

Perritte Memorial, Nacogdoches Texas

CONSULTATION REPORT

September 11-13, 2015

INTRODUCTION

We, the VCI consultation team, thank The Reverend Lani Rousseau, staff, lay leaders and the congregation of Perritte Memorial Church for the invitation to consult with this Body of Christ. The following observations and prescriptions are the result of this consultation team's study of the following information: a) Perritte Memorial Church's self-study document provided by its leaders, b) a MissionInsite demographic report of the area population, c) the 'Mystery Guest' report by Faith Perceptions, d) interviews with pastor, staff and ministry team leaders, e) a leaders focus group, f) a focus group with members of the congregation, and g) input from the consultation workshop.

Our prayer is that God will use this assessment experience and consultation report to help Perritte Memorial Church more effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the community and the world.

STRENGTHS

Perritte Memorial Church's greatest strengths follow.

1. Caring Hearts. Perritte Memorial is a church that cares deeply, not only for its own members but for all with whom they connect. This is exemplified by their relationships with the SFA Wesley Foundation, the Boy Scouts Troop and ministry with the local Elementary School.
2. Mission Minded. Perritte Memorial exhibits a desire to be in mission with their community and the world.
3. A sincere desire to do ministry well and mentor disciples.

CONCERNS

1. No clear discernible vision.
2. Excessive reliance on special fundraisers to meet regular budgets.
3. No systematic approach to ministry.

In order to address the above concerns, upon acceptance of this Report, Perritte Memorial United Methodist Church will do the following:

Service of Prayer and Discernment: The congregation will have a service of prayer and discernment to embrace God's mandate for making disciples. This will allow the membership to be fully prepared for the Lord's vision for the future. The service will be led by a person to be selected by the Center for Congregational Excellence. The Service of Prayer and Discernment will take place on or before December 31, 2015.

PRESCRIPTIONS

Prescriptions are intended to outline a process for addressing each concern in a way that increases the likelihood of the congregation being vibrant.

To that end, Perritte Memorial Church of Nacogdoches will implement the following prescriptions.

1. No clear discernible vision.

Perritte Memorial UMC has stated as its purpose: "The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." To facilitate this mission, and clarify the vision of Perritte:

1. The Pastor, in consultation with the Coach, will appoint a Vision Team of 3-5 persons, on or before December 31, 2015.
2. The Coach or designee will conduct a four-hour "Day of Visioning" workshop for the members of Perritte Memorial UMC. The purpose is to learn how God wants to work through the congregation, both individually and collectively, to reach the local mission field. This workshop will occur on or before January 31, 2016.
3. After completion of the workshop, the Pastor, Coach and Vision Team will create a vision statement that aligns with your existing mission statement. This statement will be shared with the congregation for affirmation by February 28, 2016.

After adoption of the new Vision, every ministry in the congregation must align with the Vision. The Pastor, in consultation with the Coach, will appoint a Ministry Review team, consisting of 3-5 people and this team will be in place on or before March 31, 2016. The initial review must be completed on or before July 31, 2016. The purpose of the review is to identify how each ministry aligns with the Vision of the church and to identify those that do not. Any ministry not

aligned with the vision will be required to align themselves with the Vision and Mission of the church.

After adoption of the new Vision, the Pastor, in consultation with the Coach, will create a team no later than March 15, 2016, of 3-5 people. This team will develop strategies to reach younger persons by:

- a. Identifying current ministries in the church for youth, young adults, and families with young children and begin the process of identifying needed programs for this demographic;
- b. Studying the MissionInsite data for the local mission field;
- c. Determining needs among the current ministries and determine goals and strategies to reach younger persons.
- d. Develop a plan of action with dates, goals and recommendations that will be shared with the Pastor and Coach for feedback no later than May 1, 2016 and begin implementation by August 1, 2016. Assistance in developing this plan of action will be available if needed through the Center for Congregational Excellence staff.

2. Excessive reliance on special fundraisers to meet regular budgets.

The Pastor, in consultation with the coach and the Center for Congregational Excellence, will put a plan together for a program to help the church practice proactive stewardship by March 1, 2016. This plan will use the Consecration Sunday model to help people embrace the joy and privilege of tithing as a spiritual discipline and a means of helping to grow God's kingdom. A comprehensive commitment model (pledge/commitment cards) will be implemented. This plan will conclude with a Consecration Sunday experience led by a designee from Center for Congregational Excellence by March 30, 2016.

While Perritte Memorial is a vital part of the Nacogdoches community, their name is rarely attached to their outreach efforts. Perritte would do well to focus less on fundraising and more on service and community awareness. In conjunction with their new systematic stewardship model, the Pastor, in consultation with the Coach, will identify a person in the congregation to lead and facilitate a Bridge to Community effort in the immediate mission field. This person will assemble a team of at least 4 people no later than May 31, 2016 and begin to lay out the following activities of the church for 2016 and 2017:

1. Develop a plan to convert two (2) of their current fundraisers into community engagement events. (at no charge to the public and not specifically for our members) to reach new people, build relationships, and invite them to worship. The intention is the entire church to be involved in some form or fashion.
2. This team will utilize quarterly planning meetings to discuss, update, and finalize plans for events by November 30, 2016.
3. The team will facilitate and evaluate these events by July 31, 2017. They will continue and/or adjust them based on their fruit for the coming years.

3. No systematic approach to ministry.

Deficiency of planning coupled with a lack of coordination, is a pervasive issue at Perritte Memorial. There are many great mission and ministry programs, events etc. that are occurring, but with no clear, concise and comprehensive means of planning, implementing, evaluating or communicating the outcomes. The result is members of Perritte are not always aware of what is happening in a manner conducive to success. This causes Perritte Memorial to be reactive (acting in a hasty, unplanned manner) rather than proactive (setting goals and charting a desired outcome) community. Planning then becomes a response to crises. As a result, this prescription has multiple layers of action that needs to occur in a systematic manner for Perritte to begin the process of becoming the church you stated you want to be.

The pastor (and designees), in consultation with the coach:

1. To aid the community in locating and entering Perritte, they will recruit a task force of 3-4 people to analyze interior and exterior signage, from a guest's perspective. Signage should make it easy for visitors and families to find restrooms, classrooms and nursery without assistance. They will contact April Canik, Associate Director of Journalism at the Conference office to aid in this evaluation and conduct a communications workshop. Recommendation needs to be presented on or before May 1, 2016, with implementation prior to July 1, 2016.
2. To invite people deeper into the Perritte family, a hospitality system will be developed. It should track and intentionally connect all to the ministries of Perritte Memorial United Methodist, including those from the Boy Scout Troop, community service/missions contacts, Sunday morning guests, SFA Wesley Foundation students, etc. The coach or designee will conduct a hospitality training workshop by June 30, 2016. It will include

exploring how to personally engage in hospitality, and training materials. This system will be in place and operating by September 1, 2016.

3. To better fulfill the responsibility for equipping the congregation for ministry (see Ephesians 4), the pastor, in consultation with the coach, will select a Leadership Development Team (3-5 people) to assist in developing and implementing a strategy for intentional leadership development. This will include a day of training with a coach-approved trainer on or before April 1, 2016 to train paid, unpaid staff, the Church Council and Lay Leadership Committee for recruiting new leaders, mentoring spiritual leaders and building effective teams.
4. The Leadership Development team will consult with the Center for Congregational Excellence, as well as other congregations of similar size. The leadership process should be developed and implemented on or before charge conference 2016 and be considered by the Lay Leadership Committee in their work of identifying and recruiting potential leaders.

Two months after the completion of their last prescription, Perritte Memorial United Methodist Church will hold a service of celebration and vision. This will allow the community to rejoice in their growth through the VCI process, reflect on their current ministry, and share excitement about their next steps.

CONCLUSION

We, the consulting team, want to thank you for the opportunity to serve your congregation through this Vibrant Church Initiative assessment process. Our prayers and hope for your congregation is that God will use this process to help your church become more effective and fruitful. May God give you courage and strength as you move forward.

Mr. Seaborn Nesbett, Lead Consultant
Rev. Kate Walker, Directive Coach
Dr. Jesse Brannen, scribe

Town Hall Meetings:

Sept. 20, 2015 2:30pm

Oct. 4, 2015 12:00pm

Church Conference Date: October 18, 2015

**Note: Prescription deadlines may be adjusted in consultation with the assigned VCI coach.*