

**Action Plan**  
**West Berlin Presbyterian Church**  
**July 2017**

Adopted by Session 2 July 2017  
Revised by Session 3 March 2019  
Revised by Session 7 September 2021

*Mission*

*The mission of West Berlin Presbyterian Church is to follow God's law and act in true faith by being a welcoming church where people learn, take part in worship, find fellowship, and serve those in need, for the glory of God.*

*Introduction*

It is important that together, the members of West Berlin Presbyterian Church (WBPC), create and maintain a plan that clearly defines the path of our "Small Strong Church with a Big Heart", in terms of actionable steps. While respecting our history and legacy, acknowledging our present, we must look to what is the best for the future of our church. What is God calling us to do and be, in this time and this place? Consistent with the polity of the PC(USA), this document is a product of the Session of WBPC. Session has primary responsibility for guidance of the church. However, the action plan will only succeed as all members and organizations within the church contribute to both establishing and implementing the Action Plan.

Accomplishments towards this plan are to be reviewed and the plan continually with a formal updating bi-annually by the Session of WBPC.

*Goals with Action Steps*

Building on the findings of the activities noted, Session has developed the following four Goals with related Action Steps to guide our activities. As would be expected, these four goals interact and overlap with each other. However, as a set, they identify action domains for our church. The goals are not presented in any priority order.

**Goal A: Engage More People with our Church Community**

Rationale: From our Mission statement – being a welcoming church where people learn, take part in worship, find fellowship, and serve... Today we realize that having people come to a physical location may be less important than it was historically and may limit our opportunities. This goal focuses on how we reach out both through physical presence (on-site) and electronic (virtual) means to engage people in the church.

Actions (Responsible Parties):

- 1) Continue focus on increasing number of visitors and first-time attenders (virtual & on-site) (**Worship and Outreach Committee**)
  - a) Equipping current members to invite and witness ( e.g. Come and See cards, QR codes, training)
  - b) Brochures, fliers, invitation cards, etc. – update and expand intentional distribution (e.g. Cheshire Market)
    - a. Information for greeters to distribute
    - b. Utilize QR codes that take people to website
  - c) Staff entrances for greeting visitor and sharing information for new persons (e.g. child care, children’s activity bags, restrooms, Sunday school)
  - d) Improve signage both inside and outside the building
  - e) Encourage people to stop in for experiences and programs
    - a. Dinners
    - b. Walking path (better signate, publicity)
    - c. Toddler Times program
    - d. Book exchange-“Little Library”
    - e. Silent Auction (consider virtual option)
    - f. Christmas pageant/event
  - f) Continue aggressive use of electronic contacts (e.g. Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram)
- 2) Enhance ways to integrate new persons into life of the church (**Worship and Outreach Committee**, **Education Committee**, **Deacon and Mission Board**)
  - a) Offer Member Information class with a segment on service opportunities,
  - b) Focus on Opportunities for participation: choir, children, women’s programs, community dinners, liturgists, sound system and presentation system operation, acolytes\*, offering\*, greeting\*, bell ringing (\*particularly for kids)
  - c) Look for new ideas to hook with current activities (e.g. community dinners with touch a truck event; might invite school groups to entertain or assist.)
  - d) Encourage partnering with experienced volunteer for first time volunteers.
- 3) Continue to use and enhance our web-based presence (**Worship and Outreach Committee**)
  - a) Periodic website update
  - b) Consider virtual tours
- 4) Targeting communication to specific demographics (**Worship and Outreach Committee**)
  - a) Target new senior residents and senior living communities in area
  - b) Target persons seeking a traditional worship experience
  - c) Target virtual participants
  - b) Improve targeted contacts [new residents, selected demographics] - Consider door hangers with QR code.
- 5) Maintain connection with developers of the residential area near the church (**Session**)

## Goal B: Enhance Mission Opportunities

Rationale: From our Mission statement “Serve those in need”. While social connections are necessary and important connections, new people are looking for more than just social engagement. The church needs to allow both current and new members to both serve and be served.

Actions (Responsible Parties):

- 1) Advance connections to Olentangy Berlin High School (Session or Committee Assigned Task Teams and Individuals)
  - a) Need to actively seek out what needs the school has that we can match. (e.g. - Invite music and arts groups from school to perform at events, host team or teacher events.)
- 2) Support and grow local and international mission opportunities with opportunities for all members (Deacon and Mission Board in collaboration with Women’s Society and Alice Cox Class)
  - a) Promote ways to enhance mission by parallel activities.
  - b) Be part of Presbytery Global Mission Network
- 3) Support needs of Congregational members (e.g organize work days to support home maintenance needs
- 4) Support informal opportunities for community and member education
  - a) Maintain Woodland Walk as contemplative/educational experience (Education Committee)
  - b) Develop and maintain a free, “little library” for community access to materials of all ages (Education Committee)

## Goal C: Enhance Worship, Education, and Engagement Opportunities

Rationale: From our Mission statement - learn, take part in worship, find fellowship, and serve those in need, for the glory of God. Our visits to other churches confirmed that there is a broad range of worship styles and content in our immediate area. Most worship services in our area include some component or all more contemporary style and music. However, we are choosing to stick with our strength of traditional worship style and learner centered content as our base, while being open to enhancements.

Actions (Responsible Parties):

- 1) Explore ways to continually refresh and enhance our Sunday morning worship (Worship and Outreach Committee)
  - a) Continue range of activities for worship, participation of lay persons, creative expressions.
  - b) Highlight mission opportunities during announcements, minutes for mission
  - c) Make opportunities for participation on committees more visible
  - d) Continue hybrid opportunities for worship, committees, etc.
  - e) Strengthen role of greeters (both on-site and virtual)
  - f) Schedule annual/semi annual review of order of worship; consider addition/removals/modifications in context of both on-site and virtual worship

- 2) Explore ways to enhance education and other opportunities for Bible, contemporary issues, and other religious programs of studies (**Education Committee**)
  - a) Have children's education packages available any Sunday we have kids
  - b) Explore and develop ways we can facilitate Christian education in the home -
    - a. Materials for use by parents, grandparents, others
    - b. Support kids in some way connected to our church even when Sunday morning is not an option
    - c. Explore future options for a summer "Vacation Bible School" type experience
    - d. Make Presbytery opportunities for youth more visible.
- 3) Explore ways to enhance offering of personal and family development as well as training for community service (**Deacon and Mission Board**)
- 4) Enhance connection with denomination and other churches (**Session**)
 

Ideas: Pulpit exchange with other churches  
More combined services, like with Peachblow

#### **Goal D: Maintain our Facility and Budget**

Rationale: Our physical facility, building and grounds, and balanced budget are an asset. To accomplish our Mission we must 1) make sure we do not back off keeping facilities in good condition and 2) assure that our fiscal resources match our mission.

Actions (Responsible Parties):

- 1) Continue program of building upgrade and maintenance (**Administrative Committee** of Session, Ongoing)
  - a) Developing wish list/opportunities for special giving and set priorities – **Session** subcommittee
  - b) Maintain a list of upcoming building and grounds projects for budget planning purposes.
- 2) Maintain focus on budget management and stewardship (**Session**)
  - a) Make on-line giving available.
  - b) Continue our system to comply with Book of Order annual financial review.
- 3) Continue personnel oversight (**Personnel Committee**)
  - a) Do annual pastor performance reviews
  - b) Seek opportunities for seminary student interactions.

#### *History of the Action Plan*

WBPC participated in the PC(USA) New Beginning Program during 2015. Broad congregational participation was accomplished. A final report (73 pages) is available in electronic or hard copy form from the church. The report described much of the current conditions of the church and the demographics of the area near the church. Although no overall strategy was adopted based on the report, it has been used for guidance in program and administrative structure decisions.

In the period of Autumn 2016 through Spring of 2017 activities continued under the heading of New Beginnings Act 2. Exploration Teams, through interviews with representatives of churches and other organizations around us, and other research, sought insights into how:

1) WBPC can best serve our community while being true to the call to create disciples for Christ and to our stated mission and

2) Other churches are successfully living out their missions.

Findings of the groups were presented in summary form at a meeting open to the full congregation May 16, 2017.

In November of 2018 Session did an in-depth review of each of the goals and actions. Notes of that discussion were shared with the Committees and the Deacon and Mission Board. A revised plan with updated actions was adopted by Session in March 2019.

One additional element for consideration is the commitment of the church in September 2019 to be part of the PC(USA) Matthew 25 church movement (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>). This includes commitment to three over-arching goals of 1) Building Congregational Vitality, 2) Dismantling Structural Racism, and 3) Eradicating Systemic Poverty. These three goals are considered over-arching goal in the Action Plan.

In April 2021, Session began the process of again reviewing the Action Plan. Committees of the church and the congregation at large were again enlisted in the process. A revised plan with updates was adopted by Session in 7 September 2021.

**Footnote:** Session will also use this plan and input to update the Church's Manual of Operation as needed.