



# Benefits of Strategic Planning

## 1. What are the benefits of strategic planning for congregations?

- Clearly defining and widely communicating the congregation's mission
- Comprehending current reality (both within the congregation and community)
- Clarifying core values (and, when appropriate, challenging the status quo)
- Receiving context-sensitive recommendations
- Building consensus and shaping an agreed-to, compelling vision for future ministry
- Helping contributors envision what their support will accomplish (to God's glory)
- Designing specific strategies and action plans which purposefully involve more people
- Evaluating progress and making needed adjustments during implementation
- Strengthening the concept of teamwork throughout the congregation
- Initiating and managing needed change with minimal resistance and disruption
- Leadership development (growth in knowledge, passion, skills)
- Exposure to current trends and evaluation of ministry innovations
- Informed decision-making that supports long-range strategic direction
- Calculated investment of the congregation's resources (people, properties, programs, funds, facilities)
- Organizational alignment with enhanced effectiveness and efficiency
- Improved communications and public relations

## 2. Why have someone from the outside – but still WELS – assist with strategic planning?

- Offers a fresh, impartial, informed point of view (which is biblically grounded)
- Promotes crosspollination of ideas (experience with serving many congregations within diverse contexts)
- Utilizes associate consultants who have a wide range of competencies
- Provides a proven ministry planning process and has a positive track record
- Uses tested tools, manages phases/steps, and keeps the process moving (so it doesn't stall out)
- Accomplishes both long- and short-term ministry planning (with outreach/nurture balance)

**Theologically trained within WELS**

*"Elton, I have explicit trust both in your theology and practice."* (District President)

## 3. How can our congregation afford to do this?

- Include the costs in the budget. Utilize undesignated special funds. Seek support publically from all or privately from individuals (who value strategic planning and have the means to fund it).
- Select an affordable ministry planning approach. (Crossroads offers options.)
- Work with Crossroads on developing an acceptable payment plan.
- View ministry planning as cost-effective, a wise investment in your congregation's mission and future within your community and beyond. (The benefits – both immediate and long-range – are likely to dwarf the costs associated with ministry planning.)