

**Agape Baptist Church's  
Strategic Plan**

**March 16, 2008**

**Agape Baptist Church's Strategic Plan**  
**3/16/2008**

- I. Introduction**
- II. Chronology (Major Actions and Recommendations)**
- III. Mission Statement**
- IV. Core Values**
- V. Goals**
- VI. Objectives**
- VII. Recommendations**
- VIII. Appendix**

## **I. Introduction**

### **Origination:**

The Interim Pastor of Agape Baptist Church, Paul Sands, recommended to the Deacons that the church undertake a strategic planning process. The Deacons agreed and recommended Charles Jones to be the chairperson. The recommendation was approved by the church on June 7, 2005. The following Wednesday, the church approved the nomination of the following five people to also serve on the committee: Lynn AbuMari, Ken Cockerham, Scotty Gray, Dick Law and Phil Love.

### **Purpose:**

The Strategic Planning Committee's purpose was to create a comprehensive ministry plan for the church. They were to be responsible to the Deacons. There was anticipation that the committee would serve until the church found a permanent location, which was identified as a prioritized goal.

### **Principles:**

During the process, the Strategic Planning Committee practiced the following principles in developing the Strategic Plan: maximize the participation of church members and ministry teams in developing the plans; ensure transparency in all deliberations; explore unconventional approaches and ideas; and be open to modifying previously defined plans and deliverables based on a changing environment and immediate needs requiring prioritized attention.

### **Approach:**

The committee defined procedures, determined and documented internal and external resources, developed and agreed to a detailed planning process with responsibilities and dates, and developed methods and procedures for involving the various ministry teams and the church-at-large in providing input to the Strategic Plan. During the process it became apparent that the creation of additional functions was required in order to address the goals that were defined by the church. These included a Land Team, a Minister of Education and Administration, and a Coordinating Council. There were also procedures that needed to be modified or created in order to support the plans required to achieve the church approved goals.

The Strategic Planning Committee established a standard meeting schedule of two hours each week during 2006. Beginning in 2007, the meeting schedule was changed to two hours every other week. The committee made regular reports, both written and oral, to the Deacons and the congregation. Recommendations to the congregation were generally made during the monthly

business conferences; however, when warranted, they were made at other times.

Recommendations were always provided to the congregation at least one week in advance of the requested vote. The Deacons and Ministry Council were consulted on sensitive matters and recommendations prior to discussion with the congregation.

Outside sources such as staff members of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Executive Director at Tarrant Baptist Association were consulted at various times during the process of developing the Strategic Plan. Content experts within Agape were also consulted to provide advice and suggestions.

**Summary:**

The Strategic Plan consists of a Mission Statement, Core Values, Goals, Objectives and Recommendations. All of the above mentioned items have been approved by the church with the exception of the Recommendations. The Recommendations are being made to the Deacons for their consideration and in no way should they obligate the Deacons, Coordinating Council, Ministry Teams or the church-at-large. In consultation with the Coordinating Council, the Deacons should choose to take what actions they deem appropriate and make desired recommendations to the congregation for consideration and approval.

## II. Chronology (Major Actions and Recommendations)

**General:**

The Strategic Plan identifies key elements required for Agape to enhance the overall ministry of the church. It also provides a basis from which to conduct the ongoing business of the church.

Following are the major actions taken and recommendations made to the church by the Strategic Planning Committee. These actions and recommendations were the basis for updating the Mission Statement, defining the Core Values, defining the Goals and Objectives, creating the functions necessary to support Agape’s on-going ministry efforts, and addressing critical requirements regarding finding and moving to a new location. They also served as a basis for calling fulltime staff members and addressing procedure issues related to how Agape conducts its business activities.

<b>2006</b>	<b>Action/Recommendation</b>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed principles, processes and procedures</li> <li>• Researched strategic planning documents and approaches</li> <li>• Planned for Core Values Workshops</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved a motion to establish a goal of obtaining a permanent location with a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, Ken Cockerham, leading this effort</li> <li>• Conducted six Core Values Workshops – ninety-three participants</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved a motion to form a Building Ministry Team in pursuit of developing a building/improvement plan once we have a permanent location</li> <li>• Recommended and the church approved a motion to form a Capital Campaign Ministry Team reporting to the Finance/Stewardship Ministry Team for the purpose of securing funds in support of purchasing land and supporting a building plan</li> <li>• Initiated meetings with key individuals with the objective of locating a permanent location</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved amending the Mission Statement (see III. Mission Statement)</li> <li>• Recommended and the church approved the five Core Values (see IV. Core Values)</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved the preliminary Goals and Objectives</li> <li>• Conducted Objectives workshop to review and modify preliminary Goals and Objectives based on church’s input</li> <li>• Deacons recommended and the church approved that the Strategic Planning Committee develop a contingency plan in case Southcliff requires us to move from the Westcliff location</li> <li>• Immediately initiated contingency planning efforts, headed by Phil Love</li> </ul>

<b>2006</b>	<b>Action/Recommendation</b>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved creating an Outreach / Visitation Ministry (Coordinators)</li> <li>• Recommended and the church approved Goals (see V. Goals)</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reported on possible long-term and interim locations</li> <li>• Announced meeting with Ministry Teams to begin process of refining Objectives and gaining support for execution of strategic plan</li> </ul>

<b>2007</b>	<b>Action/Recommendation</b>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified by Southcliff that Agape must vacate the Westcliff facility by April 9, 2007 – Prioritized the interim location efforts including meeting with the Pastor of RWBC</li> <li>• Gained support of final Goals and preliminary Objectives during Ministry Team kickoff meeting</li> <li>• Requested Ministry Teams define and document their responsibilities</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held joint worship service with RWBC</li> <li>• Met with RWBC Pastor and Leadership Team</li> <li>• Reviewed agreed-to Goal sponsors with church</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in meeting with fifty-four members of RWBC at their request</li> <li>• Conducted multiple meetings with BGCT staff to gain advice related to possible new location</li> <li>• Conducted planning meeting with RWBC for anticipated upcoming move</li> <li>• Were informed that RWBC voted to give their facility to Agape</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtained BGCT architecture recommendations for new location</li> <li>• Coordinated move to new location</li> <li>• Gained agreement from Ministry Teams on Objectives sponsors</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Met with BGCT staff to discuss staffing requirements in the Education / Training / Equipping Ministry area</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved Objectives (see VI. Objectives)</li> <li>• Recommended and the church approved disbanding the Building Committee and Capital Campaign Committee since we had a location from which to minister for the foreseeable future</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved that Agape become a B. H. Carroll Teaching Church</li> <li>• Conducted town hall meeting to discuss Minister of Education and Administration (ME/A), and Part-Time Administrative Assistant (AA) positions</li> <li>• Coordinated follow-up Deacon family meetings to gain additional feedback on ME/A and AA positions</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained agreement from Personnel Ministry Team to support required personnel items related to calling a ME/A and AA</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted meeting with Personnel Ministry Team leadership, Ministry Council and Deacon leadership to develop plan for moving forward with ME/A and AA recommendations</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved calling a Part-Time AA and beginning the process for calling a ME/A</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determined how to introduce Coordinating Council recommendation and related planning responsibilities</li> </ul>

2007	Action/Recommendation
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalized Coordinating Council recommendation including organization and participants</li> <li>• Finalized plans for Ministry Teams meeting related to forming a Coordinating Council</li> </ul>
2008	Action/Recommendation
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted Ministry Teams meeting to introduce and gain agreement on the proposal for a Coordinating Council</li> <li>• Requested the Nominating Ministry Team take responsibility for initial Ministry Team descriptions provided to the Strategic Planning Committee</li> <li>• Recommended and the church approved the formation of a Coordinating Council</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended and the church approved two updates to the bylaws re: Deacon responsibilities; and Coordinating Council responsibilities</li> <li>• Recommended and the church approved after amending that the bylaws be updated to address lead times and documentation for recommendations requiring church approval</li> <li>• Recommended and the Deacons approved that the Strategic Planning Committee be disbanded since they have completed their assigned tasks</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Deacons will recommend to the church that the Strategic Planning Committee be disbanded</li> </ul>

### **III. Mission Statement**

Agape Baptist Church is a loving fellowship of Christian believers committed to historical Baptist principles and practices and, led by the Holy Spirit, devoted to worshiping God in a biblically-based manner; maturing in discipleship through prayer, Bible study, and stewardship; sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the lost and unchurched of all backgrounds and cultures; and ministering to the needs of people locally and around the world.

## **IV. Core Values**

### **We are committed to God-centered, Bible-based worship.**

Worship is indispensable to our faith and is the basis of every aspect of our ministry. Therefore, we encourage all members and guests to meet regularly for corporate worship. Our adoration, confession, affirmation, and dedication through prayer, Bible reading, proclamation, music, and offerings demand our best. We approach worship with humility and reverence.

### **We are committed to Christian discipleship led by the Holy Spirit.**

We seek God's will in our daily lives through individual and family worship, prayer, Bible study, and stewardship. We seek to be faithful to God's teachings and honest and truthful in our dealings with others. We strive to grow in Christian maturity that will be exemplified in our character and conduct. Our discipleship is focused on applying God's truths in our daily living and prepares us for effective service to God and ministry to others. As joyful stewards, we are faithful in giving and administering the blessings God has provided. Our stewardship includes our finances, our time, our talents, our whole being, and all of God's creation. We are also called to disciple others by providing Christian education for people of all ages, nationalities, and backgrounds, and nurturing them as they grow in their Christian maturity.

### **We are committed to an unconditionally loving fellowship.**

Our congregational fellowship is a reflection of God's love and grace. As faithful servants, we minister to others in a spirit of humility and love by caring for all within the congregation and bearing each other's burdens. Our actions are based on integrity, trust, honesty, and respect. We pursue a spirit of unity and cooperation in all that we do. Our fellowship is democratic in decision-making, and we desire input and participation from all members in matters brought to the congregation.

### **We are committed to local, national, and global missions.**

Individually and as a church, we are called to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those in need of the gospel message and to reach out to those who do not have a church home. We offer our congregation's love and support as we minister to the whole person in attempting to meet their spiritual and life needs. As we seek to do God's will in our mission ministries, we cooperate with others who share our values and beliefs.

### **We are committed to historical Baptist principles and practices.**

Historical Baptist distinctives are: the authority of scripture, the priesthood of the believer, the separation of church and state, the autonomy of the local church, missions, evangelism, social ministries, and the celebration of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## **V. Goals**

### **Core Value - Worship:**

1. **Goal:** To develop individual, family, and congregational worship, through the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit, in every expression of our faith including prayer, music, preaching, reading of scripture, and celebration of the ordinances

### **Core Value - Discipleship:**

2. **Goal:** To strengthen Bible Study and application of God's truths in our daily living
3. **Goal:** To model stewardship of everything God has given us and efficiently administer the resources given to the church
4. **Goal:** To provide a caring visitation and outreach program
5. **Goal:** To obtain property (land), buildings, and other physical resources required to carry out the mission of Agape Baptist Church
6. **Goal:** To call additional staff members based on the prioritized and affordable needs of the congregation

### **Core Value – Fellowship:**

7. **Goal:** To reflect Christ as we acknowledge our mutual dependence as church members and strengthen a sense of spiritual and physical relatedness
8. **Goal:** To employ efficient church business practices that foster active involvement of all members in decision-making and ministry in such ways that deepen trust and assure unity
9. **Goal:** To affirm the multi-cultural and multi-generational members of our fellowship in ways that minister to their distinctive needs and encourage them to enrich the diversity of our congregation

### **Core Value – Missions:**

10. **Goal:** To proclaim the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ
11. **Goal:** To increase our involvement and support of local and global missions

### **Core Value – Historical Baptist Principles and Practices:**

12. **Goal:** To provide training on Baptist distinctives

## **VI. Objectives**

### **Core Value - Worship:**

**1. Goal:** To develop individual, family, and congregational worship, through the leadership and power of the Holy Spirit, in every expression of our faith including prayer, music, preaching, reading of scripture, and celebration of the ordinances

#### **Objectives:**

- a. Increase the involvement of church members from different cultures and age groups in worship services
- b. Provide to the congregation each week, information about the following Sunday's worship service so that families and individuals might more meaningfully pray for, prepare for, and participate in worship, and encourage and support individuals in their personal worship
- c. Provide additional opportunities for worship and for outreach to the community by presenting special programs
- d. Work with the future Building Committee to enhance worship through the design of the sanctuary

### **Core Value - Discipleship:**

**2. Goal:** To strengthen Bible Study and application of God's truths in our daily living

#### **Objectives:**

- a. Provide Bible study and discipleship education and training that will assist individuals and families in their spiritual growth
- b. Train and enlist more members to be involved in ministry activities
- c. Facilitate the possibility of becoming a B. H. Carroll Teaching Church
- d. Develop prayer ministries and promote special prayer emphases

**3. Goal:** To model stewardship of everything God has given us and efficiently administer the resources given to the church

#### **Objectives:**

- a. Strengthen financial stewardship
- b. Manage financial resources to provide for current and future needs
- c. Provide reports that meet the needs of the congregation using sound financial practices

**4. Goal:** To provide a caring visitation and outreach program

#### **Objectives:**

- a. Implement a timely visitation, outreach and follow-up program

**5. Goal:** To maintain and upgrade the physical resources to support the current mission and the long-range vision of the church

**Objectives:**

- a. Maintain and upgrade the current buildings to support the mission and programs of the church
- b. Develop a long-range plan for the physical resources that supports the vision of the church

**6. Goal:** To call additional staff members based on the prioritized and affordable needs of the congregation

**Objectives:**

- a. Develop procedures and overall plan for calling staff members
- b. Develop appropriate personnel policies prior to hiring any employees

**Core Value – Fellowship:**

**7. Goal:** To reflect Christ as we acknowledge our mutual dependence as church members and strengthen a sense of spiritual and physical relatedness

**Objectives:**

- a. Minister to our fellow church members to assure that no one faces difficulties alone
- b. Discover and match spiritual gifts and experiences with ministry needs
- c. Encourage small groups that emphasize fellowship and ministry
- d. Conduct church wide events that build fellowship within the church and are of interest to the community

**8. Goal:** To employ efficient church business practices that foster active involvement of all members in decision-making and ministry in such ways that deepen trust and assure unity

**Objectives:**

- a. Modify church organizational structure to meet congregational needs
- b. Provide timely and relevant information to the congregation
- c. Plan and execute effective business conferences
- d. Implement good business management practices

**9. Goal:** To affirm the multi-cultural and multi-generational members of our fellowship in ways that minister to their distinctive needs and encourage them to enrich the diversity of our congregation

**Objectives:**

- a. Implement plans that transcend cultural and language barriers
- b. Implement plans for multi-generational activities and involvement

### **Core Value – Missions:**

**10. Goal:** To proclaim the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ

**Objectives:**

- a. Train members to be effective witnesses

**11. Goal:** To increase our involvement and support of local and global missions

**Objectives:**

- a. Involve people in church missions activities
- b. Promote denominational and multi-denominational events and activities
- c. Explore opportunities within the Tarrant Baptist Association, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Women's Missionary Union, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Baptist World Alliance, and other organizations with which we have common objectives
- d. Contribute at least 10% of undesignated income to cooperative missions
- e. Support church-sponsored missions efforts
- f. Provide mission education and opportunities for hands-on involvement for all age groups

### **Core Value – Historical Baptist Principles and Practices:**

**12. Goal:** To provide training on Baptist distinctives

**Objectives:**

- a. Provide meaningful education and information to new members
- b. Provide ongoing classes, information and resources for members

## **VII. Recommendations**

As stated in the Summary section of the Introduction, the following recommendations are being made to the Deacons for their consideration, and in no way should they obligate the Deacons, Coordinating Council, Ministry Teams or the church-at-large.

### **Recommendation 1:**

The Deacons should support and work closely with the Coordinating Council to ensure that future planning activities, both short term (including annual) and long term, are coordinated with both groups. This includes, but is not specifically limited to, the areas of assigning and tracking the progress of the achievement of church agreed-to goals and objectives, and continuous improvement and refinement of the planning processes in support of the church's ministry.

### **Recommendation 2:**

The Deacons should formally assess the Strategic Plan of the church at least every three years. Based on their assessment, they should recommend appropriate actions. The Coordinating Council should be requested to provide council in determining the above-mentioned appropriate actions.

### **Recommendation 3:**

The Deacons, in concert with the Coordinating Council and Ministry Teams, should be vigilant in making organization recommendations to the church that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the church's ministry. This includes, but is not limited to, the consolidation or creation of Ministry Teams; and the establishment of church policies.

### **Recommendation 4:**

The Deacons should be aware of issues that families, in their Family Ministry groups, have with the church planning and ministry activities, and take appropriate actions to address these issues.

### **Recommendation 5:**

The Deacons should encourage periodic outside evaluation of the ministries of the church.

VIII. Appendix  
AGAPE'S ONGOING PLANNING AND COORDINATION

# MINISTRY

## SCHEDULED UPDATES

## APPROVED (A) or REVIEWED (R) by CONGREGATION

RESOURCES - <i>Ministry Teams</i>	SCHEDULING - <i>Coordinating Council</i>	ANNUALLY AND AS NEEDED (Resources)	MONTHLY (Scheduling)	ANNUALLY AND AS UPDATED (A) (Resources)	MONTHLY (R) (Scheduling)
ACTION PLANS - <i>Ministry Teams</i>		ANNUALLY AND AS NEEDED		ANNUALLY AND AS UPDATED (R)	
OBJECTIVES - <i>Ministry Teams</i>		ANNUALLY AND AS NEEDED		ANNUALLY AND AS UPDATED (R)	
GOALS - <i>Coordinating Council</i>		ONLY AS REQUIRED		AS REVISED (A)	
CORE VALUES - <i>Deacons and Coordinating Council</i>		ONLY AS REQUIRED		AS REVISED (A)	
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS - <i>Deacons</i>		ONLY AS REQUIRED		AS REVISED (A)	
MISSIONS STATEMENT - <i>Deacons</i>		ONLY AS REQUIRED		AS REVISED (A)	

**Based on the recommendation of the Deacons, the Church may choose to conduct a strategic planning or long-range planning initiative. This initiative may utilize a temporary ministry team / committee to lead the effort.**