

Sample Revitalization Strategy for “Any” Baptist Church

1. **The foundation is vital.**

- a. Pray - Use times with the people to pray specifically for people who need Christ or need a church family. This can be a men’s prayer group meeting with the pastor before Church on Sunday morning or at another time of the week. Wednesday night prayer meeting can be turned into a time to pray for individuals and the community.
- b. Communicate - Be very clear about your vision for the church, any goals you set, and the purpose for the goals. When you think you have said it enough say it one more time. The people are just beginning to get it.
- c. Move – Move at a pace the church can follow. One leader said, “If you think you are leading and no one is following you are just taking a walk.” As pastor you want to be out front of your people but not so far that they cannot see you!
- d. Preach - Preach sermons that teach the church the importance of taking down the walls and reaching into the community. Base this on the model of Jesus and the model of the first century church.

2. **Find ways to let people know about your church and to invite them to attend.**

- a. Google - People who are looking for a church today do not use the yellow pages; they Google your name. Did you know people can write reviews on your church? Positive on-line reviews can be leveraged for good. Have your people go to Google, church finder, yp, etc. and write positive reviews of their experience at Any Baptist Church. Do not underestimate the importance of this.
- b. Website - The next place this generation looks is at the church’s website. Look at it through the eyes of a guest not simply a member. Make it user friendly. Make sure your website creates the image you want people to have of the church.
- c. Neighborhood blitz - This is a great activity leading up to Easter.
 - i. Choose a Saturday about two weeks before Easter.
 - ii. Choose a neighborhood(s) to blitz.
 - iii. Start a month in advance enlisting the church family to join with you on the Saturday of the neighborhood blitz. Have people sign up to attend.
 - iv. Map the neighborhood streets you want to cover.
 - v. Create a door hanger that gives your church name, time of the Easter service, and a personal invitation for individuals and families to attend your church on that day.
 - vi. On the Saturday of the blitz create teams of two or three individuals each to make these visits.
 - vii. Give instructions: Remind the people of the purpose. This is not designed to be an in home visit. Be positive even if someone is negative at a home being visited. Be respectful. Hand the door hanger to residents and personally invite them to the Easter service; if no one is home leave the hanger on the door.

- d. Lead your people to list 5 people they want to see come to Christ and attend your church.
 - i. This is the old "Operation Andrew" model.
 - ii. It is based on Andrew bringing Peter to see Jesus.
 - iii. Create a card with the Scripture from John 1:40 at the top.
 - iv. In the next paragraph state: "I commit to pray for, invest in and invite to Any Baptist Church the following people:"
 - v. During the Sunday morning worship service, walk the people through the process of filling in the blanks. Give suggestions:
 - 1. Family members
 - 2. Friends
 - 3. Associates
 - 4. Neighbors
 - vi. Ask each member to place these names in a prominent place where they will be reminded to pray for the people listed.
 - vii. Ask your members to find ways to invest in the people for whom they are praying.
- e. Friend Day - This can be coupled with Operation Andrew. There is a process for this developed by Elmer Towns. You can go on line to find materials for doing this campaign.
- f. Revivals - Revivals work when you work revivals. There are revival preparation manuals available to help. I saw this work in a personal way in the church I pastored for many years.
 - i. Thoroughly pray about who will preach the revival.
 - ii. Design the purpose around reaching the community not merely a series of meetings for the church.
 - iii. Set the date. Be sure it is far enough in advance for you to adequately prepare. Six month minimum is needed.
 - iv. Utilize a revival preparation manual to adequately prepare for a successful revival. Go to *revivalprep.com* or *evangelismga.com* for a free downloadable revival preparation manual. This is a very helpful resource.
- g. Evangelistic Events - Choices that can be utilized throughout the year.
 - i. Vacation Bible School
 - ii. Fall Festival
 - iii. Wild Game Dinner
 - iv. Other high impact events found at namb.net/high-impact-events

3. Utilize Sunday School for growth

- a. The resources provided by the Georgia Baptist Convention Sunday School/Small Group ministry are very helpful.
- b. Start a pastor's class
 - i. Personally enlist people who are not in Sunday School for this class.

- ii. Base this class around a topical approach that will be appealing to those attending. (Deal with subjects such as: stress management, marriage, parenting, finances, etc..)
- c. Elevate the importance of Sunday School from the pulpit.
- d. Use cards, e-mails and calls to contact absentees from Sunday School. Let them know they are missed and ask if there are needs the church can meet.
- e. Set aside times for people to come to the church to write notes to those who have missed Sunday School for several weeks.

4. Prepare the church for guests

- a. Look at the church through the eyes of those who will be visiting.
- b. People decide about your church in the first 8 minutes of their visit to your property. This occurs before a sermon or song is heard.
- c. Cleanliness and neatness is important. This is especially true in the preschool and children's area. Do these areas look like the church is anticipating children?
- d. Train your people how to welcome guests. Repeatedly remind church members how uncomfortable it is for new people to attend and not be personally welcomed by those who have been there for a long period of time.
- e. Consider having a secret shopper attend your church to assess the friendliness level of the church. This can be friends who the people do not know.
- f. Do not be afraid to ask guests after they attend for an honest evaluation of the church.
- g. Namb.net/evangelism has a power point for teaching a church how to prepare for guests.

5. Contact in a timely manner all first time visitors to the church.

- a. Sunday afternoon - Someone from the church visits Sunday morning guests. Take a gift. It can be something as simple as home made cookies or a gift card to a local restaurant. At the door say something like this. "We are from Any Baptist Church. You cared enough to visit us; we want to care enough about you to bring by this gift and to thank you for visiting with us. Is there anyway we can help you, pray for you or answer questions about the church?"
- b. E-mail, call or letter from the pastor. Within three days the pastor makes contact with first time visitors.
- c. Contact from a Sunday School Class - Within a week someone from a Sunday School Class should make contact inviting them to their class. Share information such as: the time class meets, location, and willingness to meet them outside the church to personally escort them to a class.

6. Develop an Evangelism strategy that will increase baptisms.

- a. Go to gbctophaptizing.com for resources created to help you increase your baptisms.
- b. Set goals for baptisms for the church year.

- c. Set aside special times in the church service for people's stories as to how Christ has changed their lives. Have those who will share write out their stories.
- d. Preach often the principles found in Mathew 9:35-38.
 - i. We must go where Jesus would go. He would be in the community loving on people.
 - ii. We must see people the way Jesus sees them.
 - iii. We must love people the way Jesus loves them. Personally and practically.
 - iv. We must pray for the Lord of the Harvest to raise up laborers.
- e. Personal Evangelism
 - i. Train the people how to share Christ.
 - ii. *evangelismga.com* points you to on-line personal evangelism training you can use with your people.
 - iii. An alternative is tract training where you utilize a tract to share Christ. Again you can go to *namb.net* for training material.

7. Connect with the community.

- a. Connect with the schools in your area. Provide breakfast for teachers on teacher work days. There are women in the church who would be glad to cook biscuits to take to the teachers.
- b. As pastor learn where the local hangout is for the men of the community. It will probably be a local store. Be visible.
- c. Organize your people to buy gifts for needy children at Christmas. It may be one neighborhood or one grade level at school.

8. Resources

- a. Georgia Baptist Convention, *gabaptist.org*
- b. Like minded pastors
- c. North American Mission Board, *namb.net*
- d. Lifeway