

Envisioning the Future of Salem Grace

Introducing Our Vision and Strategy

Last fall, after much thoughtful discussion, our Church Board felt it was time for Salem Grace to reflect on and plan for our future. We decided to bring in a consultant, Chad Clemons, to help guide us through several months of deep reflection, prayer, research, conversations, and more prayer. Our mission was clear: we needed to define what we want for the church, identify our core values, and envision where we see ourselves in three years.

Here's where we landed:

Firstly, we took a good look at who we are and defined our church culture through three core values:

1. **Missional:** We strive for ongoing life change that makes us more like Jesus. This means volunteering in our community, serving others, and building intentional relationships. Whether through Mission Salem, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, or our Mobile Market, we aim to bring about transformative, connected community life.
2. **Compassionate:** We seek to meet needs and share the hope of Jesus. Our efforts, like Be Rich, Local Missions, and Bread and Fish, are examples of our commitment to being outrageously generous and welcoming to all. Our goal is to cultivate a diverse, caring culture where generosity flourishes in time, talent, and treasure.
3. **Authentic:** True life change only happens when we are real with ourselves, with others, and when we reflect Jesus. This means being candid, transparent, and consistent. We extend love to every person who walks through our doors, no matter their past or present. Being real helps us mirror our community and show genuine care.

Our vision is to create a safe place where people can experience life change through God's love and share it with others, wherever they are.

How will we know we're on the right path? In three years, we hope to see an average Sunday attendance of 1,000. Right now, we average 356 attendees weekly, 375 including those online. Increased attendance will show that we are successfully serving our community and sharing God's love, creating a welcoming, loving place for people to grow in their relationship with Jesus.

To reach this goal, we identified four key areas to focus on:

1. **Experience:** Creating inviting environments where people can connect with Jesus.
2. **Life Change:** Building relationships that encourage growth across generations.
3. **Operations:** Ensuring clarity and efficiency in our church activities and stewardship.
4. **Care/Missional Outreach:** Impacting our community through love and service.

We're taking a step-by-step approach to our attendance goals:

- Three-year goal: 1,000 average weekly attendance
- Two-year goal: 800 average weekly attendance
- One-year goal: 600 average weekly attendance
- Today: 375 average weekly attendance

To accommodate this growth, we will focus on:

- **Staffing:** Building a team that supports our mission with a long-term perspective.
- **Facility/Environments:** Investing in our spaces to welcome more attendees comfortably.
- **Outreach Events:** Planning community events to engage and attract new visitors.

You may have already noticed some changes. We've added a new guest table in the foyer to welcome newcomers with a guest bag and collect their information. We've placed an air freshener in the entryway for a more welcoming first impression and hired a cleaning service to keep our facility fresh and welcoming. We are renovating the gym to create a gathering space and coffee bar to encourage fellowship and connections.

We have an exciting opportunity to purchase a house at a price below market value. As we plan to hire several new staff members who may not be from this area, we believe this could be a wise investment. The house would serve as a temporary landing pad for our new staff while they search for their own homes. To fund this purchase, the church will take out a loan. The next step is for our church membership to vote on this purchase. This vote will take place on Sunday, July 21, after the church service.

As we continue to make improvements, we'll keep you updated. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. Remember, all this progress is aimed at creating a safe place for people to experience life change through God's love and to share it with others.

Our strategy team and the Church Board believe this is the direction God is leading Salem Grace. Our building, resources, and message belong to Jesus, and it's our responsibility to share them in His name. We'll take risks responsibly, trusting that He will provide for us as we carry out His mission.

Salem Grace Strategy & Vision Team:

Chuck Howe, Trent Ice, Cheryl Ice, Chris Ice, Cathy Malone, Carol Ann Short, Troy Williams, and Jeremy Young. Chad Clemons, Consultant.

Salem Grace Board of Directors:

2024-2025: Chris Ice, Cathy Malone, Troy Williams.

2024-2026: Missy Hogan, Olivia Young

2024-2027: Christy Gillett, Abby Hawkins, Caleb Lusch

Pastor Trent Ice