

Yuma Christian Church Elders and Search Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present this outline of how I will accomplish all of the things desired in the Strategic Plan set forth by the Eldership of Yuma Christian Church based on the needs that have been identified through prayer, thought, and communication with the congregation. I know that this is only scratching the surface of goals that need to be met to grow the Kingdom of God here in Yuma. I know that all of you as well as myself want to see Yuma Christian Church be a major player in that growth.

I am aware however that without help I will fail. My first priority has to be my family and making sure that they are being cared for physically, emotionally, and spiritually. A church is made up of people and it takes people to make these things happen. It is more than one man can handle. Therefore my biggest goal is to facilitate an environment for ministry leaders to step up and help make this church a place for people to find and get connected to Jesus in the most efficient way possible.

The goals of Yuma Christian Church are to follow the Great Commission and raise disciples to spread the Gospel to the people in our own community that have either not really heard the message or have just ignored it. To be successful we have to teach people to serve others selflessly. To make sure that we raise disciples from every gender, age group, and ethnicity. We need to make sure that we are caring for all people equally.

My goal is to empower the people who come into this building to better themselves and help them realize that each of us have an important role to play in Christ's Church. I believe that is what the Strategic Plan is asking of the minister. Outlined below I put the specific goals set forth by the Eldership in order starting with what I believe needs the most energy and attention. I am also including a description of how I see us accomplishing these goals as a church.

1. Develop a discipleship program

This is the most important thing we can do as a church. This will require the most time and work to accomplish effectively. True disciples are theologically strong and prepared to effectively spread the love and word of Christ to the people around them. They need to be able to recognize and help develop the gifts of the people they are ministering to. Very literally, if this church is going to be successful at everything else on this Strategic Plan, we absolutely have to create strong disciples.

The place we need to start is finding a good discipleship program for people to go through. After talking with Pastor Marcos I have realized that there are programs available through some colleges that offer extensive discipleship training through a class setting. These classes come complete with a certificate and a graduation. They take a couple of years to complete but at the end they produce people who have grown in faith and who desire to serve Christ.

When people are willing to invest that kind of time and effort on something, it produces a sense of accomplishment. More importantly it produces people who have the necessary tools to effectively minister to others. A good discipleship program will help us better identify church leaders. I believe that by building disciples we can build ministry opportunities in this church that will benefit and draw more people.

I foresee the discipleship program becoming the baseline tool we will use to institute ministry leaders. If they are willing to put in the time and effort to go through the program, they will be willing to put the time and effort into the ministry they are going to be running.

I will devote time during the week looking into these programs and find one that fits Yuma Christian Church. Then I will work to implement this program with the Eldership. Once we agree on a program I will go through the program along with the disciples in training. When we see growth in people that desire to become disciples of Christ, we will also see the congregation grow. I want that growth to require us as a church to consistently offer discipleship training.

2. Establish youth ministry programs directed at grades 6-12

I think this is one of the most important goals we have as a church. If we can create a strong youth program we will see this church grow. We already have a well established ministry targeting girls in this age group. My focus would be to create a young men's ministry to complement that. I know that Davin Doyle and Lucas Lubbers have both stated interest in this area of ministry. I will meet with them to discuss their ideas and create a plan to move forward with.

My goal would be to start something small one evening every other week. We could meet at the church and go to Quintech or the park on nice days to do some team building activities and then move back to the church for a snack and devotional/prayer time.

Eventually I would like to make something happen every week and start to do monthly events that would bring the two groups together to start and build a community within our young people.

I would work with Jennifer Koolstra and the other youth leaders to determine what activities would be beneficial for combined youth group to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all the kids.

I will develop an advertising program for social media as well as encourage our youth to spread the word to their friends. I have recently heard that some schools are now allowing Chaplains. I will talk to the administrations of the school district to see if I could serve in that capacity. Becoming someone the kids know and trust will go a long way to creating a successful youth ministry that will impact their lives with Jesus.

3. Plan and implement small groups

I am encouraged by the small groups that have been forming. I honestly think that small groups need to be organic and focus on the issues that people in our congregation are facing. When a need arises a group needs to be formed. At the point of need I will be trying to identify good group leaders to step up. The ultimate goal would be to make sure that all ministry leaders get the opportunity to go through the discipleship program. I think that developing a good discipleship program will foster more small groups. I think that it will create groups that will last longer and be more fruitful.

I will start by listening to the congregation and identify what ministries are really needed right now. My plan is to meet with and spend time with each family/person in this church. I want to build relationships and fellowship with the people in this church community. As I get to know people I believe that I will be able to start to get a feel for the needs of the congregation as well as begin to identify potential leaders to take care of the ministries needed.

4. Establish organized structure and support to manage growth

As I really get to know members in this congregation I will be looking for people with qualifications to be Deacons/Servant Leaders. I will then present these people to the Eldership. We need to develop this program to raise up Deacons/Servant Leaders to oversee the ministry leaders. A deacon would be someone who has gone through the discipleship training as well as the qualification training as determined by the Eldership of this church.

I will work directly with the Deacons/Servant Leaders to get insight as to how the ministries that I am not directly a part of are functioning. I will do this through monthly meetings with the Deacons/Servant Leaders.

5. Organize and provide a second service

This is the easiest of all and the one that we will institute immediately. I believe that the second service at this point should be a midweek service. There are people who cannot make it to church on Sunday. There are people who may even attend other churches on Sunday that would join us another night of the week. Whether we do a full service or we do an abbreviated service that has different focuses each month is the question.

This might be a prime opportunity to give some of the other ministry or church leaders a chance to preach about what God has put on their hearts and what God is doing in their ministries. This might be a good place for testimonials. This might be a good place for nights of worship only. This might be a good place to hold nights of prayer. The possibilities are endless but the need is now.

If we grow enough to require a second service on Sunday we will offer one. We can talk about how that might affect service times when that becomes a need.

Beyond that, a good chunk of time during the week will be spent on research and sermon writing. Ministry is the job of the church and as the preacher, my job is to present good messages that help inspire and guide the ministry leaders as well as the congregation. The sermon needs to be theologically sound and relevant to the people I am engaging. Sermons should set the direction for the church and bring people into a closer relationship with Jesus.

Education is a vital part of ministry. The next 4-6 years I will be taking classes and doing homework to earn my Bachelors degree. While I do not agree that people cannot be qualified to be a minister without a degree, I do believe there is value in furthering education. I believe that a preacher owes it to themselves and their congregation to continually look for ways to grow in knowledge and faith. This should always serve as a way to further our relationship with Jesus and encourage others to seek a deeper understanding and relationship with Jesus because of it.

I also plan to serve on the Yuma Ministerial Alliance, volunteer as a Chaplain with Emergency Services, continue ministry at Harmony Home, and offer services to the hospital to ensure that people have access to spiritual care when they need it most. I will also serve as a presence with the Caring Pregnancy Resource Center and make sure to be in the community and working to make a difference for the people in Yuma County.