



Board Resources

Learning resources for Elders, Deacons
and Church Management boards.



TRANSFORMING



RESOURCING



NETWORKING



PLANTING

CHURCH MINISTRY RESOURCES

The Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec exists to equip churches and leaders as they engage in their mission from God in their community. While every church will have a slightly different vision and calling, churches have historically functioned with four primary tasks:

- ▶ gathering as a **community** of faithful believers,
- ▶ **worshipping** the living God,
- ▶ **forming** spiritually mature followers of Christ and
- ▶ engaging in **mission** locally and beyond.



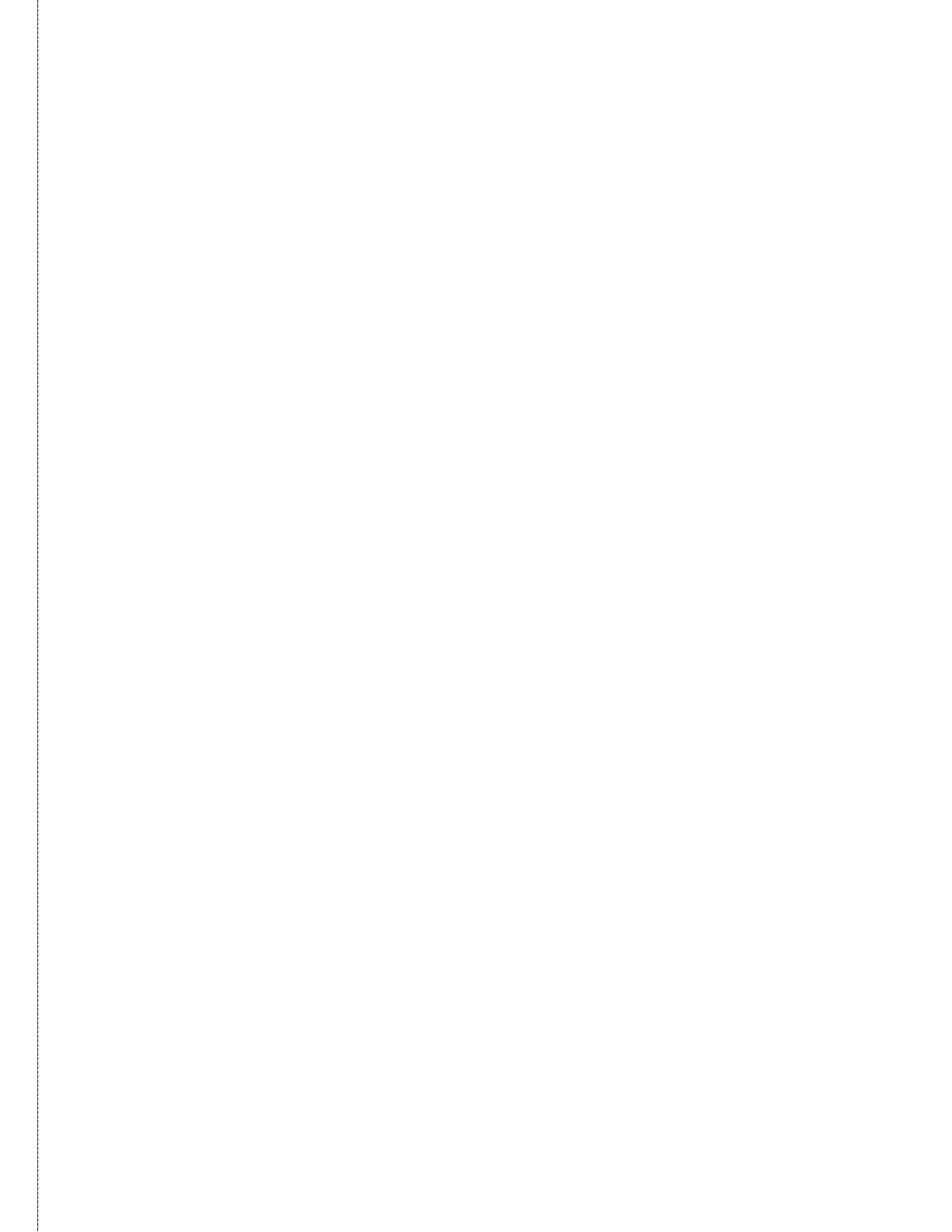
Our desire is to help resource you in all four of these areas.

Usable & Adaptable

These ideas and resources are meant to be simple, usable and adaptable for your own setting. If you find a posture of the heart or practice that you think might be helpful then try it out, use it and adapt it taking into consideration your own church culture and context.

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RESOURCES FOR CBOQ CHURCH BOARDS

DIRECT

(or Strategic mode)

Directing our commitment to
living our mission as a church.

PROTECT

(or Fiduciary mode)

Protecting our people, vision and
resources through accountability.

REFLECT

(or Generative mode)

Reflecting on our commitment
and accountability to God, our
church and our community

Would your board be willing to spend 10-15 minutes of your meeting time to learn together and develop in each of these areas?

Why?

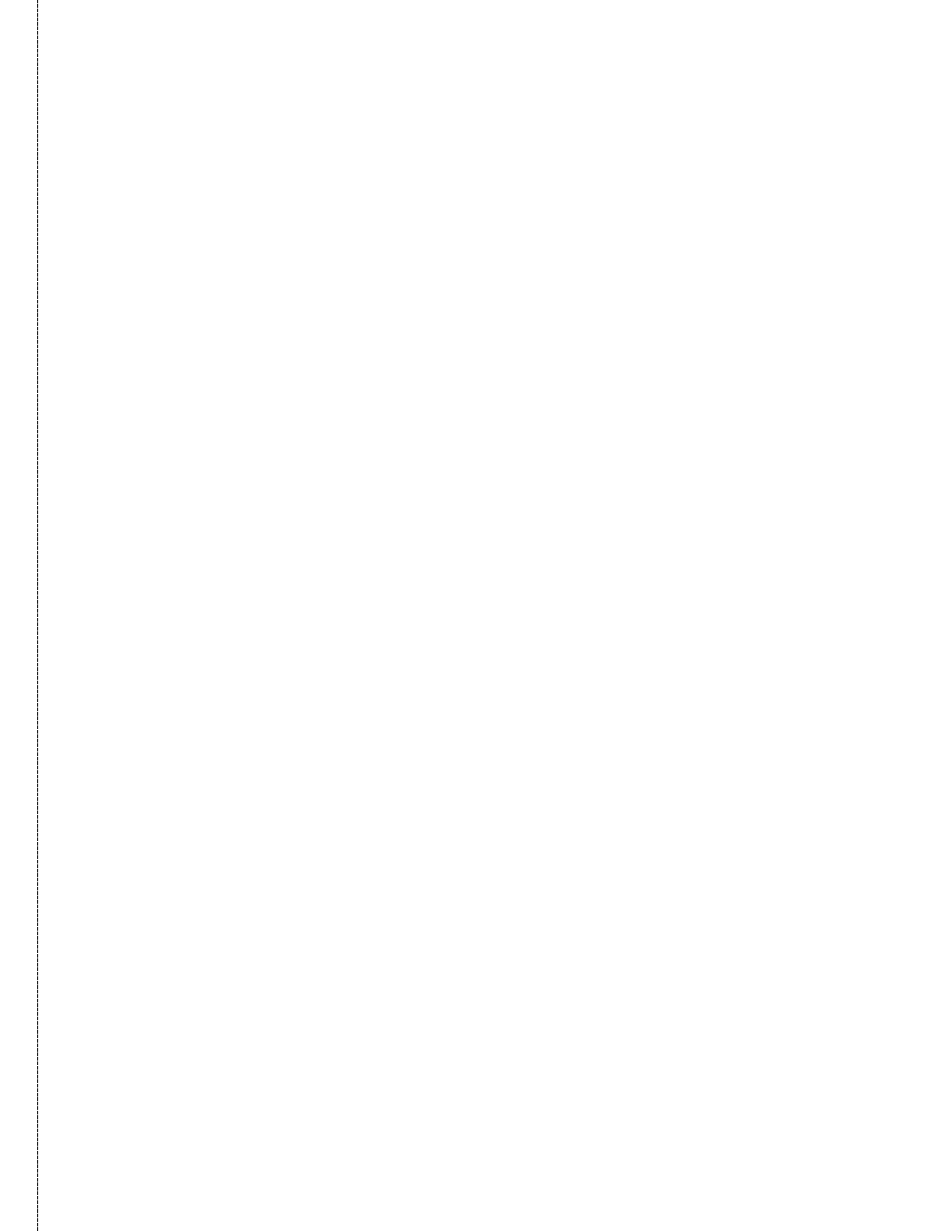
- Scripture points to elders and deacons as being responsible for providing leadership to churches.
- Church life and governance is more complicated than ever before and we need to equip and train our leaders for effective ministry.
- Healthy churches have strong boards.

Who?

- These resources are designed for CBOQ Church Boards (could be Board of Directors, Board of Deacons, Board of Elders, Board of Management, Board of Trustees, etc.). While CBOQ churches are unified in sharing a “congregational governance” approach there are at least a dozen different models of church governance.

What?

- Each handout is meant to be a 10-15 minute learning experience.
- Each handout is meant to be led by a member or the chair of your board.
- Feel free to use or adapt the resource so that it fits best with your people, context and the culture of your board.





BIBLICAL BASIS FOR LEADERSHIP

What does Scripture say about leadership?

STEP ONE
(6 minutes)

Read each of the passages listed below
Ask if there are other passages or examples from scripture worth exploring

For each passage identify a Biblical characteristic of leadership and write it on a white board

- Discuss what would it look like for you, as individuals on your board, to live out each of these characteristics?
- What could we do as a board to spur each other on in these areas?

One idea might be to publish the list of characteristics on the back of your written agendas.

STEP TWO
(3 minutes)

Create a list of leadership characteristics that you want to use to encourage and to keep each other accountable.

STEP THREE
(6 minutes)

Around the table, identify which characteristics are strong in each board member.

Mature and Spiritual Leaders	
• 1 Timothy 3:1 – 10	
• 1 Peter 5:1 – 3	
Fruit of the Spirit	
• Galatians 5:22 – 23	
Christ as Head of Church	
• Ephesians 1:22; 4:15	
• Colossians 1:18	
Other Passages: Add any passages you find applicable to the discussion	
•	
•	

CBOQ Leaders Prayer

Lord, thank you for the specific guidance you have given to leaders. Help me to be a godly leader and encourage others to godliness.

Amen

Group Reflection:

What is one area you find challenging as a board? What is one action step you can take to develop in that challenge?

Personal Reflection:

How can you encourage your identified strength in others? What steps can you take to develop your growth area? Who, on the board, has this strength? Consider asking them for guidance and accountability?



LISTENING | TRUSTING | RESPECTING

As a church how can we deepen our ability to listen (to God, each other, our church family and our community) trust, and respect each other?

*Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life.
Hebrews 12:14*

STEP ONE (5 minutes)

Break into three groups.
Each group brainstorms ideas that the board could do in ONE of the following areas “**active listening**,” “**building trust**,” and “**showing respect**.”

TIPS FOR ACTIVE LISTENING	TIPS FOR BUILDING TRUST	TIPS FOR SHOWING RESPECT

STEP TWO (6 minutes)

As a big group.
Brainstorm next steps that you as a board could do to **listen** better, build **trust** or show **respect**.

NEXT STEPS FOR ACTIVE LISTENING	NEXT STEPS FOR BUILDING TRUST	NEXT STEPS FOR SHOWING RESPECT

STEP THREE
(4 minutes)

As a big group. (4 minutes)

In each area, identify your ONE next step for better **listening**, **trusting** and **respecting**.

OUR ONE LISTENING NEXT STEP	OUR ONE TRUSTING NEXT STEP	OUR ONE RESPECTING NEXT STEP

Group Reflection:

What is one specific item you can pray for in these areas?

Personal Reflection:

Which of these three areas is the greatest challenge for you? What is one thing you can do immediately to develop in this area?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer

Deepen my ability to listen and truly hear you, each other, and our church family. Help me to be trustworthy and respectable in all I do.

Help me to be an example, building trust and showing respect to each other and our church family.

Amen



DEVELOPING AN ANNUAL PLANNING CYCLE

One of the ways you can keep your board discussing important (PROTECT) issues in a regular and systematized way is to develop an annual planning cycle.

STEP ONE
(5 minutes)

Create a list of all activities and responsibilities that happen over the course of a year.

But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.
Psalm 33:11

STEP TWO
(5 minutes)

Slot the tasks that are time specific and include any non-time specific.

STEP THREE
(5 minutes)

As a group, review the cycle and see if there are times of the year when there are too many things on the calendar. Consider make adjustments to the timing to balance things out.

ANNUAL PLANNING CYCLE		
Timeline	Process / Product	Responsibility
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		

July		
August		
September		
October		
November		
December		

Group Reflection:

What is one area or item was can pray for as we develop an annual cycle?

Personal Reflection:

How has this exercise impacted you specifically?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer

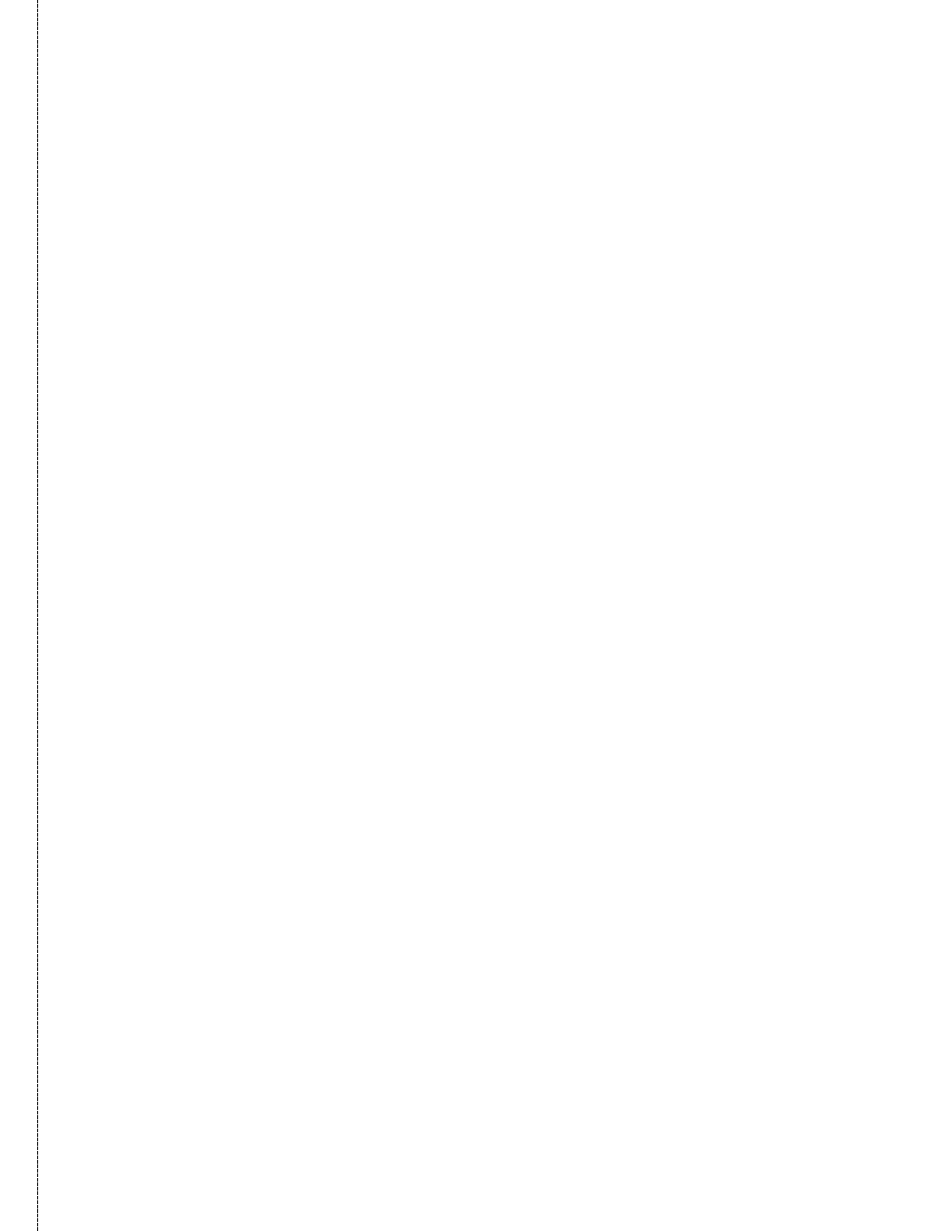
Lord, help me to do my part to protect the leaders and volunteers at our church with a balanced cycle. Help us to know what to keep doing and what might need to stop.

In all things may you be glorified.

Amen

Sample

ANNUAL PLANNING CYCLE		
Timeline	Process / Product	Responsibility
January	-Budget ready for congregational meeting	-Treasurer / Finance Team
February	-Congregational Meeting (2nd Sunday) -T4's to Employees -Tax Receipts	-Chair of Board of Directors -Treasurer -Envelope Steward
March	-Nominating Discussions -Send out requests for Annual Report Submissions	-Board of Directors -Administrator
April	-Annual Report Preparation	-Administrator
May	-AGM Meeting	-Board of Directors Chair & Clerk
June	-Start of new officers and team members -File annual Charity return to Canada Revenue Agency on or before June 30	-Treasurer
July		
August		
September	-Sunday School Teachers and <i>Plan to Protect</i> Training	Ministry Staff
October	-Preliminary Budget Priority Discussions -Review Insurance Policy	Board of Directors and Finance Team
November	-Preparing Budget and Strategic Priorities -Anniversary Service	Board of Directors and Finance Team Ministry Staff
December	-Candle Light Service -Christmas Pageant -Christmas Eve Service -Financial Year End (Dec. 31)	Ministry Staff Ministry Staff Ministry Staff





COMMUNICATION ACCOUNTABILITY RESPONSIBILITY

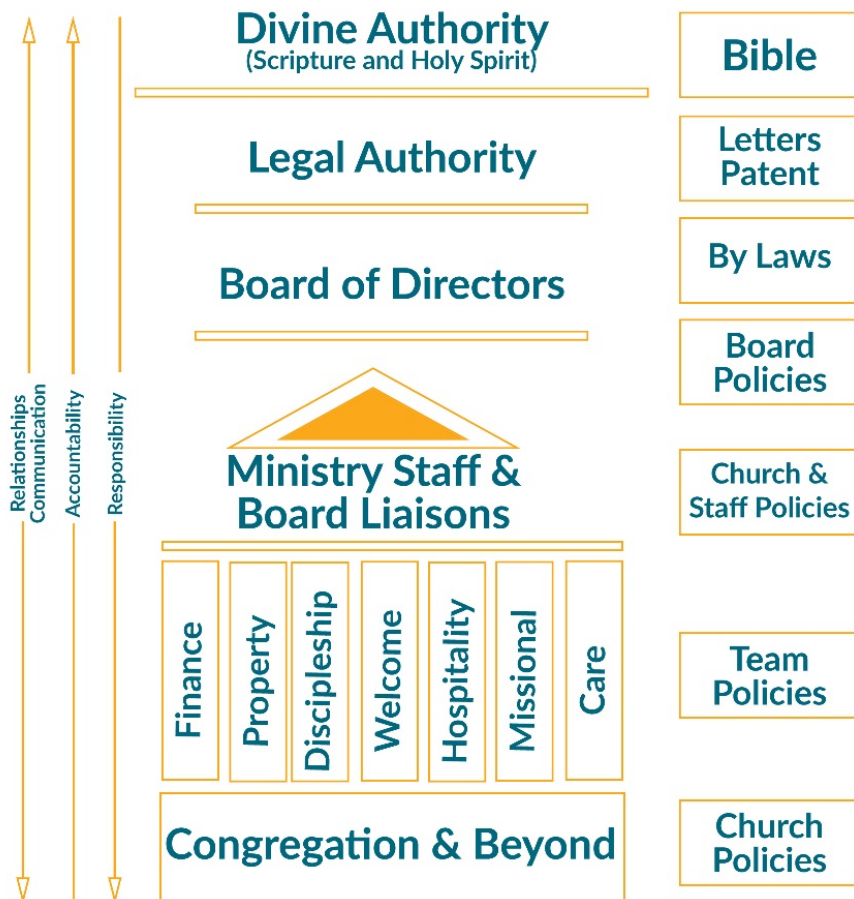
STEP ONE
(5 minutes)

Have someone draw out / or hand out a sample diagram of your church's organizational structure (see example below).

STEP TWO
(5 minutes)

Identify how the words **COMMUNICATION**, **ACCOUNTABILITY** and **RESPONSIBILITY** might fit into your diagram. As a group take a few minutes to define what these terms mean to you and your board.

Sample



*Let us think of ways to
motivate one another to acts of
love and good works.*
Hebrews 10:24

STEP THREE
(5 minutes)

Ask the questions...

What does healthy **communication** look like in our church?

What is one way we, as a board, could improve our communication with other groups in the church?

What does healthy **accountability** look like in our church?

What is one way we, as a board, could improve our accountability to God and to the church?

What does it mean for us to be **responsible** as a board?

What is one way we, as a board, could clarify the lines of responsibility within our congregation?

Group Reflection:

What is one specific item you can pray for in these areas?

Personal Reflection:

Which of these three areas do you need to work on most? What is one thing you can do immediately to develop in this area?



DEVELOPING A BOARD COVENANT

A Board Covenant is a way to solidify as a group the commitments you make to each other. The covenant can be useful in helping shape the ethos of the group, set boundaries and to provide a standard to hold each other accountable.

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2

STEP ONE (1 minute)

Individually think about three basic things you expect of every person when you gather (examples might be... that people show up on time, have done any prior reading, not gossip, etc.)

There is a sample covenant on the next page. Before referring to it, try to work through your own.

STEP TWO (2 minutes)

Go around the circle and share one thing each person wrote. Write responses on a white board or flip chart.

STEP THREE (10 minutes)

Talk about anything that needs to be added or what might be important but not essential.

STEP FOUR (2 minutes)

Have everyone express how they feel about raising this bar of accountability and covenant.

STEP FIVE (2 minutes)

Ask if anyone feels they need extra help in being accountable or if they will struggle with any of the items.

STEP SIX

Spend some time in prayer for each other.

STEP SEVEN

Include the covenant on the back of future agendas. Create a culture where people lovingly hold each other accountable.

Group Reflection:

What is one area or item we can pray for as we develop and uphold a covenant?

Personal Reflection:

What is one area of our covenant that I need to work on? How will this help me to be a more godly leader?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer

Lord, help me to persevere in the race you have set out for me. Help me to follow through on the covenant we have established. Help me to be a more godly leader. Amen

Sample

CHURCH BOARD COVENANT

1. Assume positive intentions of all members. Effectively listen by reserving judgment.
2. Attendance is a priority for all members.
3. Meetings will start and end on time.
4. The Chair will facilitate discussions allowing every voice to be heard.
5. Members will participate fully and stay on task. This includes collective responsibility to point out discussion and actions that contradict these Norms.
6. Members will provide advance notice of agenda items to other members where their specific input may be required, or where item impacts on their assigned ministry committee.
7. “Take a balcony view.” – Don’t take things personally (Ask yourself - which “hat” am I wearing at any moment – Board member? Congregant? Parent? Ministry Leader?)
8. All members will assume collective responsibility for decisions/outcomes of meetings.
9. Recommendations pertaining to a single situation must take into consideration other similar situations (no “one offs”).
10. Confidentiality is required.
11. Members can request prayer time and additional time to process.



3 TASKS OF CHURCH BOARDS

Church Boards operate in three distinct areas: Direct | Protect | Reflect. Healthy boards work toward a balance in these areas.

STEP ONE
(5 minutes)

Read the description below of each of the “Three Tasks of Church Boards”

*He {Jesus} must increase,
but I must decrease.
John 3:30*

DIRECT

(or Strategic mode)

Directing our commitment to living our mission as a church

- As a Board we move in a specific direction to live out our calling and mission as a church community
- We establish strategic, biblically based, directions that allow us to move forward in ministry
- We are in continual interaction and communication with the congregation on how we are best living out our mission as a church community
- Our hearts and minds are discerning how we can best live what God is asking of us

PROTECT

(or Fiduciary mode)

Protecting our people, vision and resources through accountability.

- As a Board we are responsible for protecting our church body and organization by:
 - stewardship of tangible assets
 - acting as a sentinel
 - overseeing operations
 - legal compliance
 - fiscal accountability

GOVERNANCE

- policies developed by the Board that give overall direction to the organization.

MANAGEMENT

- the Board makes decisions to ensure there are sufficient human and financial resources to accomplish the organization's work.

OPERATIONS

- the programs and services of the organization. The Board chooses whether or not to be involved in this area.

REFLECT

(or Generative mode)

Reflecting on our commitment and accountability to God, our church and our community

- As a Board we reflect on what we believe God is calling us as a church towards
- We establish a Discernment Process for the board and the congregation that allows us to listen for God
- We are continually interacting and engaging with the congregation and the community to hear what God is doing
- Our hearts and ears are listening for what God is doing... in our congregation, neighbourhood / city, CBOQ family of churches

STEP TWO

(3 minutes)

Have each person circle the answer that best fits

As a board, collectively we are best at... **DIRECT** | **PROTECT** | **REFLECT**

As a board, collectively we could grow most at... **DIRECT** | **PROTECT** | **REFLECT**

I wish we spent more time talking about... **DIRECT** | **PROTECT** | **REFLECT**

STEP THREE

(5 minutes)

Have people share what they circled and why.

STEP FOUR

(2 minutes)

What patterns are you noticing about the focus of your board?

STEP FIVE

(2 minutes)

What area(s) need more focus? What steps can be taken to develop in that area?

Group Reflection:

What is one specific item you can pray about in this area?

Personal Reflection:

In which area do your gifts most naturally fit? What is one step you can take to develop in an area where you are not as gifted?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer

Lord, I look to you as my leader as I lead.

Help me to be balanced and fair.

May you always be glorified.

Amen



REFRAMING A CHALLENGE

Sometimes a challenge gets us stuck in a negative spiral. One of the ways we can address the challenge is by reframing the challenge.

STEP ONE
(1 Minute)

Have one person on the board or a pastor identify a real challenge that the church is facing today. Have the person explain the situation (as they see it) to the rest of the board in 1 minute.

Note: The challenge identified may not be the most significant challenge. You may not all agree that it is actually a challenge or an issue.

STEP TWO
(4 Minutes)

Based on the challenge just named discuss the following question....

- How has this board been directly or indirectly responsible for this challenge?

Name of the challenge

How have we, as a board, been DIRECTLY responsible for this challenge?	How have we, as a board, been INDIRECTLY responsible for this challenge?

So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.

Deuteronomy 31:6

STEP THREE
(5 Minute)

Discuss as a Board...

Regardless of the size of this challenge, if Jesus were to physically walk into your board meeting today, how might he respond to you?

STEP FOUR
(2 Minutes)

Have one person pray for wisdom and then allow for 1 minute of silence for people to individually pray for wisdom.

STEP FIVE
(2 Minutes)

Have one person pray for courage and then allow for 1 minute of silence for people to individually pray for courage.

STEP SIX
(2 Minutes)

Each person is tasked with the responsibility to pray for how they can both directly and indirectly address the challenge.

CBOQ Leader's Prayer

Lord, give me the peace to rest in your care and the courage to become the person that is able to deal well with what is before us.

Amen.

Group Reflection:

How does Deuteronomy 31:6 affect your perspective on a challenge? What other verses offer similar encouragement?

Personal Reflection:

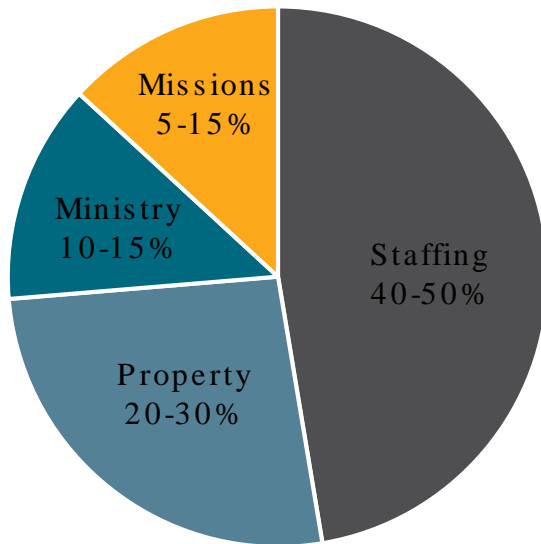
When faced with a challenge, what is your first reaction? Fight or Flight? How does Deuteronomy 31:6 encourage you?



50,000ft BUDGET DISCUSSION

How we spend our money is directly proportionate to what we really believe is important for our church.

Average CBOQ Church Expenses

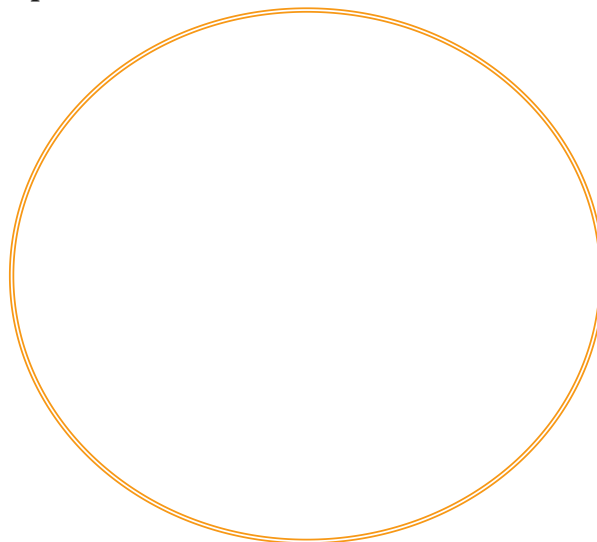


Because every church does ministry so differently, there is a wide variety in how churches allocate their resources. Some churches rent space, because they find that a better fit in the long run than owning a building and having to pay exorbitant upkeep and utilities costs. Some churches have lower staffing costs because they utilize more volunteers from their congregants. Some churches are intentional in “tithing 10%” of what comes in as an example to the congregants.

Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.
Matthew 6:21

STEP ONE
(5 minutes)

From your own budget, draw a pie chart showing the budget categories of your church. How do your church expenses compare to the average CBOQ church expenses?



STEP TWO
(2 minutes)

What are the larger budget categories? Do these reflect your church values?
(i.e. – if your church values – worship, fellowship, discipleship and mission are these values categorized in your budget?)

STEP THREE
(3-5 minutes)

Discuss what changes or adjustments need to be made to better reflect the values of the church? Make a specific commitment to follow up on this discussion at the appropriate levels (agenda items for another meeting, congregational vote, further research)

STEP FOUR
(3-5 minutes)

What budgetary goals might you consider for the next five years?
(i.e. – we want to increase our local missions giving by at least 2% until we get to 15%)

**THE WAY YOU USE
YOUR BUDGET IS
AN INDICATOR OF
YOUR ACTUAL
VISION FOR YOUR
CHURCH.**

- Goal for Year One:** _____
- Goal for Year Two:** _____
- Goal for Year Three:** _____
- Goal for Year Four:** _____
- Goal for Year Five:** _____

Group Reflection:

How do money and ministry connect? What is one thing you can do immediately to better align the two?

Personal Reflection:

What do you find most challenging about finances? How do your personal financial practices reflect your values?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer
Lord, I acknowledge that it all yours.
May we honour you in the way that
we use the gifts that you give us.
May we reflect your love and
glory in all we do.
Amen



CHANGE INITIATIVE

The following may be a useful tool when having to work through a change initiative with your Board. There are multifaceted, complex challenges facing churches these days. Leadership and organizational change expert, Ronald Heifetz identifies two types of challenges: Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges.

STEP ONE

(1 minute)

NAME A CHANGE

As a board, decide together in one minute, using one sentence, one significant area of change that your congregation is experiencing or you are planning on leading the congregation through. Write this one sentence on a white board.

STEP TWO

(4 minutes)

TWO TYPES OF CHANGE

Have one person read the description of Technical Problems and one person read the description of Adaptive Challenges

Technical Problems

1. Easy to identify
2. Often quicker and easier (cut-and-dried) solutions
3. Often can be solved by an authority or expert
4. Require change in just one or a few places; often contained within the church's established boundaries
5. People are generally receptive to technical solutions
6. Solutions can often be implemented quickly – even by an edict

Adaptive Challenges

1. Difficult to identify (easy to deny)
2. Require changes in values, beliefs, roles, relationships & approaches to work
3. People with the problem do the work of solving it
4. Require change in numerous places; usually across the church's established boundaries
5. People often resist even acknowledging adaptive challenges
6. "Solutions" require experiments & new discoveries; they can take a long time to implement & cannot be implemented by edict

Examples

Providing better quality financial statements

Introducing new instruments and worship songs

Starting a prayer meeting

Tweaking and updating board agenda's and minutes

Developing a culture of stewardship & generosity

Establishing an atmosphere of intentional God honouring worship

Fostering a commitment to prayer throughout the congregation

Empowering the Board to provide leadership and serving the needs of the congregation

STEP THREE

(5 minutes)

CLARIFYING THE CHALLENGE

When considering the challenge before you, as identified in STEP ONE, how, break into two groups, have one group answer the question under the **Technical Change** category and the other group answer the question under the **Adaptive Change** category.

Technical Change

Identify three ways in which the challenge before us is a technical issue?

1.

2.

3.

Adaptive Change

Identify three ways in which the challenge before us is an adaptive challenge?

1.

2.

3.

STEP FOUR

(5 minutes)

Open discussion as a board...

What given what we know about the nature of the change before us, what do we need to do to operationalize the ideas we just identified?

Further questions
for consideration

1. Is there an “elephant in the room” that we haven’t named yet?
2. Do we have a working discernment practice to tackle this?
3. How can we use this situation to develop leadership capacity?
4. How can we think theologically about this situation?

OTHER RESOURCES

- Church and Change Workshop
- Ronald Heifetz, The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

CBOQ Leader's Prayer

*Lord, give me
the heart to seek you
the wisdom to discern your leading
the courage to risk my comfort
the perseverance to follow through with what I said I would do.
Amen.*

Group Reflection:

What is it about change that makes it such a challenge? What is one thing you can do to encourage the church in the midst of change?

Personal Reflection:

What is it about change that makes it challenging for you personally? How can you encourage others around you in the midst of change?

3. What are some barriers you are experiencing to church health?

STEP TWO
(5 minutes)

What next steps could you take to address one or more of the barriers you have identified?

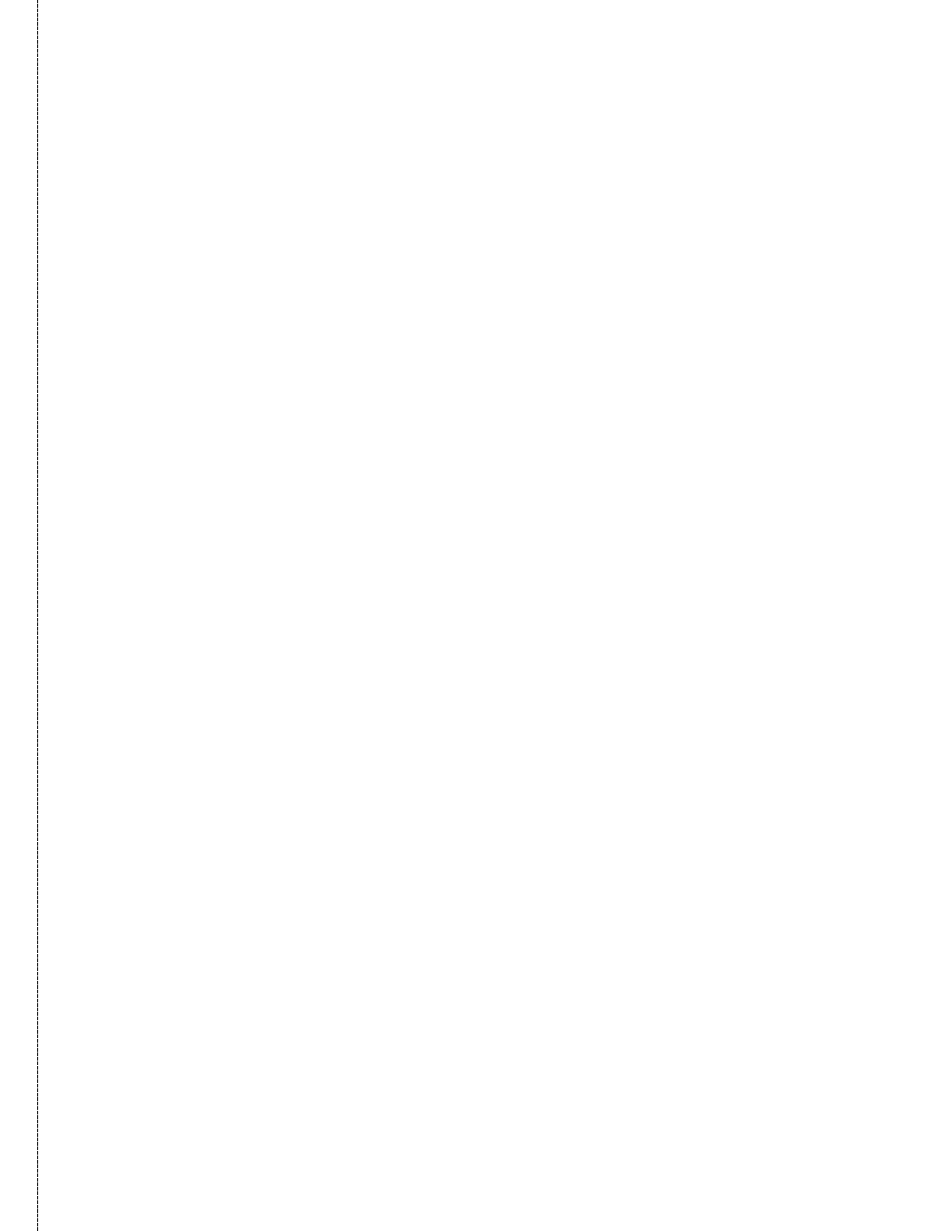
CBOQ Leader's Prayer
Lord, fix our eyes on you. We want to
serve you and reflect your love plainly to
the world around us.
Amen.

Group Reflection:

How can you more effectively communicate the vision of the church?

Personal Reflection:

Do you have a personal mission statement, life verse or life plan? Consider writing one.





WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?

One of the ways you can build organizational capacity is to clarify the responsibilities of each position, board, committee and ministry team.

STEP ONE
(3 minutes)

Have everyone in the room write out as many tasks and responsibilities that falls into each of the categories on the chart below (you may need to use different categories for your church – support staff, other pastors, etc. Agree on these before you begin).

*Just as a body, though one,
has many parts, but all its
many parts form one body,
so it is with Christ.
I Corinthians 12:12*

Pastor / Staff	Board	Ministries / Committees / Teams	Congregation

STEP TWO
(3 minutes)

Once you have each listed as many responsibilities you can think of, compile your lists together on a whiteboard or flip chart. At this point, you are simply listing what you wrote. Don't take time to analyze or defend your position.

STEP THREE
(1 minute)

Identify items of agreement with a checkmark. Celebrate your agreement and if there is agreement on everything celebrate that you are all on the same page.

STEP FOUR
(2 minutes)

Identify items of disagreement with an X. Again, you aren't trying to solve your differences at this point. You are simply identifying if there are differences.

STEP FIVE
(4 minutes)

Create a list of areas that are working well and a list of areas that you will need to work on. At this point you are simply creating the list – don't try to solve issues
If there are over lapping areas of responsibility, it might be helpful to clarify the specific responsibilities that fall under each category.

Areas of agreement	Areas to work on

STEP SIX
(1 minute)

Possible next steps...

1. things are good, this has been a good exercise and no further action is needed
2. let's be strategic to talk about these matters at upcoming meetings
3. let's empower a sub-group to explore this matter and make proposals for review.

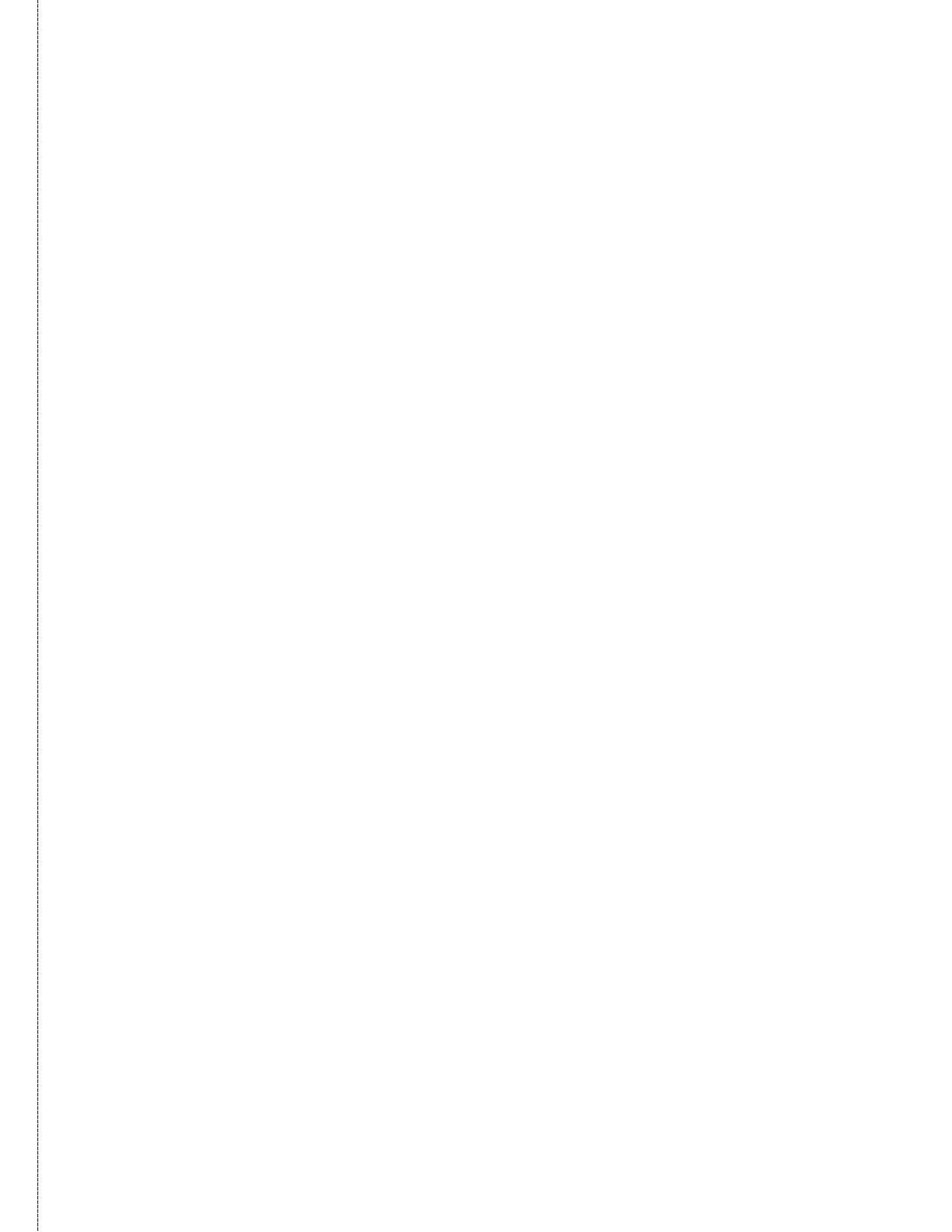
CBOQ Leader's Prayer
Lord, give me
the heart to seek you
the wisdom to discern your leading
the courage to risk my comfort
the perseverance to follow through with what I
said I would do.
Amen.

Group Reflection:

What is the gift mix around the table? How can you encourage one another from your strengths?

Personal Reflection:

Do you know your spiritual gifts? If not, find out. If so, with your strongest gift, how can you encourage someone today? With your weakest gift, what is one thing you can do to grow in that area?





CRITICAL, URGENT & IMPORTANT

Helping you and your church prioritize the challenges before you and change the conversation from problem to possibility.

STEP ONE (3-5 minutes)

As an individual, list the top 5 to 10 issues that you consider significant issues today for the life of your church.

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

STEP TWO (3-5 minutes)

As an individual: Go back and categorize the issues as:

- Important (of significant worth)
- Urgent (calling for immediate attention) [maximum of 2 items]
- Critical (crucial and vital) [maximum of 2 items]

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

STEP THREE
(5 minutes)

As a board: Combine your lists. This is just a recording exercise. If there are similar issues that some have identified in more than one category, record them duplicate times.

- What did you discern is the most critical issue?

STEP FOUR
(5 minutes)

As a board consider:

- Is there one step we can take immediately to address this?
- Is this an agenda item for our next meeting?
- Is there something that requires a vote?
- Do we need a retreat to deal with this issue?
- Do we need to empower the pastor, staff, board or someone else to tackle this issue?
- Do we need someone outside the church to give us guidance?

STEP FIVE
(2 minutes)

Determine who is responsible for following up

STEP SIX

Optional:

Consider – what will keep us from accomplishing this?

Group Reflection:

What is one specific item you can pray for in these areas?

Personal Reflection:

Is there something on this list that affects you personally more than any other? What is one thing you can do to contribute a positive impact?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer:

Dear God, help us to be honest about the challenges and remember that you are our strength. Help us to follow your ways in all that we do. Amen



RECEIVING FEEDBACK

One of the responsibilities of being on a Board is to regularly receive feedback from congregants. While we can't control the feedback we are given, you can control how you receive it.

There are three common triggers we experience when we receive feedback.

Truth Triggers

The feedback about yourself or the church seems wrong or off target. Sometimes we don't receive feedback because we believe it is unfair or lousy.

Two ways you could receive feedback better is...

1. **First Understand** - *Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood*
2. **See Your Blind Spots** - Blind spots are when others see something in you or the church that you are unaware of or ignore

Relationship Triggers

Regardless of the feedback itself, sometimes we are not able to receive the feedback based on our prior or current relationship with the person offering the feedback.

Two ways you could listen well is...

1. **Don't Switch track** - Disentangle *what* from *who* by trying to hear the feedback without taking up the relationship issues
2. **Identify the Relationship System** - feedback in a church is usually about a bigger dynamic than simply you *or* the person talking with you.

Identity Triggers

Sometimes we can't receive feedback because it threatens our own identity or safety. Dealing with identity triggers means being able to hear what the person is actually saying and removing your identity from the actual feedback.

Two ways you could listen well is...

1. **Dismantle Distortions** - learn to keep feedback in perspective, work to correct distorted thinking
2. **Cultivate a Growth Identity** - do you see a situation as a challenge or a failure?

If you listen to constructive criticism, you will be at home among the wise.
Proverbs 15:31

STEP ONE
2 minutes

In pairs, talk about a time that you received feedback that you did not take well? Why?

Separate Appreciation, Coaching and Evaluation

Sometimes someone's feedback and our ability to receive it are at odds because we have different expectations from what the person intended to offer.

Appreciation
(thanks)

Coaching
(here's a better way to do it)

Evaluation
(here's where you stand)

STEP TWO
2 minutes

In pairs again share about a time you wanted appreciation for something and you got coaching or evaluation? How did you respond?

STEP THREE
5 minutes

Again in pairs, consider the following Scenario

A board agrees to put together an event. Four board members agree to help put the event on but for various reasons one person is left doing the bulk of the work. The event was okay but someone comes up to that individual afterwards suggesting how the event could have been better.

*CBOQ Leaders
Prayer*

*Dear God, help me
to be humble both in
giving and receiving
feedback. Help me
to reflect Jesus in all
I say and do. Amen*

How would you have felt in this scenario if you were the person who put in all the effort?

How would you have felt in this scenario if you were the person offering the coaching?

Group Reflection

We can't always control the kind of feedback we receive. As a board, what is one thing you can do to protect yourself and others from the hurtful effects of poorly expressed feedback?

Personal Reflection

We can't always control the kind of feedback we receive. What is one thing you can do to protect yourself and others from the hurtful effects of poorly expressed feedback?



FROM FINANCIAL CRISIS TO MISSION

Many churches are facing tough financial realities. Often conversations about finances run in circles and patterns don't change. If approached with new insight and energy a financial crisis can be a catalyst to move a church towards mission.

*Humanly speaking,
it is impossible.
But with God
everything is possible.
Matthew 19:26*

STEP ONE 2-3 minutes

In groups of 2 or 3 people, discuss the following question:

In my own personal life, I view money as important because it allows me to...

1. Do what I want to do.
2. Feel secure.
3. Get ahead in life.
4. Buy things for others.



Why?

STEP TWO 3-4 minutes

Big group discussion:

How has your own personal experience of money impacted the issues you raise, the questions you ask or the anxiety you feel when you talk about stewarding the money of the church?

There is no such thing as a financial crisis for the Creator God. Often church's flounder and experience financial crisis when they have lost sight of the mission God has for them. The kinds of questions you may want to ask are...

- *How can we turn this financial crisis into an opportunity for greater mission?*
- *How do we shift our conversations and prayers from focusing on problems to exploring new possibilities for us to live out our church's mission?*

STEP THREE
7 minutes

1. Is our church experiencing mission drift?
Yes | No | Not sure

People will give towards mission and vision. Paying bills, status quo and administration is rarely inspiring. Are we providing a God sized mission that people want to be a part of or has our mission become stale?

2. Are we being faithful to what we say we prioritize?
Sometimes churches say they value – worship, mission, discipleship, community, etc. However, if you were to examine their budget, usually the biggest expense is personnel and the second biggest expense is property.

List the top 4 values that your church holds or the mission your church states is important? (these can be broad categories – ie missions, worship, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

If you unable to list your priorities then it is time to revisit why your church exists.

Group Reflection

What is the connection between budget and mission? What is one way you can communicate this connection more clearly?

Personal Reflection

What is your definition of mission? How does this affect your personal missional involvement?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer

Lord, help me to understand your priorities and apply them in my own life and the life of my church. Help me to step up in this area.

Amen



BAPTIST IDENTITY

Have you ever wondered “why Baptist”? Aren’t we all just Christians? Don’t labels just tear down and confuse people? (often yes AND they are vital when looking in a medicine cabinet) Why do Baptists have all these committees? Could it be that our unique Baptist identity might actually help us navigate the complexities and uncertainties of life in 21st Century, post-Christian central Canada?

STEP ONE

5 minutes

Have each person read out loud one of the Baptist Distinctives:

Jesus is Lord

Baptists believe that Jesus Christ, being eternally God, only begotten Son and the visible expression of the invisible God, effectively procured salvation for all creation through his death, burial and resurrection. He is the one assigned by God the Father to rule with authority over all of creation. Every area of the believer’s life and the life of the church is to be subject to the Lord.

Worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. 1 Peter 3:15

The Word of God is the Authoritative Rule of Faith & Practice

Baptists believe that God communicates his will through the inspired Word of God. For Baptists, the Bible is the final authority in matters of faith and practice. It is to be interpreted responsibly under the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit within the community of faith.

The Priesthood of All Believers

The Bible affirms the value of each person as having been created in the image of God, and also declares each person morally responsible for his/her own nature and behaviour. Baptists believe that inherent in the worth of each person is also the right and competency of each individual personally to deal directly with God through Jesus Christ. This principle also suggests our responsibility to serve other believers in intercession and nurture: we are priests to each other. Baptists believe that no group or individual has any right to compel others—forcefully or politically—to believe or worship as they do. Rather, Baptists have historically been champions of **religious liberty**.

A Believers' Church

Baptists believe that Jesus Christ chooses to form his church by bringing together believers for the purpose of worship, witness, fellowship and ministry (both spiritual and social). Baptists recognize the church universal as all who truly profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. They also profess their understanding of the church as being visibly expressed in local congregations. Each local church must thus be made up of believers who, upon their profession of faith and their baptism (almost always by immersion), are incorporated into the local church through the activity of the Holy Spirit. Baptists believe that **Believers' Baptism** and the **Lord's Supper** are the **two ordinances** required by the New Testament and are to be administered by the local church.

Mission & Evangelism

We have a story to tell that is mandated by our Lord in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20. Our calling is to share God's message of love and salvation with each person. Each Christian has a duty to share their faith with others. Baptists continue to be very active in mission efforts, both in local and global contexts. We recognize that mission is not just evangelism, but also includes promoting justice, social welfare, healing, education and peace in the world. It is a holistic approach that expresses care for both the needs of the human soul and the social needs that affect all of life.

Church Autonomy & Association

Government in a local church is controlled by the principles of the priesthood of all believers, the Lordship of Christ, the authority of the Scriptures and the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. Christ, present in the lives of congregational members, leads them corporately to discover and obey his mind and will. Such '**congregational government**' calls for and expresses the equality and responsibility of believers under the Lordship of Christ. Baptist churches also recognize the need to temper the exercise of their autonomy in order to '**associate**' by linking regionally, nationally and internationally for ministry, mission, support and fellowship.

Freedom & Equality

Emerging from our convictions about the priesthood of all believers, we affirm that in Jesus Christ all people are equal. Each one is free to be in relationship with God and to express a faith that is not coerced. Faith cannot be predetermined by someone else, but is the right of and responsibility of each individual as they seek a relationship with God based on their own personal commitments. A further extension of the principle of the Lordship of Christ and the priesthood of believers is to be found in the Baptist conviction that there must exist a **separation between the church and civil governments**.

STEP TWO
10 minutes

Discuss the following questions:

1. Which of the Baptist Distinctives is our church best at living out?
2. Which of the Baptist Distinctives is a challenge for our church to live out well?
3. In many ways, the Baptist Distinctives are very similar to other Christian groups. What is the value of acknowledging and teaching these distinctives in the 21st Century?

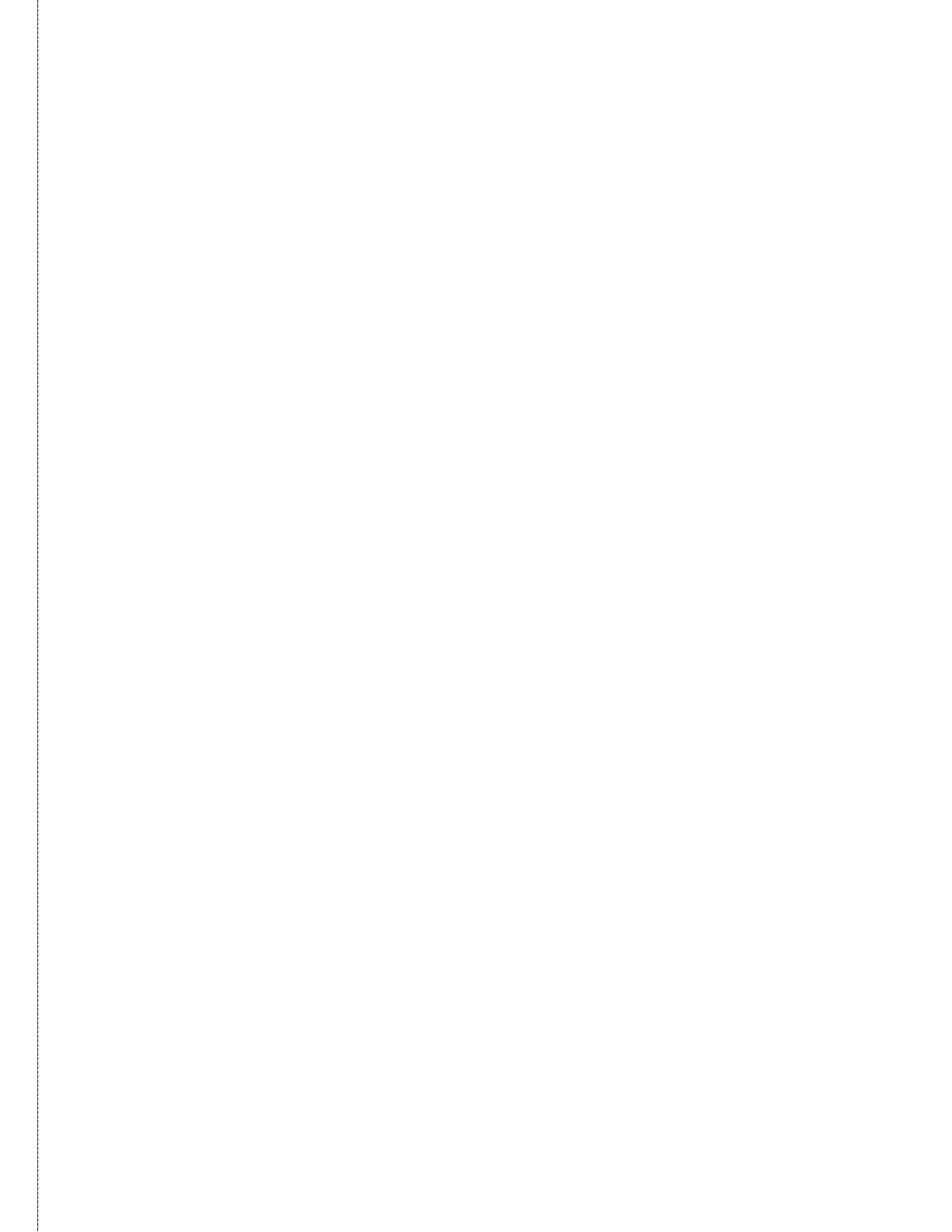
Group Reflection:

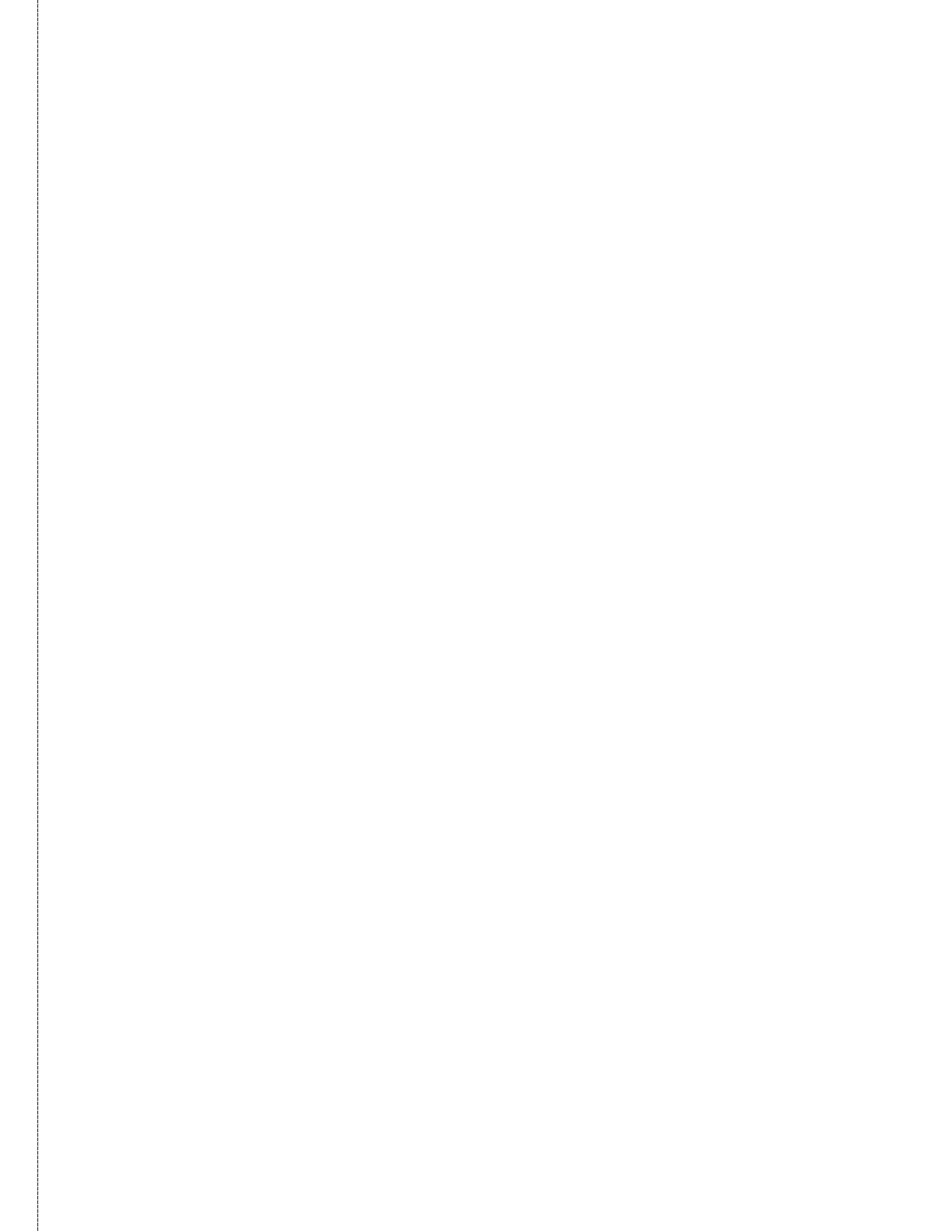
What is one specific item you can pray for your church related to this area?

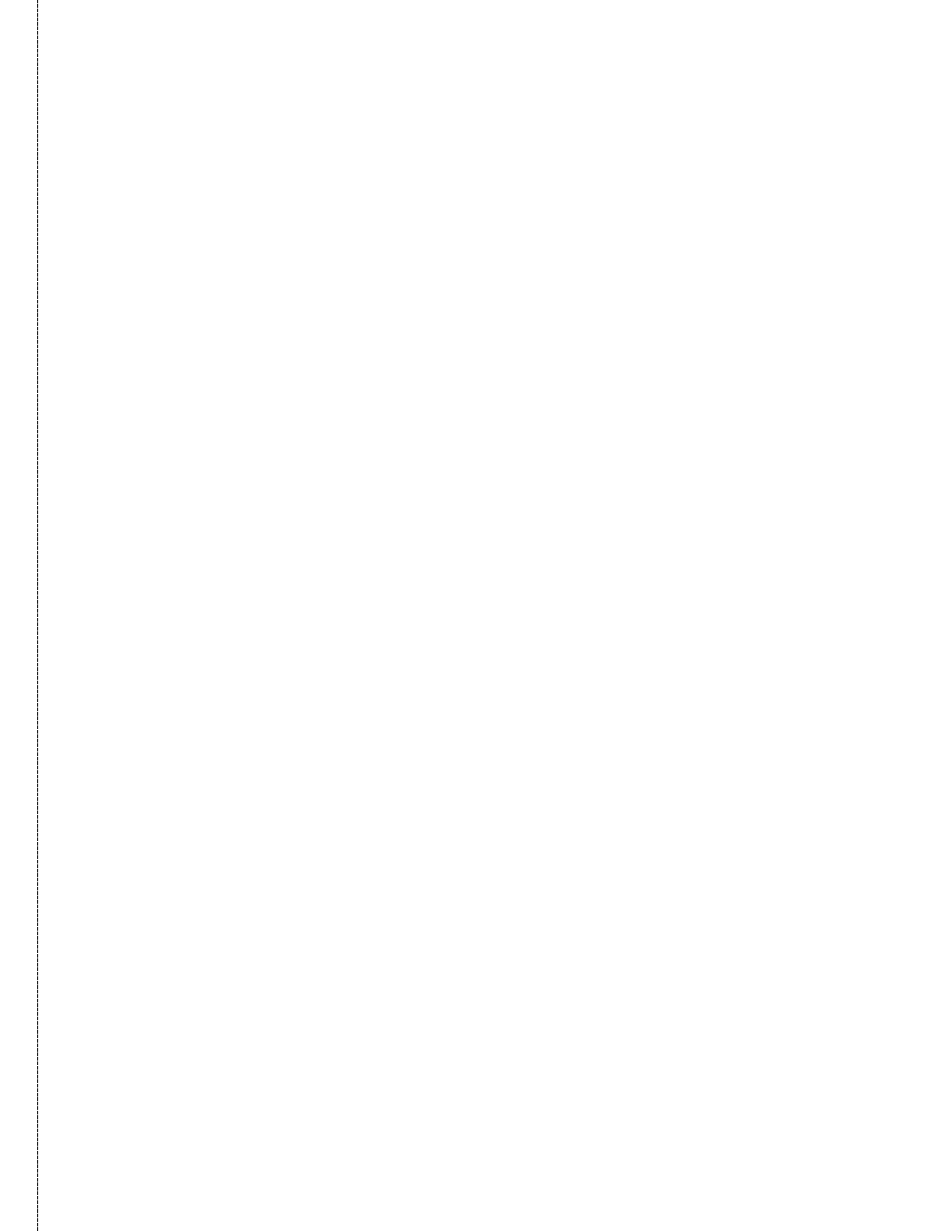
Personal Reflection:

While all of the distinctives are important, is there one that stands out as more important to you? Why?

CBOQ Leaders Prayer
Lord, help us to be faithful to you and to live out our faith in a way that
reflects you and your glory.
Amen







Dallas Friesen
Director of Church Life and Leadership
416-620-2958 | dfriesen@baptist.ca
www.baptist.ca



5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6H3
P. 416 622 8600 • F. 416 622 2308 • E. cboq@baptist.ca
baptist.ca