

Georgetown CRC Discerning His Direction

Equipped to love and serve

**“... We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus
to do good works ...”**

Ephesians 2:10

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At Georgetown Christian Reformed Church

We Value:

Variety and music in worship
Biblical, Reformed preaching and teaching
A church family that cares, fellowship
Prayer
Youth involvement

We Long for:

Growth and development of our Reformed faith
Attention to youth
Community outreach and transformation
Building on and utilizing our existing strengths & gifts
Vibrancy, zeal, enthusiasm, joy, thankfulness and praise

Our Goals are:

To make our faith vibrant
To do things together, all ages
To serve our neighbours

Combined with existing ministries, we seek to reach these goals by:

Implementing a Youth Task force
Welcoming and Enfolding Visitors
Augmenting Sunday Evening Services
Developing a Deeper Prayer Culture
Discovering and Using our Spiritual and other Gifts
Encouraging Community Volunteerism
Expanding our Baby Basket program to our Community
Enhancing Small Groups

**Our Vision at Georgetown Christian Reformed Church is that all our members
will Grow in their Love for and Service to Our God and Our Neighbour**

1. Implement a Youth Task Force	
Purpose	<p>To bring our young people together for a time to reflect, discuss, and dream about our church's youth programs and the place of our youth in our church. This "Youth Summit" will allow us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage our youth by letting them know that their voices are being heard. • Create a sense of ownership among our youth for their youth programs. • Play a greater role in the improvement of GCRC youth programs, as well as potentially create new programs that will help our youth grow spiritually through fellowship, communal prayer, Bible study, and education.
Description	<p>An outside facilitator will address our youth as an entire body, and ask them for their honest opinion on such topics as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their place at GCRC and their involvement in the church. • Our existing youth programs, particularly the WEDS program. • Their hopes and dreams in regards to our youth programs, including improving existing programs and creating new ones. <p>The youth will then break into smaller groups to discuss a given topic with an adult at each table to foster conversation. After a period of time, a representative from each smaller group will report to the larger group, much like the Discerning His Direction sessions. To help create an environment where our youth can talk openly and honestly, Pastor Brian and other youth leaders will not be present among any of the smaller group sessions.</p>
Implementation Guidelines	<p>The Implementation Team will appoint a "Youth Task Force," consisting of an outside facilitator, Pastor Brian, two "young people," two parents, and a Council member. This group will plan the Youth Summit as outlined above, spend time reflecting on what our youth had to say at the summit, and come up with initiatives accordingly.</p>
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussions at the Youth Summit are to be positive and forward-thinking. • The Youth Task Force will discuss what ages to invite to the Youth Summit and whether to divide the different age groups at the discussion tables, as 13-17-year-olds are in much different stage of life than 18-23-year-olds. • The Youth Task Force can make use of bulletin announcements, pre-service announcements, social media, and overhead presentations to promote the Youth Summit. Personal calls and conversations with our youth about the event will help; this was evident with our Discerning His Direction sessions. • The Youth Task Force will continue to serve as a Committee at GCRC to continually monitor our youth and their programs, to encourage youth leadership, and to give our youth a sense of ownership of their youth programs. The Committee will have a clear mandate, with members having defined roles.

2. Welcome and Enfold Visitors

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make all visitors feel welcomed. • To welcome and enfold singles, couples, or families who are looking for a new home church, or have recently joined our church.
Description	<p>GCRC will form a Welcoming Committee, which is made up of singles and couples, to seek out visitors to our church before and after worship. The “welcomers” will introduce themselves, engage in conversation to assess any needs (such as the location of the nursery), and make the visitors feel welcome and at home. The welcomers, who are very familiar with the congregation, will also introduce visitors to like-minded members; and, if appropriate, these members can invite the visitors to their home after church for coffee and/or lunch.</p> <p>The Welcoming Committee will establish a process in which they discuss recent visitors and potential next steps (i.e. if the visitor returns to church the following Sunday, who should approach them?). If the visitor keeps coming to GCRC, the Committee will link them to a “mentor” family who will “show them the ropes” of GCRC and let them know about our church’s programs.</p>
Implementation Guidelines	This Committee will consist of six to ten individuals and couples, with one person or couple taking a leadership role. The Committee will establish initial training and regular communication protocols.
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success of this initiative requires that the Committee members are good communicators, at ease with making small talk with strangers, and have good church service attendance records. • Some initial training will be required.

3. Augment Sunday Evening Worship

Purpose	<p>To provide an avenue for people to engage and connect with one another and with relevant issues "outside the pews." These Sunday sessions will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a non-threatening small group atmosphere. • Augment the Sunday evening services for those who currently regularly attend. • Draw more people to come to the evening service.
Description	<p>GCRC will introduce a new "once-a-month" format to our evening service that will be exciting, stimulating, relevant, and non-traditional. This new format will model the evening services of the Discerning His Direction conversations, in which our pastor will deliver a short message and the congregation will then spend time in small groups for discussion (discussions not more than 60 minutes in length).</p>
Implementation Guidelines	<p>The Small Groups Committee will implement this initiative. Its members will include our pastor and a liaison from the Worship Committee. The Small Groups Committee may need more members to carry out this initiative.</p>
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails (or paper copies) could be sent out earlier in the week with topics and possible preparation work. • Promotion could be done in the bulletin and on the overhead, but it's the topic/content of the evening that will get people out and keep them coming, as well as word of mouth by those who attend. • The program, as managed by the Small Groups Committee, could provide a non-threatening way to introduce people to small groups. At times, small groups could be softly marketed with an opportunity to join a new or existing group. • There ought to be opportunity to pray within the small groups, or to share a prayer matter or a testimony with others at the table, so that the group can pray for each other in the coming weeks. • There is also the opportunity to add a potluck to the evening on occasion to expand the community-building. • The implementation of this initiative must include providing nursery services. • Consideration should be given as to whether evening services ought to be held earlier, so that families with small children might attend. • The Small Groups Committee should welcome topics for discussion from congregants.

4. Develop a Deeper Prayer Culture	
Purpose	To become a church with a deeper prayer culture, where members pray because they know the spiritual benefits and power of prayer.
Description	<p>Prayer is foundational to our personal and communal faith life, as noted in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Practice</u>: Our pastors will provide simple weekly prayer guides to members via email; these emails will include repetition of the prayer requests listed in the bulletin. This email will remind congregants of the purpose of these prayer requests (as a fridge door notice); members will also commit to including the prayer requests in their daily prayers. • <u>Community</u>: Our congregation will continue to pray during the service (the traditional congregational prayer) and during the week (by praying based on "real-time" requests communicated during the week through email or phone calls). • <u>Testimony</u>: Our church members will be encouraged to openly share how they have experienced the power of prayer. Our members share these testimonies in conversations with others, small groups, ministry moments, and/or augmented Sunday evening worship times. • <u>Prayer room</u>: Our church will designate a specific, accessible, and private space on the main floor where people can safely and confidentially express their joys and/or burdens to our prayer "counsellors."
Implementation Guidelines	The pastors will prepare simple prayer guides for the whole congregation. The pastors or elders will identify prayer requests and communicate these requests via email through the Office Administrator. Members of the congregation are welcome to also submit prayer requests. Church members are also encouraged to share prayer testimonies as part of the regular "agenda" of the augmented Sunday evening worship times.
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This initiative will succeed if it is woven into the fabric of how our church operates, as opposed to being run as a separate "program" (i.e. it becomes a cultural norm). • Personal testimonies and sermons will help deepen our church's prayer culture. • The existing prayer space is not conducive to privacy from observation, noise or interruption, which inhibits some people from seeking out prayer. Further, attempts to keep young children from being in the sanctuary during coffee fellowship inevitably fail. • Additional opportunities to enhance our prayer culture could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Prayer walks</u>: A group walking through town, praying for God's blessing on our neighbours. ○ <u>Preparation</u>: Worship service participants gathering in groups to pray before each service. ○ <u>Chaplaincy</u>: Those making pastoral and hospital visits consistently include a prayer component. ○ Our pastor preaching on the power of prayer, the importance of prayer, and how to pray. ○ Having the congregational prayer sheet as a separate insert in the weekly bulletin.

5. Discover and Use our Spiritual and Other Gifts

Purpose	To enable members to understand, identify, use, and strengthen their spiritual and other God-given gifts for the good of God's Kingdom.
Description	<p>GCRC will employ the spiritual and other gifts of its members to achieve its mission, as working in areas where one's gifts are needed and used is much more satisfying to the volunteer and to the recipients of their gifts. The parameters within which this program will operate are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Understand</u>: Through profession of faith classes, periodic sermons, and bi-yearly "Discover Your Gifts" workshops, members will understand the variety of gifts God grants. • <u>Identification</u>: Through personal prayer, "Discover Your Gifts" workshops, family and small group discussions, and home visits, members will identify the spiritual and other gifts with which they have been blessed. Church administration will become aware of the gifts of our church members (through relationships and discussions). • <u>Tracking</u>: GCRC will aggregate, inventory, and periodically update members' gifts to ensure the church best uses the gifts that exist in our congregation. This inventory will be accessible to church staff. • <u>Use</u>: GCRC will advertise volunteer positions using specific, identifiable gift "language." Our church will encourage members to volunteer for specific positions because they are known to have the required gift(s). • <u>Strengthen</u>: Through testimony in evening worship services, small groups, and Crossroads publications, members will discuss their experience of serving using their gifts. Our church will also offer Bible studies directed to those with specific gifts as a means of further strengthening their gifts.
Implementation Guidelines	The pastor (and youth pastor, as required) will oversee the education component. Pastoral elders and volunteer workshop leaders can also be trained to help other members discover and grow their gifts. A Committee will be created to manage the inventory, tracking, and periodic updating of the members' gifts. If necessary, Committee members soliciting volunteers will consult with the pastor to understand the gifts required for a vacant position. GCRC will encourage its members to strengthen their gifts as a matter of personal devotion and communal accountability.
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This initiative is more likely to succeed if it is not run as a separate "program," but rather is woven into the fabric of how our church operates (i.e. it becomes a cultural norm). • There are benefits to formally tracking gifts inventory, and this should proceed as we understand the Biblical truth and value of identifying and using gifts. • Members should feel free to decline an opportunity to volunteer when a position does not use their gifts.

6. Encourage Community Volunteerism

Purpose	To encourage the members of GCRC to be more active and involved in our local community-based programs, so that by their participation they are given an opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of GCRC will be made aware of local volunteer opportunities through notices in the bulletins, articles in Crossroads, and a "volunteer workshop fair." • The Volunteer Committee will make use of many mediums (from the pulpit, through home visits, ministry moments, and articles in Crossroads) to encourage participation in these pre-existing community-based programs. • A membership participation spreadsheet will be created and maintained that lists which members are volunteering and in what capacity. • The congregation will be updated quarterly on the church's level of volunteerism and for which organizations via Crossroads.
Implementation Guidelines	<p>The Volunteer Committee, consisting of three members, will run this ministry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One will keep and maintain the records of volunteerism. • The other two members will be responsible for finding the volunteer opportunities (utilizing local agencies like Links2Care, etc.) and for encouraging congregational participation.
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This ministry should not be difficult to get started. The first step is to find three members who are willing to serve and work on this Committee. • The resources required are very limited and this ministry should not conflict with any current ministries.

7. Expand Baby Basket Program to the Community

Purpose	To demonstrate God's love to those within our community.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With close cooperation with Links2Care, GCRC will give a baby basket full of gifts to parent(s) in Halton Hills with demonstrated financial need. This basket will bless the family in the early stages of raising a child. • This ministry will model our current Baby Basket Program, but instead focus on those outside of our church. GCRC will also use the baskets to introduce the parent(s) to our church community and the additional services offered in Halton Hills. • Our Baby Basket Program will ask Links2Care to help identify local families who could use the blessing of a baby basket. • Two representatives from the Baby Basket Program, along with a representative from Links2Care, will call the parent(s) to set up a time for delivery of the baby basket, ideally at the home of the parent(s). The team will only enter the home IF invited in.
Implementation Guidelines	The Implementation Team will ask our existing Baby Basket Committee to take on this community ministry. The Baby Basket Committee may choose to increase the size of their Committee.
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The items in the basket will vary given the unique situation of the parent(s) (e.g. married, only child, multiple children, etc.). Baskets may contain items such as cabinet door locks, age-appropriate toys, baby medicine dispensers, safety nail clippers, baby wipes, formula, diapers, baby cloths, gift cards, etc. • The baskets will include a note stating something to the effect of, "Given in love by members of the Georgetown Christian Reformed Church." The note will also provide the church's complete contact information. • The deaconate will be involved in this ministry. • The Links2Care contact is Cathy Gerrow. She may be reached at 519-853-3310, ext. 223.

8. Enhance Small Groups

Purpose	To provide opportunities for members to build community, trust, and accountability with one another through the process of studying God's Word and praying together. These groups will also provide an avenue for newcomers or those on the "outside" to be enfolded, known, and loved.
Description	<p>Building on our existing structure, the Small Groups Committee will oversee the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect groups with potential new members. • Provide leadership training for small group leaders. • Offer and recommend small group materials. • Create an annual calendar of events to ensure new opportunities and programs are continually being offered to members of our church. • Develop and maintain a list of the small groups and the contact person for each group.
Implementation Guidelines	The Small Groups Committee will implement this initiative.
Additional Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Small Groups Committee is currently lacking a Chairperson. The Committee will need to be strategically restructured and have members added in order to accomplish its mandate. • The Committee should offer short-term small groups to allow church members to join a group without a sense of obligation. These shorter sessions will also allow our busy members to get involved without an ongoing commitment. • The definition of small groups at GCRC is broad; that is, Council, Committees, Coffee Break, etc. can all be considered "small groups." • The Small Groups Committee will also have to find ways to promote groups for specific demographics in our congregation (i.e. women's groups, groups for young families, etc.), as well as groups that are intergenerational. • The Small Groups Committee would have access to coaching and training.