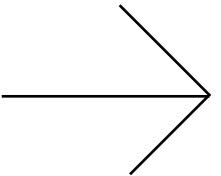




Vision Session

10/11/2026

Shaping the future of Samuel Church



Focus Areas for Discussion

INVITE. Create more reasons for people to encounter Samuel.

This could include community events, neighborhood involvement, more consistent communication, and making greater use of our church space.

CONNECT. Help people move from encountering Samuel to meaningful belonging.

How do we welcome newcomers, build relationships, and strengthen connections with our broader community – including the preschool – in ways that are respectful and mutually beneficial?

NURTURE. Support faith formation for children, youth, adults, and families.

Rather than assuming a particular staffing model, how can we meet these needs sustainably? The new faith-books ministry being developed by two members is a great example of people bringing their gifts forward to create meaningful ministry.

FOCUS & SHARE. Put our resources behind what matters most and distribute ownership more broadly.

What should we continue, change, simplify, or stop? How can we partner with others and make it easier for more people to contribute without placing additional burdens on the same volunteers?

Discussion Questions

The congregation split into small groups aligned to the Focus Areas for Discussion.

Each group considered the questions at left and captured their notes on flip charts.

At the end of the discussion, groups shared out key insights with the larger group.

Does this priority belong in Samuel's future? Why or why not?

What are we already doing that we should build upon?

What should we START doing?

What should we CHANGE, SIMPLIFY, PARTNER, or STOP to make room for it?

What is one realistic thing Samuel could accomplish in the next 12 months?

Invite. Create more reasons for people to encounter Samuel.

Thought Starters:

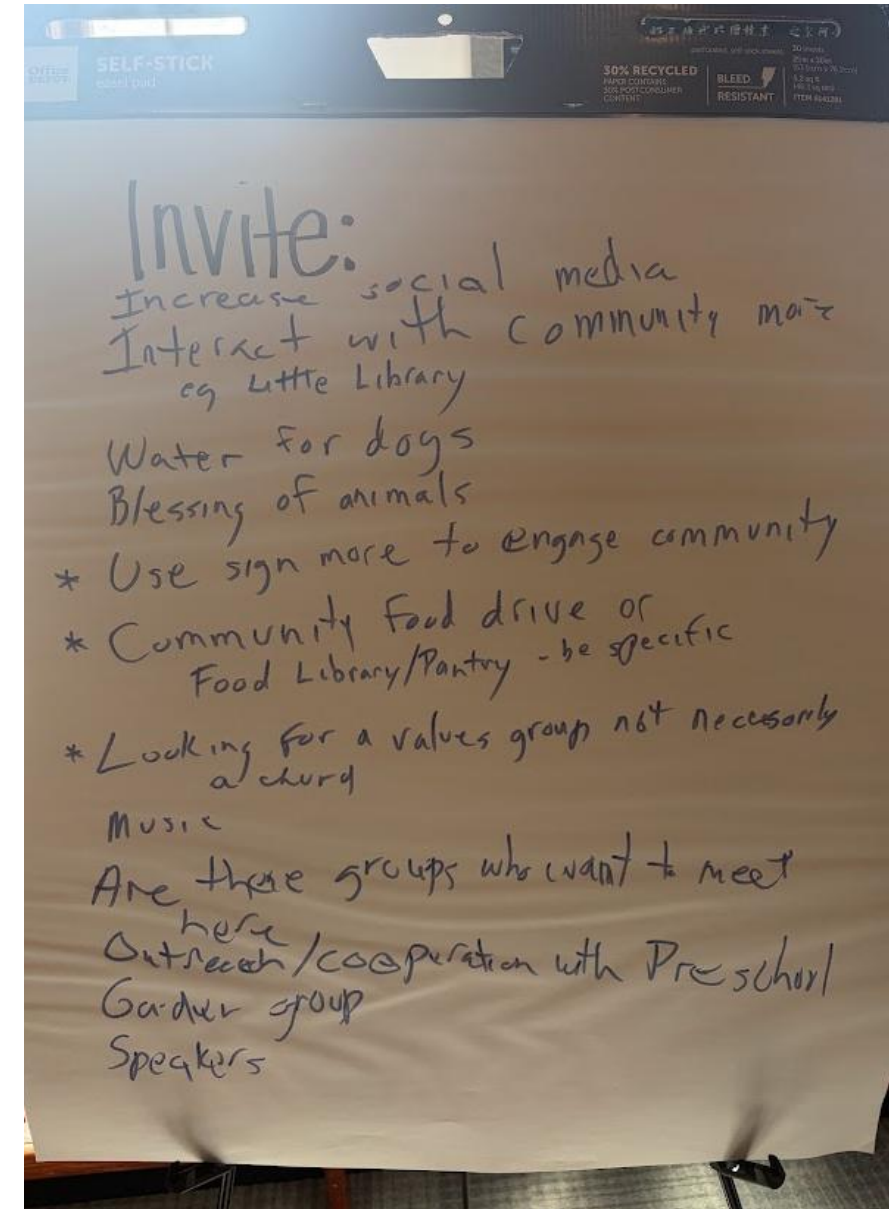
Commit to a calendar of several high-impact community/family events each year.

Increase Samuel's social media presence and regular communication.

Participate more intentionally in neighborhood and community events.

Make greater community use of Samuel's physical space and explore appropriate rentals/partnerships.

Encourage personal invitations from members.



Connect. Help people move from encountering Samuel to meaningful belonging.

Thought Starters:

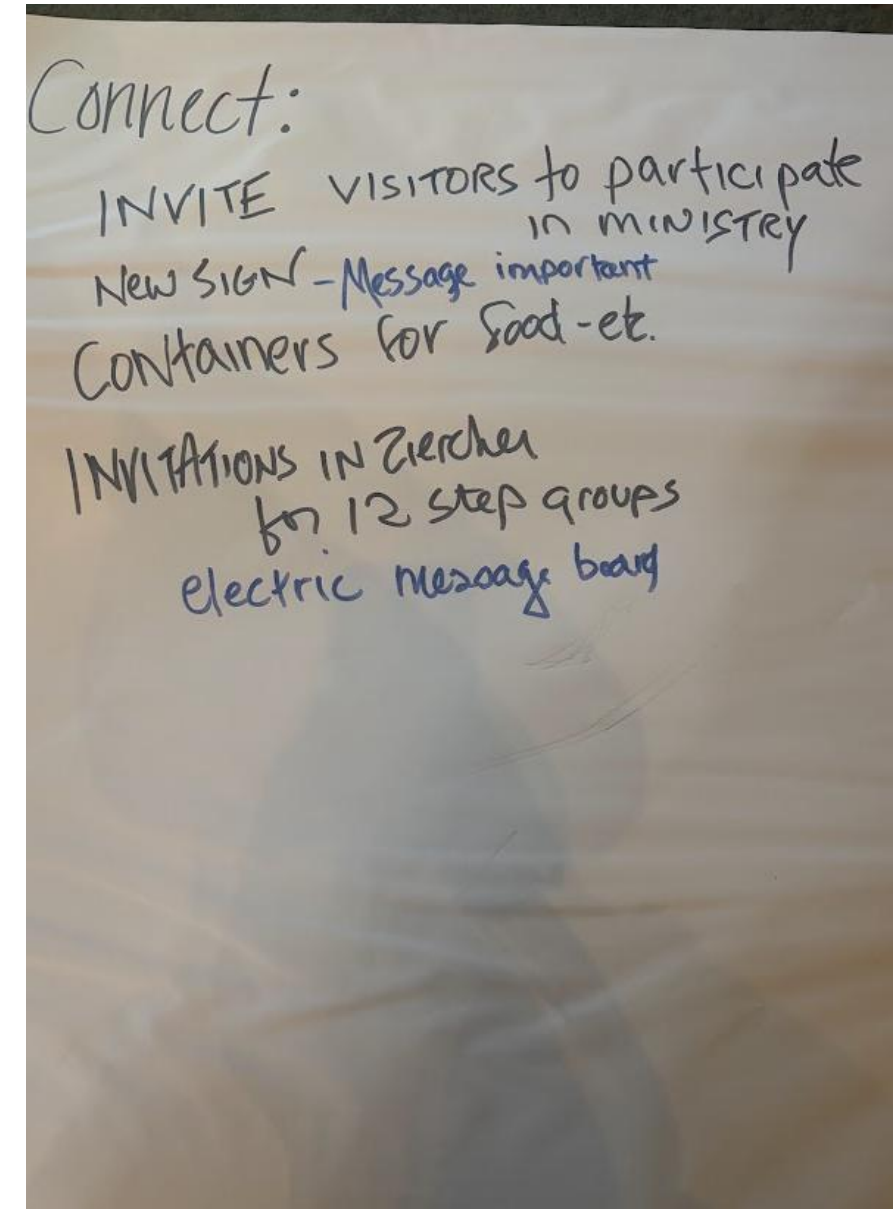
Create easier entry points into Samuel beyond Sunday worship.

Improve newcomer follow-up and communication about what is happening.

Build natural connections from community events to future Samuel activities.

Strengthen the Samuel/preschool relationship in ways that are welcoming, respectful, and mutually beneficial.

Respect the preschool's desire not to pressure families; emphasize optional invitations, shared service, resources, and community-building rather than recruitment.



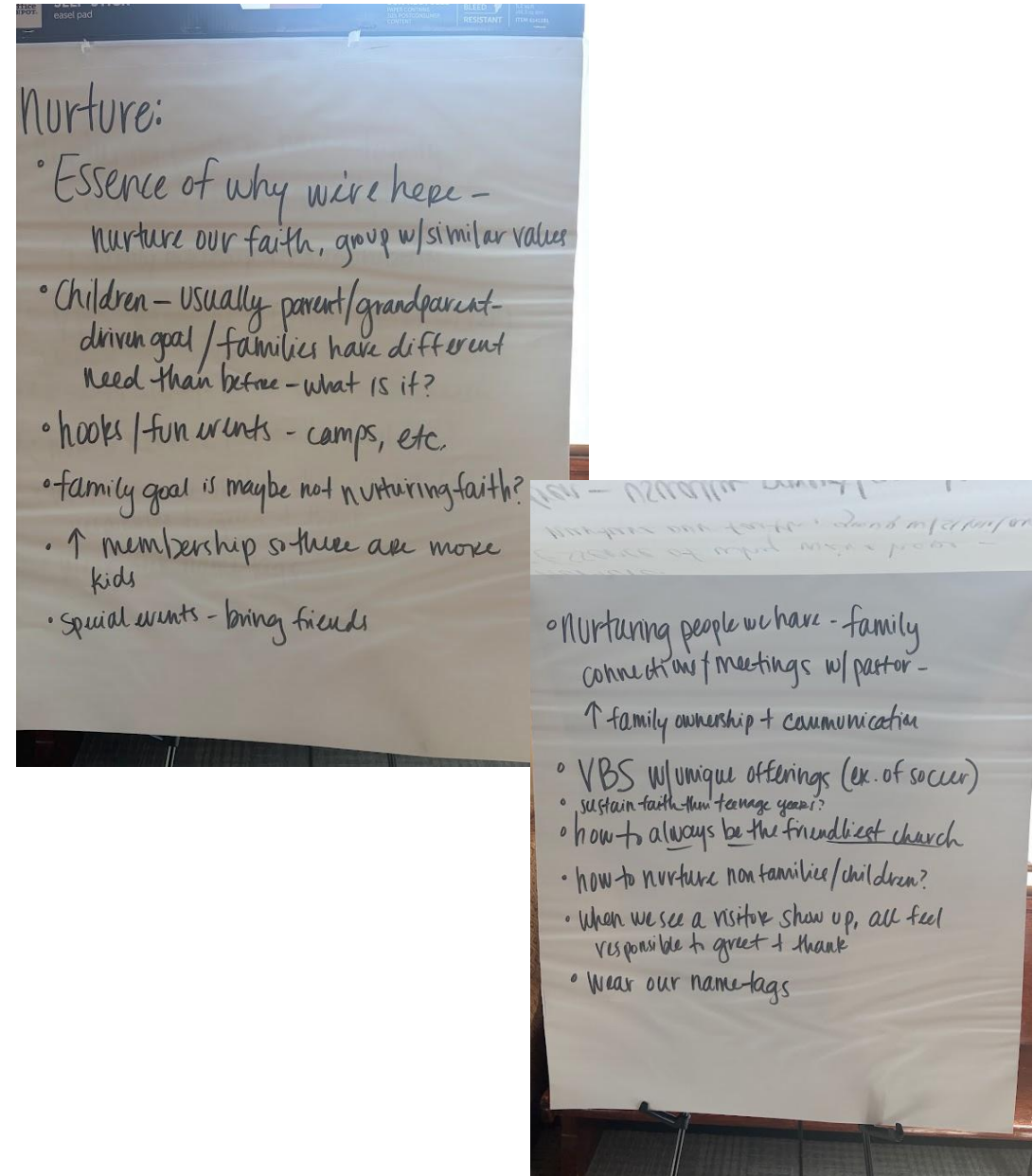
Nurture. Support meaningful faith formation for children, youth, adults, and families in sustainable ways.

Start with the ministry outcome Samuel wants - then determine the best structure to deliver it.

Explore lay leadership, intergenerational ministry, partnerships, contract/part-time support, and future staffing options rather than assuming a youth minister is the only solution.

Incorporate and support the new member-led ministry providing faith books/resources to families.

Use partnerships and member gifts to expand ministry without automatically adding permanent staff or programs.



Focus & Share. Concentrate Samuel's resources on what matters most and distribute ownership more broadly.

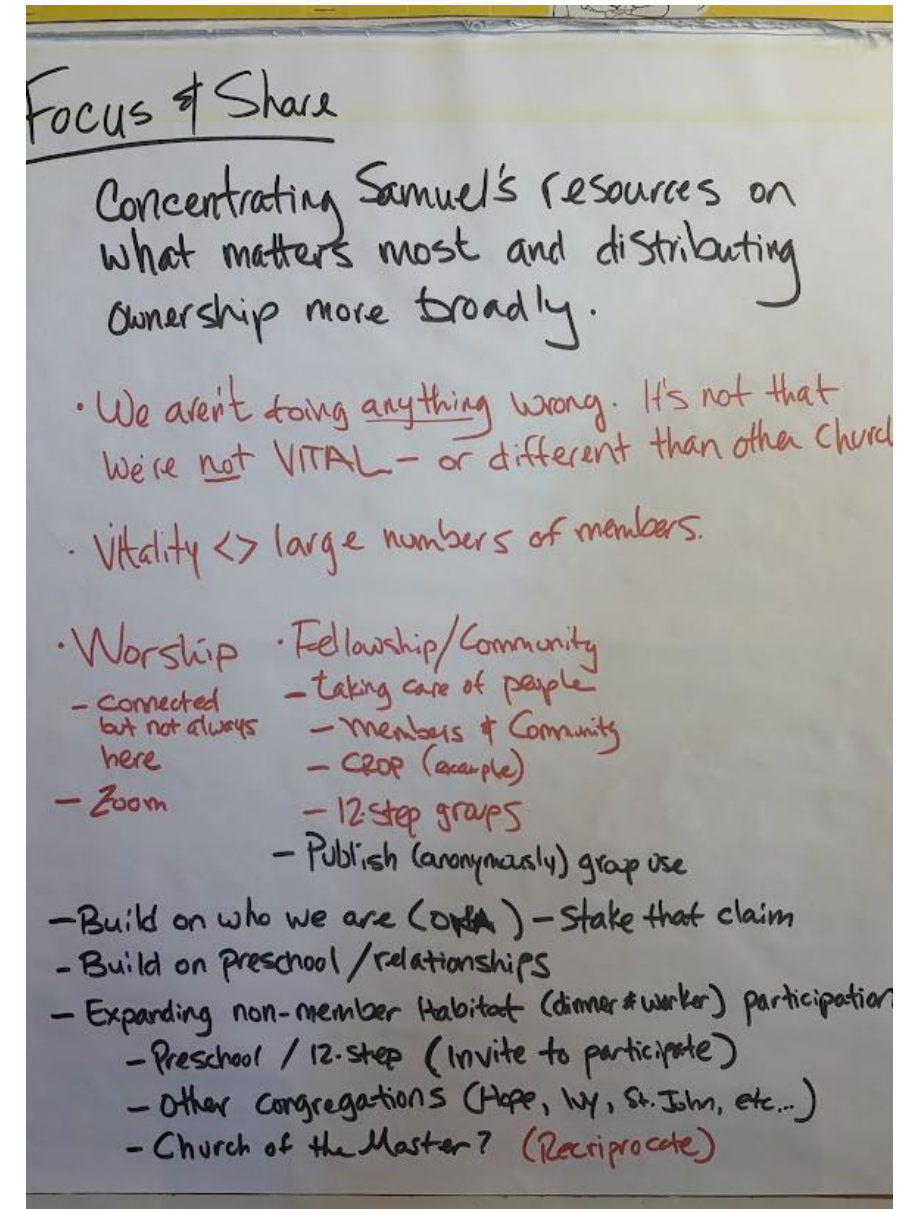
Identify what should continue, change, simplify, partner, or stop.

Focus on fewer, more impactful initiatives rather than simply adding programming.

Use event-specific action teams and clearly defined volunteer roles instead of relying on the same people for broad ongoing commitments.

Ask both 'How can more people help?' and 'How can we require less volunteer labor?'

Partner with other congregations and community organizations when appropriate.



Common Themes

Preserving our welcoming spirit: Building on the friendliness and relationships that make Samuel special, while helping visitors and longtime members alike feel connected and valued.

Strengthening our community presence: Increasing visibility through communication, community events, and meaningful connections with our neighbors.

Expanding mission and partnerships: Finding new ways to serve our community, collaborate with others, and build on Samuel's role as a gathering place.

Nurturing faith and relationships across generations: Exploring creative, sustainable ways to engage children, families, and adults in faith formation, fellowship, and service.

Focusing our efforts and sharing responsibility: Prioritizing activities that make the greatest impact while creating manageable opportunities for more people to contribute.