liskeard First Baptist Church Strategic Plan

A Shared Understanding

As our congregation “Looks Ahead”, we have three foundational points on which we must agree – head and heart – in order to move forward in Unity in Christ:

- ✓ First, we must understand and agree that while our Church has a strategic nature to its organization, we are neither a business nor a non-profit social service agency. We are the Holy Church of God Almighty.
- ✓ Second, we do NOT have a product, and we have nothing to sell – not even figuratively. Our sole purpose for existing is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- ✓ Third, God decides who comes to our Church, and IF we allow it through surrender to God’s will, we hold to God’s promise that God will save and redeem the ones God wants to save and redeem using the gifts and resources to which we have been entrusted, through selfless acts of love, sacrifice, and service.

This document describes our vision for New Liskeard First Baptist Church. The vision, values, and goals are based on our dream of becoming a Christian Community in Temiskaming Shores.

Our Mission

“We seek the growth of God’s Kingdom by connecting with those that are searching to know God and equip our members and adherents to fully participate in that mission!”

Our Values

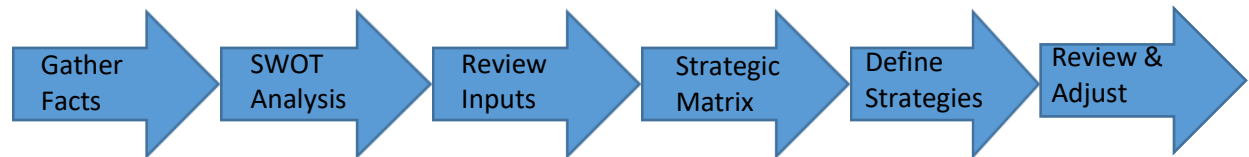
Faithfulness ▪ Generosity ▪ Humility ▪ Kindness ▪ Love ▪ Worship

Our Vision

“Committed to a deeper understanding of God’s word, we aspire to grow personally and communally, to become a sanctuary for all God’s people, and to pour out God’s love in the local and global community.”

Our Process

The Revitalization Team involved all members and adherents in an open and transparent process in 2023 - 24. That process is described below:



Gather Facts

- Input from Members, Adherents, Visitors, and Community

SWOT Analysis

- Internal Analysis
 - Strengths
 - Weaknesses
- External Analysis
 - Opportunities
 - Threats

Review Inputs

- Input from Members, Adherents, Visitors, and Community
- Review SWOT Analysis
- Define 4 - 5 key Statements

Strategic Matrix

- Define Strategies to address SWOT combinations

Define Strategies

- Establish Objectives
- Develop Key Strategies
- Define Short and Long-Term Goals
- Develop Operational Plans

Review and Adjust

- Review Strategies, Goals, and Plans
- Adjust as Necessary

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

1. Bible Based Church: First Baptist Church is noted for strong Bible based preaching and teaching that places a high emphasis on application to real life issues. In order for this to remain a strength, effort must be given to ensure that the Pastor's over-all health (e.g., physical, spiritual, emotional, etc.) and the delegation of non-ministerial issues (e.g., management, non-crisis care, property management, etc.) to others, is monitored so we can stay focused on feeding and leading the church.
2. Fiscal Responsibility: The financial viability of a Church rests on its ability to manage its resources and it is the responsibility of the church to be a wise steward of the resources God has entrusted to this fellowship. Our Church creates an annual budget that allows for successful financial management while designating resources toward those critical areas that will sustain and grow the ministry. Oversight and accountability is maintained by sharing budget information on a quarterly basis, annual Canada Revenue Agency Reports and providing avenues to answer any financial questions that members may have.
3. Make People Feel Welcome: Our members are known for being rather friendly and making people feel welcome. There is ample willingness to carefully build relationships among the disciples of the church. In order for this to remain a strength, effort will be given to maintaining a spirit of friendliness, fellowship activities, relationship building projects, and discipleship development sessions with accountability partners.
4. Bible Study Classes: Looking into God's word will guide one to experience God's presence leading to a personal renewal and revival of the soul. Our small group Bible Study serves to help members return to their first love, Jesus Christ. As they do, Jesus can work powerfully in and through them influencing others with the love of Christ. A faithful relationship with Jesus is a key to personal and church revival.
5. Fellowship at Church: Christian fellowship is essential to spiritual growth. Many aspects of our spiritual lives depend on being together with other believers to encourage, teach, serve, and share life together. Fellowship takes place in Sunday School classes, Sunday Worship Services, at Church dinners, men's and women's group gatherings, prayer meetings and on work projects. Where two or more believers congregate, fellowship takes place.

Weaknesses

1. **Huge Age Gap 25 – 50:** Millennials are not tied to denominational or organizational loyalty. This impacts how they relate to the church and religion. Fewer and fewer young people buy in wholeheartedly to particular statements of faith or doctrinal beliefs put forth by denominations or church boards. They want the flexibility to choose the tenants of faith that resonate with their personal views and experiences. When it comes to their faith, Millennials shop around, looking for the best deal or product for their perspective, life style and priorities. FBC has a noticeable lack of attendees in this age group.
2. **Lack of Community Outreach:** There seems to be a disconnect for many churchgoers between serving the community and helping individuals find their way to God through Christ. Ministry-related goals – such as teaching the Bible, introducing people to Christ, and bringing people to salvation – are infrequently viewed as a primary way to serve the community. Even among many churchgoers, contributing positively to the community is perceived to be the result of offering the right mix of public service programs. Yet, this seems to miss an important biblical pattern: you change communities by transforming lives. FBC has a limited outreach program.
3. **Not Leveraging Technology:** In the past several years and especially through the pandemic, more churches than ever have discovered the benefits of technology. Through online giving, live streaming services, and dozens of other digital solutions, church leaders have realized that these tools are more than flashy luxuries—they're essential to the future of ministry. But a willingness to embrace technology is only half of the equation. Many ministries don't have the time or manpower to adopt new systems. As more and more churches consider new tech, there are gaps in knowledge that must be bridged, helping churches understand their needs and how best to address them. FBC has been lagging in the use of social media and technology.
4. **Aging Leadership:** Just a century ago, average life expectancy in North America was about 50 years old. Today, it's over 80 and for the first time in history, our society includes at least four distinct adult generations — the Silent Generation (born 1925–1945); Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964); Generation X (born 1965–1981); and the Millennial Generation (born 1982–2001). Never have we had this many generations sharing leadership in society, in the workplace, and in the church.
We must understand that each of the generations in our community is its own unique culture. The experiences, practices, language and customs of each generation are distinct. Sometimes division among generations erupts into contentious debate over worship style, music, age-level programming (or lack thereof), and even facility usage. These conflicts stem from more than preference or personality differences.

Sometimes, generational differences are the root cause. FBC has very few Millennials and Gen Z members or adherents.

5. Retaining Membership: In a recent survey among those over 65 who didn't attend church, 45 percent said they don't go to church because "they practice their faith in other ways" and about the same proportion of people between 50 and 64 said the same. In other words, just under half of Christians over 50 who stop attending church feel they're still practicing their faith. It was a different story among younger adults. Only about a quarter of 18 to 29-year-olds said they don't go to church because they practice their faith in other ways. Those who leave tend to fall into two groups: those who "fade away" and those who "break away."

The "fade away" group includes people who have entered retirement and drifted out of regular attendance. "They're not apostatizing", church just doesn't seem to hold a priority. That's true of a lot of older adults who are leaving the church. When congregants aren't satisfied, they look for better uses of their time than serving on church committees.

Roughly 38 percent of 50 to 64 year-olds and of 18 to 29-year-olds say they don't attend church because of some form of dislike. Some are leaving because the church's views don't line up with their personal ones while others find that amplified tensions over issues such as politics and social justice have made church uncomfortable for them. This the "break away" group." FBC has experienced a loss of membership through passing, relocation and fading away.

Opportunities

1. **Engaging Local Community:** When churches are outward focused, rather than just concentrated on Sunday services, more people end up joining the church. People like community service and seeing organizations blessing the community. It can get people involved with volunteerism and the people they are serving will then be prompted to attend the church after hearing about it and being served by their staff/volunteers. Society has a huge number of needs that are calling for us to respond to them. Addressing poverty and helping the poor is the most common top-of-mind response being offered as to how our Church can positively influence our community. This includes helping the needy, poor and disabled, distributing food and clothing, and assisting the homeless. In order to address these we need to strategically do what we can do a great job at and provide support for those things that are beyond our doors. Collaboration is going to be crucial in helping the community without hurting our Church.
2. **Use of Social Media /Technology:** Social media has undeniably become an integral part of marketing plans across the board, including non-profit entities such as churches. Data reveals that 18% of young adults and 22% of members of ethnic groups prefer attending church online. Social media helps break down the physical barriers of our church, enabling us to reach new audiences. We would get the opportunity to engage with the younger generation and connect with diverse communities that are increasingly active on these platforms and may not have previously considered attending church. Social media offers a cost-effective way for us to promote church events, ministries, and sermons. By utilizing the power of social media, we can efficiently spread the word and invite more individuals to join our church family.
3. **Create A New Member Retention Program:** Low retention rate is a major problem that many churches struggle with. Are we losing young families? Senior adults? Families with teens? Young adults? Knowing where the loss is occurring will help us get closer to understanding why the loss is happening. And knowing why will help us create the right solution. We must be intentional in our efforts to retain the people who have come through our doors. Feeling deeply connected is what makes someone say, "This is where I belong."
4. **Recruit More Young People:** Every church wants to increase the number of young people in its congregation. It's estimated that only 54 percent of Christians aged 18–35 attend church once a month or more. Within this demographic, young people say that the main element missing from their church is social and community opportunities. Young people want to attend with friends and family, they want support and social groups, and they want mentors. Young adults are looking for authenticity not relevancy.

5. Expand Youth Focus / Youth Church: What is said about outreach and young people above can be repeated here. The church doesn't have a magic wand to make all of the young people do better. However, the children and youth ministry of the Bible is called "family." In order to address this area, effort must be given to collaborating with other youth oriented organizations and projects with the hope that some of the young people will become saved Disciples of Christ and members of our church family.

Threats

1. Aging Leadership / Membership: Older leaders and members may have limited energy or be resistant to change, which could hinder our church's ability to innovate and respond to evolving needs. Likewise, a leadership / membership composed predominately of older individuals may struggle to connect with younger generations, leading to a decline in membership and relevance in the community. With lack of succession planning, our church may face difficulties in maintaining continuity and effectiveness in its leadership.
2. Declining Membership: With fewer members the Church may struggle to have a meaningful presence and impact in the community, affecting the ability to fulfill our mission and serve those in need. The shrinking congregation may also lead to a sense of discouragement and a lack of energy among the remaining members, potentially further exacerbating the decline and making it more challenging to attract new members. Potential new members may perceive the church as less vibrant or relevant.
3. Revenue Loss: Declining membership may result in fewer contributions which in turn can strain the Church's finances, impacting its ability to cover operational expenses such as staff salaries, facility maintenance, utilities and other essential costs necessary for day-to-day functioning. The church may also be forced to scale back or eliminate outreach and ministry programs that serve our community and impact our ability to fulfill its mission and meet the needs of its members and surrounding area.
4. Inflexible to Change: The resistance to change can result in our church becoming stagnant, failing to adapt to evolving social, cultural and spiritual needs, leading to a decline in relevance and attractiveness to existing and potential members and the community. The reluctance to embrace change may prevent our church from seizing opportunities for growth, innovation and outreach, limiting our potential impact and effectiveness in fulfilling our mission.

OUR VALUES

Faithfulness: Proverbs 28:20 “A faithful person will be richly blessed but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.”

As Christians, our primary faithfulness belongs to God. Being faithful to Him means Lordship in Him. This Lordship is recognizing that He alone is the one great God. The best way to prove Christ’s Lordship in our lives is through obedience. This is what faithfulness to God is all about.

Generosity: 2 Corinthians 9:11-12: “ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.”

The Bible tells us to share generously with those in need, and good things will come to us in turn. Each of us has something to offer to someone in need. We can give our money and our time to charity, be a friend to someone sick or lonely, do volunteer work or choose a service-oriented occupation.

Humility: 1 Peter 5:5 “In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”

Humility in the Bible is about putting oneself as the least and others above. It does not think highly of one’s self. Instead, it desires to put the interest of others before his or her concern. The greatest enemy of humility is pride.

Kindness: Galatians 6:10 “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

A true Christian imitates God’s kindness. It recognizes no merits. In reality, the people who need to experience goodness are the least we expect to need it. Hence, let’s be good and kind to everyone as much as we can and with every opportunity God has given us.

Love: Colossians 3:14 “And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

The essence of God’s character is love, and the two greatest commandments of Jesus also emphasize love (Matthew 37-39). The Lord tells us to love Him with all our heart, soul, and mind. The second greatest commandment is to love our neighbors

as we love ourselves. Perhaps, love is the most important value for Jesus. It is also the first and foremost value we should recognize.

Worship: Mark 12:28-30 “The most important one is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’”

In today’s world, many things compete against God for our devotion. There are some things that are not necessarily bad in moderation but can become modern-day idolatry if we let them become too important to us, like attention to material possessions, the pursuit of wealth, and excessive devotion to self.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The 2024-2028 Strategic Plan consists of five strategic priorities. These priorities embody FBC’s philosophy at the heart of who we are, what we believe and how we will act. Embedded within each strategic priority are the strategic actions we will take to reach our Vision and describe what we uphold as our Values.

These priorities shall guide our strategic planning and decision-making processes, helping our Church fulfill our mission and make a positive impact on the lives of our members and the surrounding community.

Spiritual Growth: Provide opportunities for members to deepen their relationship with God through worship, prayer, Bible Study and discipleship.

Community Engagement: Engage with the local community through outreach programs, events and service projects that address both spiritual and practical needs.

Fellowship: Create a supportive and nurturing environment where members can connect with one another, build relationships and experience Christian fellowship.

Evangelism: Share the gospel message with others, inviting them to experience the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

Leadership Development: Equip and empower members to serve in various leadership roles within the church and community.

OUR GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

Spiritual Growth

Goal #1 – Increase participation in spiritual practices.

Objective #1- Increase attendance and engagement in worship services, prayer meetings and Bible study groups.

Objective #2- Encourage members to establish personal spiritual disciplines such as daily prayer, bible reading and meditation.

Goal #2 – Enhance prayer culture.

Objective #1– Establish an intercessory prayer group dedicated to praying for the Church, its members and specific community needs.

Goal #3 – Deepened understanding of scripture.

Objective #1 – Offer at least two new Bible study courses or workshops per year focusing on different aspects of scripture.

Goal #4 – Personal spiritual formation.

Objective #1 – Encourage members to participate in spiritual retreats or direction sessions to deepen their relationship with God and discern His direction for their lives.

Strategies:

Education and Training:

- 1. Offer seminars, workshops or guest speakers focused on spiritual growth, discipleship and Christian living.*
- 2. Provide resources such as books, podcasts and on-line courses to support members in their spiritual journey.*
- 3. Equip and empower leaders and volunteers to facilitate spiritual growth initiatives within the church by providing training, mentoring and ongoing support.*

Relationship Building:

- 1. Foster an environment of authenticity, vulnerability and mutual support within small groups, encouraging members to share their spiritual conversations among each other.*
- 2. Organize fellowship events, retreats or group outings that facilitate deeper connections and spiritual conversations among each other*

Integration of Spiritual Practices:

- 1. Provide resources and guidance for families to incorporate spiritual practices into their daily routines and family life.*

Community Engagement

Goal #1 – Increase community participation and involvement by the Church.

Objective #1 – Facilitate opportunities for building relationships and fostering connections within the community.

Objective #2 – Support charitable initiatives that address local and global needs reflecting the Church's commitment to compassion.

Objective #3 – Develop partnerships with organizations and missions to amplify the impact of giving.

Goal #2 – Enhance communication and collaboration between the church and the community.

Objective #1- Establish communication channels such as newsletters and social media platforms to advise the community of church related activities.

Objective #2 – Expand volunteer engagement in community activities, events and service projects.

Goal #3 – Provide support and resources to address spiritual, emotional and practical needs of community members.

Objective #1- Establish small groups or community outreach teams to facilitate deeper connections and relationships among church members and the community.

Objective #2 – Develop partnerships with local organizations, school and social service agencies to address community needs and provide support where needed,

Strategies:

Community Outreach:

- 1. Provide opportunities for members to volunteer their time and skills in Church ministries, community service projects and outreach ministries.*
- 2. Go out into the community and engage with people where they are, whether it's door-to-door, street fairs or community festivals.*

Community Support:

- 1. Provide support to community members in times of need, such as offering financial, moral or emotional support.*
- 2. Collaborate with other community organizations such as schools, charities or other non-profit groups to host joint events or initiatives.*

Communication:

- 1. Use social media with platforms like Facebook, Instagram or X (formerly Twitter) to share updates about church activities, events and community outreach efforts.*
- 2. Encourage church members to invite friends, family and neighbors to services and events.*
- 3. Ensure that the church is welcoming to all members of the community, regardless of background or beliefs.*
- 4. Actively seek feedback from the community to understand their needs and tailor our activities accordingly.*

Fellowship

Goal #1 – Foster a sense of community and belonging among members.

Objective #1 – Facilitate opportunities for building relationships and fostering connections among members by organizing regular gatherings.

Objective #2 – Provide practical assistance and emotional support to members in times of need.

Objective #3 - Establish support systems such as care ministries and counselling services to assist individuals and families facing challenges.

Goal #2 – Create an atmosphere of inclusivity and openness where diverse perspectives are valued and respected.

Objective #1 – Implement practices that foster active listening, empathy and understanding in interpersonal interactions and decision making processes.

Objective #2 – Train greeters and ushers to welcome visitors warmly and ensure they feel valued and included.

Goal #3 – Encourage volunteerism and involvement in church activities.

Objective #1 – Promote servant leadership principles by equipping and empowering individuals to serve in various roles and capacities.

Objective #2 – Establish small groups focused on specific interests, programs or events within the church.

Strategies:

Small Group Ministries:

- 1. Encourage participation in Bible Study groups.*
- 2. Form Prayer groups where members can meet regularly to pray for the needs of the church and the community.*
- 3. Provide intimate settings or opportunities for members to share their faith, discuss scripture and support each other.*

Social Events:

- 1. Organize regular social events such as potlucks, picnics, games nights or outings to help members or neighbors get to know each other in a relaxed setting.*
- 2. Engage the congregation in community service projects, working together for a collective purpose while building strong bonds.*

Communication Channels:

- 1. Use various communication channels (newsletters, social media, etc.) to keep members and the community informed and connected.*
- 2. Actively encourage members to participate in church activities, ministries and decision making processes.*
- 3. Regularly seek feedback from members about their experiences and suggestions for improvements.*

Evangelism

Goal #1 - Increase Congregational Engagement in Evangelism.

Objective #1 – Organize Evangelism training workshops.

Objective #2 – Create a plan outlining specific evangelistic activities, target audiences and timelines.

Goal #2 – Expand Outreach Efforts.

Objective #1 – Launch Community Service Projects.

Objective #2 – Host outreach Events.

Objective #3 – Provide members with tracts, books and other evangelistic material to share with others.

Goal #3 – Utilize Technology and Social Media.

Objective #1 – Increase Online Presence.

Strategies:

Training & Equipping Members:

- 1. Conduct workshops or seminars to teach practical evangelism skills.*
- 2. Introduce programs that focus on discipling church members to deepen their faith and equip them to disciple others.*

Personal Evangelism:

- 1. Motivate members to invite family, friends and colleagues to church services and events.*
- 2. Encourage members to share their personal testimonies during church services to inspire others and provide relatable experiences of faith.*

Building Relationships:

- 1. Partner with local organizations, schools and businesses to build relationships and create outreach opportunities.*
- 2. Develop ministries focused on hospitality, such as hosting newcomers' lunches or small group gatherings.*
- 3. Offer "New Believer Classes" that cover the basics of the Christian faith and provide a pathway for deeper involvement in the church.*
- 4. Implement a follow-up system for visitors and potential new members that includes personal contact.*

Leveraging Technology and Social Media:

- 1. Develop an online presence that includes a user-friendly website with resources like sermon recordings, blog posts and evangelistic materials.*
- 2. Create engaging content that can be easily shared by members on social media platforms.*

Leadership Development:

Goal #1 – Leadership Succession Planning.

Objective #1 – Create a succession plan to identify and prepare future leaders.

Objective #2 – Involve current leaders in mentoring and training their potential successors.

Goal #2 – Enhance Leadership Skills.

Objective #1 – Develop mentorship and peer support systems where experienced leaders guide and support emerging leaders/.

Objective #2 – Encourage leaders and potential leaders to attend workshops, seminars and conferences.

Objective #3 – Strengthen relationships between current church leaders and potential leaders within the congregation.

Goal #3 – Foster Diversity and Inclusion.

Objective #1 – Promote leadership opportunities for under-represented groups.

Objective #2 – Ensure that the leadership reflects the diversity of the congregation.

Goal #4 – Develop Strategic Thinking.

Objective #1 – Equip leaders with the skills to plan and implement church policies and initiatives effectively.

Objective #2 – Encourage a forward-thinking approach to ministry and mission work.

Strategies:

Succession Planning:

1. Prepare “Job Descriptions” for the leaders positions.

2. *Conduct a “talent survey” of the congregation to identify potential leaders within the church.*
3. *Provide opportunities for volunteers to transition into leadership roles.*

Comprehensive Training:

1. *Provide access to formal leadership courses, in-person or on-line, covering topics like theology, church administration and pastoral care.*
2. *Pair experienced leaders with emerging leaders to focus on personal development for specific positions.*

Resource Provision:

1. *Create a resource library of leadership books, articles and other pertinent online information.*
2. *Establish networks within the church and within other churches to foster collaboration and idea sharing.*

Diversity and Inclusion:

1. *Encourage diverse perspectives in leadership discussions and decision making processes.*
2. *Ensure that the leadership group meets regularly, providing a safe space for sharing and growth.*
3. *Assign each leader to spearhead a specific project or initiative to provide hands-on leadership experience.*