

2014

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR GATEWAY TO HEAVEN CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Introduction

As a result of two renowned men of GOD joining forces to make a dream become a reality, Gateway To Heaven Christian Church (GTHCC) opened its doors on January 8, 2012.

GTHCC acts as a catalyst for public participation across waters and beyond borders in igniting passion for Christ and developing the leadership potential of the next generation.

This strategic plan is a working document. It will be used as a roadmap to grow Gateway to Heaven Christian Church and Gateway to Heaven Christian Center.

Who We Are

Located in Jacksonville, Florida, Gateway To Heaven Christian Church has a global outreach and presence. It has increased its membership and expanded upon its ministries over the past three years.

Its role is to serve as a facilitator for churches and communities, as they empower their members to do the missionary work of reaching the unchurched and leading them to Christ. GTHCC is committed to spreading the word of GOD, by empowering, encouraging, equipping, and educating people to live more abundantly.

The Church has established several key ministries that specifically impact northwest Jacksonville, but could also impact the city of Jacksonville, the state of Florida, and potentially reach communities across the country and beyond the borders of the United States.

Several of our ministries are administered through our Gateway to Heaven Christian Center (GTHCCenter), which is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. The foundation of GTHCCenter's ministries is "economic empowerment."

Ministries include:

At Risk Youth:

Serving more than 100 children in Jacksonville, Florida's North-side, GTHCC has set a goal to teach the gospel from Genesis to Revelations. Children will participate in fun-filled activities throughout the year, while learning Biblical morals. Gospel song and dance, visual arts and performance ministries are examples of activities youth may participate in.



Children at GTHCC preparing for an Easter egg hunt

1. Work-net through Campus Crusades:

Statistics have shown that participating in meaningful employment-related activities can improve a person's chances of finding sustainable employment. GTHCC is committed to empowering and encouraging people to live more abundantly, through the use of education. GTHCC and GTHCCenter, in partnership with Campus Crusades (cru), is committed to helping members of the community with job training and preparation.

3. Community Development:

GTHCCenter's service area has an aging population, with aging housing and infrastructure needs. One of our primary goals is to go into these neighborhoods to provide financial literacy to our Baby Boomer population, in preparation of retirement. Personal financial literacy should extend beyond the ability to write a check, and balance a check book. It should encompass long-term vision and planning skills; and the discipline to use those skills daily. Among other things,

GTHCCenter intends to help educate residents on the importance of using community banks to obtain low-interest loans; and protecting oneself against predatory lending. Low-interest loans can be used to update homes with ADA (American Disabilities Act) needs, like handicap ramps, door widening, ADA standards for kitchens and baths, elevators, etc. Updated homes provide residents with an alternative to costly nursing or senior citizens' living facilities.

In addition, we are identifying master planning opportunities within our service area to attract and provide other community development services. Plans include restoring and re-energizing our aging neighborhood infrastructure and neighborhood retail centers. Our goal is to serve as a catalyst for public participation. We intend to empower our citizens, and other not-for-profit organizations, the City of Jacksonville's Transportation Authority, Jacksonville's Electric Authority, JAX Chamber, and elected officials to improve our neighborhoods so they become walkable, and accessible to public transportation. Furthermore, we intend to partner with these entities so that we might find cost-effective solutions for upgrading Jacksonville's entire infrastructure; and where possible, encourage, that utilities be placed underground. Moreover, GTHCCenter intends to lead efforts to help restore our public parks and public space, which includes street lighting, landscaping, trash removal and community maintenance.

4. Affordable Housing:

GTHCCenter is committed to developing at least 11 affordable housing units that may benefit citizens of the North/Northwest Jacksonville, Florida communities.

5. Career Transitions:

As a part of its ministry, GTHCCenter will help its congregation and members of the community to navigate today's challenging employment environment. It will do so, by sponsoring interactive resume building workshops and career counseling. In addition, it will hold simulated interview sessions, so that participants can practice interview techniques. Biannually, GTHCCenter will partner with private and local businesses, non-governmental organizations, and local/state governments to host job fairs.

6. Financial Wellness:

According to a 2014 survey done by PwC, the generational gap in employee financial health is growing. PwC's Employee Financial Wellness Survey tracks the financial and retirement wellbeing of working U.S. adults nationwide. This year it incorporated the views of over 2,100 full-time employed adults.

While a 2013 survey showed that Generation X carried the heaviest financial burden, the 2014 results find that Generation X employees, along with Baby Boomers, appear to be recovering faster than Millennials (Generation Y). Employees benefitting most from the market gains are those who have savings and equity in their homes rather than those who are more reliant on their current incomes.

Key findings of the PwC Survey:

- **Cash and debt:** While Baby Boomers and Gen X employees have shown improvements, Gen Y employees who find it difficult to meet monthly household expenses increased to 41%. Of those Gen Y employees who carry credit card balances, 39% find it difficult to make their minimum payments.
- **Retirement:** Overall retirement confidence rose to 40%. The percent of Gen Y employees who think it's likely they'll need to use money from their retirement plans for other expenses increased to 34%.
- **Financial stress:** 24% of U.S. employees admit that personal finances have been a distraction at work. 60% of Gen Y employees report financial stress.
- **Healthcare:** Healthcare costs are one of the biggest retirement concerns for 33% of U.S. employees. 59% of employees think that health insurance costs will increase as a result of the Affordable Care Act. Less than half of Baby Boomers are confident they'll be able to cover medical expenses in retirement.

GTHCCenter's goal is to empower people to make educated decisions to improve their financial wellbeing.

Drawing upon the diverse skill sets and talents of Gateway Christian Church's Congregation, GTHCCenter will offer classes on "financial wellness." These sessions will help to ensure that its members, and members of the community, have the wherewithal to combat financial peril.

Each of the six aforementioned ministries provides outreach models for other churches and communities to duplicate and implement.

The Ministerial Team

The Senior Ministerial Team includes:

Co-Pastors:

Reverend Dr. Carlton Jones and Reverend Dr. Walter Johnson:

Pastor Carlton D. Jones is an ordained minister and Co-Pastor of Gateway To Heaven Christian Church. He is married to Barbara A. Jones. Pastor Jones has more than 40 years of experience in large scale real estate management and development; and a 20 year walk in Christian Ministry. He is Chairman at Corporate Renaissance Group. Pastor Jones has served on hospital boards and foundations, higher education boards and bank boards. He is a founding stockholder of two community banks, and has owned and sold a residential mortgage company. Pastor Jones is a Program Management Member for Sports Development, and Master Planning and Development. Currently, he is serving on several not-for-profit boards and foundations in the Southeast.

Pastor Jones is a licensed Realtor (FL), and licensed General Contractor. His undergraduate studies were at the Washington Technical Institute, which later became the University of the District of Columbia, in Architectural Engineering, and then in City and Regional Planning and Architectural Design. His Graduate/Post Graduate studies were in City and Regional Planning, at Catholic University School of Architecture, in Washington, D.C., and in Theology, and Divinity at ZOE University; and in Sacred Literature, at Christian College in Jacksonville, Florida.

Pastor Walter Johnson

Dr. Walter H. Johnson is Co-Pastor of the Gateway to Heaven Christian Church in Jacksonville, FL. He received the B.A.; M.Div.; and D.D. from the Virginia University of Lynchburg. Dr. Johnson has more than 40 years of experience in pastoral ministry, having previously pastored in Orange, VA and Ashland, KY. During his almost 30 years in Jacksonville, Dr. Johnson has been very active in the non-profit sector of the community, having served on several non-profit boards and committees, including the Jacksonville Network for Strengthening Families, UF Health, and Young Life Jacksonville. Dr. Johnson previously served as Adjunct Professor of religious studies at Edward Waters College of Jacksonville. He is married to Dr. Sylvia M. Johnson, an administrator in the Duval County Public Schools.

Mission and Vision for the Future

GTHCC's mission is to serve as a leader within the community by teaching the precepts of the Bible. Moreover, it acts as a catalyst for public participation in national and international discipleship.

Florida faces future challenges and opportunities that range from addressing unemployment, and preparing students for careers in an increasingly competitive global economy, to integrating affordable housing into our underserved and under-represented communities. GTHCC is committed to spreading the word of GOD, by empowering, encouraging and educating people to live more abundantly. Moreover, GTHCC intends to align its work with the seven priorities set forth by Co-pastors, Dr. Carlton Jones and Dr. Walter Johnson, and the goals outlined in its CY2014-2017 Strategic Plan.

In particular, GTHCC will promote the use of education as a way of advancing the Church's priority of "Expanding the Conversation on Economic Empowerment and Working for Faith-based Justice."

OUR PRIORITIES



"The following seven priorities are built around the challenges and opportunities of Gateway To Heaven Cristian Church's (GTHCC's) mission to spread the word of GOD, by empowering, encouraging and educating people to live more abundantly. We are confident that, through the grace of GOD, we will meet every challenge, and seize every opportunity."

Co-Pastors Dr. Carlton Jones and
Dr. Walter Johnson, 2014

- ✓ Educate people on the importance of discipleship, and how to understand the Will of GOD;
- ✓ Empower the Congregation to build coalitions, as we implement the goals and objectives of GTHCC's strategic plan;
- ✓ Lead communities to become more sustainable;
- ✓ Educate the less fortunate on the importance of giving back to the community and tithing more abundantly;
- ✓ Develop outreach models for other churches and communities to duplicate and implement;
- ✓ Encourage people to build healthy relationships;
- ✓ Expand the conversation on economic empowerment and working for faith-based justice.

Goals and Strategies

The following Strategic Goals and Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategies reflect the results we hope to achieve and the way we intend to approach our work over the coming years. These goals and objectives set GTHCC's direction, advance its priorities, and will be used by its senior Ministerial leadership as a management tool.

Overarching Strategic Goals (PROPOSALS):

Goal 1: Model and teach Gateway To Heaven Christian Church's congregation, and members of the community, the precepts of the Bible, mainly prayer, doctrine, Christian living, service and worship.

(Coincides with Priority 1)

Goal 2: Lead churches and communities, as they empower their members to do the missionary work of reaching the unchurched and leading them to Christ. (Coincides with Priority 1)

Goal 3: Develop the leadership potential of the next generation through the successful management of the following GTHCC's ministries: *At Risk Youth, Work-net through Campus Crusades, Career Transitions, and Financial Wellness*. (Coincides with Priority 5)

Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategies (Proposals):

Strategy 1: Promote transparency and open communication.

Strategy 2: Strengthen partnerships and outreach. (Coincides with Priorities 2 & 5)

Strategy 3: Manage GTHCC's human, financial, and physical resources.

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: *Model and teach Gateway To Heaven Christian Church's congregation and members of the community, the precepts of the Bible, mainly prayer, doctrine, Christian living, service and worship.*

(PROPOSED) OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1.1: Increase an awareness of external discipleship over a 12 week span of time. Provide guidance and training to members of the Church and community regarding what a discipling relationship entails, and who could/should be a disciple.

Objective 2.2: Increase an awareness of discipleship from the perspective of a spiritual discipline. Ensure that the congregation and/or members of the community know what it means to be a disciple and the cost involved.

Objective 2.3: Increase the number of participants in GTHCC's theology studies by 5% over a 24 month span of time.

Objective 2.4: Increase the number of participants in Bible Study by 3% over a 6 month span of time.

Objective 2.5: Raise the Church's awareness of its members' needs, and the needs of the community by 5% over the baseline established in August 2014.

Objective 2.6: Increase GTHCC's membership by 5% over the baseline of members recorded as of August 2014, no later than March 2015.

GOAL 2: *Lead churches and communities, as they empower their members to do the missionary work of reaching the unchurched and leading them to Christ.*

Objective 2.1: Advise the President of the United States, the Governor of Florida, the Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, and other state and local officials on faith-based related needs that specifically impact U.S. communities, and potentially impact (directly or indirectly) bordering countries.

Objective 2.2: Advise the President of the United States, the Governor of Florida, the Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, and other state and local officials on how communities can become more sustainable through a broad range of faith-based related activities.

Goal 3: *Develop the leadership potential of the next generation through the successful management of the following GTHCC and/or GTHCCenter's ministries: At Risk Youth, Work-net through Campus Crusades, Career Transitions, and Financial Wellness. (Coincides with Priority 5)*

Objective 3.1 (At Risk Youth): Increase the Biblical knowledge base of children, through modeling and teaching Biblical morals in Children's Church, during Day-care, and while attending after school programs at GTHCC.

Objective 3.2 (Work-net through Campus Crusades): Empower and encourage people to live more abundantly, through the use of education. GTHCC and GTHCCenter, in partnership with Campus Crusades (cru), is committed to helping members of the community with job training and preparation.

Objective 3.3 (Career Transitions): Help members of GTHCC's congregation and members of the community navigate today's challenging employment environment.

Objective 3.4 (Financial Wellness): Empower people to make educated decisions to improve their financial wellbeing.

Objective 3.5 (Outreach Models):

Develop outreach models for other churches and communities to duplicate and implement.



Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategies

Strategy 1: Promote transparency and open communication. Expand and improve public participation in GTHCC's and GTHCCenter's activities.

Strategy 2: Strengthen partnerships and outreach. Expand and improve outreach to ensure that partnerships with small, national and international churches, faith-based organizations, private, public and governmental sectors, and non-governmental organizations are formed to do the work of GOD. Work with key staff to provide feedback to GTHCC's congregation on how recommendations from these entities are being implemented.

Strategy 3: Manage GTHCC's human, financial, and physical resources. Use resources effectively and efficiently to support excellence in GTHCC's and GTHCCenter's ministries, and to empower a diverse and talented congregation.

We will take the following actions to implement these strategies:

- Use public meetings, web content, social media, and other tools to disseminate information and facilitate communication with the public and other stakeholders.
- Lead a faith-based summit. Partner with leaders of the community and other pastors, ministers and heads of faith-based organizations, nationally and internationally, to exchange information and form stronger coalitions.
- Engage GTHCC's Ministerial leadership, members of the congregation, members of the community, and state/local officials, in church and community-related activities.
- Manage GTHCC's and GTHCCenter's administrative and support functions, including strategic planning, program evaluation, budget activities,

workforce planning and human resource services, meeting support, contract and grant management, information and records management, and communications and outreach.



Performance Measures

GTHCC has set the following strategic measures for achieving the long-term goals and objectives put forward in this Plan. GTHCC routinely reviews and compares financial, budgetary, and operational performance to planned or expected results. At biannual planning meetings, we measure our results against performance targets identified in this plan and ministerial team work plans. Major activities related to the work of the church are tracked to ensure that both near and long-term performance goals have been met. Likewise, major activities related to specific programs administered through GTHCCenter are tracked to ensure that both near and long-term performance goals have been met.

Strategic Goals and Measures:

Goal 1: *Model and teach Gateway To Heaven Christian Church's congregation and members of the community, the precepts of the Bible, mainly prayer, doctrine, Christian living, service and worship.*

Objective 1.1: Increase an awareness of external discipleship.

Objective 2.2: Increase an awareness of discipleship from the perspective of a spiritual discipline.

Objective 2.3: Increase the number of participants in GTHCC's theology studies by 5% over a 24 month span of time.

Objective 2.4: Increase the number of participants in Bible Study by 3% over a 6 month span of time.

Objective 2.5: Raise the Church's awareness of its members' needs, and the needs of the community by 5% over the baseline established in August 2014.

Objective 2.6: No later than March 2015, increase GTHCC's membership by 5% over the baseline of members recorded as of August 2014.

We will take the following actions to achieve these objectives:

- By August 2015, create and conduct a 12 week course that will teach members of the Church and community methods of discipleship, and the differences between them (e.g., modeling, mentoring, instructing and coaching).
- By December 2015, create and conduct a 6 week course that will teach members of the Church and community the cost involved to be a disciple. (Reference book – *The Cost of Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer).
- Offer an 'early registration' scholarship of \$100.00 to the first five people that register; or decrease tuition fees for theology studies by 2% for the first 2 months of study.
- Publicize, each Sunday in the Church bulletin, what the topic of discussion might be for the proceeding Tuesday Bible Study session. Emphasize whether the focus will be on prayer, doctrine, Christian living, service and/or worship.
- Through the use of surveys, become aware of the needs and special interests of church and community members. Increase the Evangel ministry by 3% over the next year (CY2015-2016), to ensure that more outreach to the community occurs (e.g., train-the-trainer).

- Ensure that church attendants are inspired and kept abreast of all church related activities and changes to any doctrine. Hold quarterly meetings with members of the North/Northwest Jacksonville, FL communities to ensure that they are aware of current and upcoming church related events/activities. By leveraging technology, increase the number of sound bites and video clips on GTHCC's Internet and Intranet sites of sermons and special events to ensure that members of the community are provided with weekly spiritual food and inspiration. Increase the Co-pastors' visibility by recording and disseminating voice messages from them to the congregation, regarding topics of interest or weekly and/or upcoming events.

GOAL 2: Lead churches and communities, as they empower their members to do the missionary work of reaching the unchurched and leading them to Christ.

Objective 2.1: Advise the President of the United States, the Governor of Florida, the Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, and other state and local officials on faith-based related needs that specifically impact U.S. communities, and potentially impact (directly or indirectly) bordering countries.

Objective 2.2: Advise the President of the United States, the Governor of Florida, the Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, and other state and local officials on how communities can become more sustainable through a broad range of faith-based related activities.

We will take the following actions to achieve these objectives:

- Either, or both, of the pastors for Gateway to Heaven Christian Church will serve on a national advisory committee that solicits advice from faith-based communities.
- Sponsor and facilitate regular meetings with senior GTHCC and GTHCCenter leaders and church members, local community leaders, government officials, and other members of the public to discuss priority faith-based issues facing the nation, and other communities abroad.
- Provide management and technical support in order for the aforementioned GTHCC/GTHCCenter leaders, members, and other groups to deliberate and develop independent reports and/or advice letters to the President, the Governor of Florida, the Mayor of Jacksonville, and other senior government officials.
- Work with GTHCC's and GTHCCenter's partners and stakeholders in the community, and across Florida's State/local governments on Church charges, deliberations, and implementation of recommendations. Ensure that GTHCC's congregation is kept abreast of all major outcomes, decisions and initiatives. [may want to move to cross-cutting strategies]

Goal 3: Develop the leadership potential of the next generation through the successful management of the following GTHCC's and/or GTHCCenter's ministries: *At Risk Youth, Work-net through Campus Crusades, Career Transitions, and Financial Wellness.* (Coincides with Priority 5)

Objective 3.1: Lead GTHCC's and/or GTHCCenter's Ministerial Programs.

Objective 3.2: Provide recommendations on key Church and community challenges and opportunities.

We will take the following actions to achieve these objectives:

- GTHCCenter will complete no less than nine (9) activities directly related to the Church's and/or Center's ministries by the end of each calendar year from 2015 through 2017. Thereby, increasing participants' skill sets and their ability to live more abundantly, developing the leadership potential of the next generation and increasing the Church's and Center's visibility within local communities, and the State of Florida, as a whole.
- GTHCC's senior leadership and ministerial team will: (1) facilitate successful meetings with the community on church-related and center-related matters that encourage public participation and stakeholder involvement; (2) support partnerships across the board with other small, national and international churches and faith-based organizations, in addition to private, public and governmental sectors, and non-governmental organizations to do the work of GOD; (3) and work with key church staff to provide feedback, on a quarterly basis, to GTHCC's congregation on how recommendations from these entities is being implemented (e.g., church meetings).

Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategies:

Strategy 1: Promote transparency and open communication:

Strategy 2: Strengthen partnerships and outreach:

Strategy 3: Manage GTHCC's human, financial, and physical resources.

We will take the following actions to achieve these objectives:

- We will continue to enhance GTHCC's website, which presently incorporates material about GTHCCenter, to make information more transparent and accessible to our audience. On a quarterly basis, we will thoroughly review and update websites, church programs and/or bulletins; and meet with GTHCC's congregation to ensure that open communication remains paramount.

- Increase communication, education, and outreach efforts by leading other churches, faith-based community leaders and organizations to participate in a Faith-based Summit during the month of January 2016. By the end of CY 2016, GTHCC will increase the number of partnerships developed, domestically and internationally, by 5% over the baseline established at the January 2016 Faith-based Summit.
- Develop and maintain outreach plans and a diversity database for GTHCC's senior leaders and Ministerial staff to use when searching for potential partners and stakeholders to execute strategic goals and initiatives.
- GTHCC's Planning, Technology, and Outreach (PTO) Team will receive at least an 80% approval rating based on surveys and stakeholder feedback evaluating PTO's performance in providing the following services:
 - Strategic planning and evaluation
 - Workforce planning and human resource services, including training and development of church staff; and assisting with several related activities under the umbrella of three ministries.
 - Grants management
 - Contract management
 - Meeting support
 - Information and records management
 - Communications and outreach