

# **PILGRIM COVENANT CHURCH**

## **VISION (draft)**

**JUNE 13, 2010**



**Letter from Greg Sikes , Church Chair (in final version)**

**Letter from Co-chairs of Vision Committee (Don Johnson and Jean Rush – in final version)**

## **Executive Summary**

The mission of Pilgrim Covenant Church is to Proclaim, Nurture, Serve, and Celebrate, all based on the foundation that we have been led by God through the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. From our Swedish roots in 1897 to our current day congregation of 178 serving a variety of Massachusetts and Connecticut communities, Pilgrim Covenant Church has grown while remaining true to this mission.

In the spring of 2009, the Church Council commissioned a Vision Committee to lead development of PCC's strategic plan for the future. With a foundation in prayer, and supported by full congregational involvement, a three to five year strategic plan has evolved. Building on the passage from Jeremiah, "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future", the Vision Committee introduced a focus on discernment and prayer throughout the entire planning process.

A survey was used to gather input from the congregation. From this, several key strengths of PCC emerged:

- Worship Services that meet the needs of the congregation
- A very strong Youth Program (including a well respected Youth Pastor and counselors)
- A distinct feeling of community and belonging to a close, caring church family
- An interest in great outreach and mission related work

Following more detailed discussions in small groups, five strategic themes were identified as the key areas of focus for the strategic plan:

- Increased focus on Missions and Outreach (both local and afar)
- Revitalize Children's Ministry
- Expand Adult Ministry
- Enhance Leadership
- Improve Communication

Following review and approval from the congregation, this Strategic Plan will be implemented by Church Council and the various ministries with support from the Vision Committee.

# Mission Statement

## Preface

The purpose of the Mission Statement of Pilgrim Covenant Church is to serve as the foundation upon which we, the congregation, build our Christian faith. It is the basis for our decisions. It is our guide both individually and corporately as we proclaim the Gospel, nurture people, serve God and celebrate the abundant life in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit

## Mission Statement

Having been led by God through the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, we have gathered as a Church in order to:

- I. **Proclaim** that through grace, God has provided:
  - A. salvation, received by faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,
  - B. continuing forgiveness of our sins through confession, and
  - C. the gifts, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit
  
- II. **Nurture** people in the development of a more mature Christian character through:
  - A. encouragement of individual daily prayer and devotional study,
  - B. assistance in the discovery of each person's spiritual gifts,
  - C. provision of opportunities for the study of Scripture and Christian aspects of other literature and other resources which enhance Christian growth, and
  - D. provision of opportunities for Christian fellowship.
  
- III. **Serve** God, the community of believers and the world by:
  - A. proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ,
  - B. utilizing our spiritual gifts in response to God's call for service,
  - C. pursuing an ethical stance in our homes, workplaces, and nation, and
  - D. striving for peace and justice in all the earth.
  
- IV. **Celebrate** abundant life in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit through:
  - A. declaration of God's Word,
  - B. participation in the Sacraments,
  - C. confession of sins, and
  - D. expression of our gratitude to God through prayer, praise and song.

### **Mission Statement in Abbreviated Form**

In publications such as the church bulletin, there is not space for the full Mission Statement Proposal. We therefore use an abbreviated form when there is not space for the full Statement.

### **Mission Statement**

Having been led by God through the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and to confess Him as Lord, we have gathered as a Church in order to:

- I. **Proclaim** that through grace, God has provided salvation, continuing forgiveness of our sins, and the gifts, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.
- II. **Nurture** people in the development of a more mature Christian character.
- III. **Serve** God, the community of believers and the world.
- IV. **Celebrate** abundant life in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit

## **Our Heritage: A Brief History Of The Church**

From Swedish religious roots came what is now Pilgrim Covenant Church. Around 1897, Swedish families of North Granby felt the need for spiritual nurture in their native language. John Nelson started a Sunday School when he hitched up his horse and wagon and made the rounds of Swedish families, gathering up the children for classes.

In 1902, with guidance from the Swedish Covenant Church of Springfield, "The Swedish Free Christians of North Granby" Corporation was formed. The first church building was located on Loomis Street, a modest structure of 30' x 25' and 10' high. A year later, expansion was already under-way in the form of a steeple, 7' x 11' and 32' high. The corporation charged a membership fee of 25 cents per month in 1902 and 50 cents per month in 1903 when the first pastor arrived. The Reverend John Thunberg was paid \$10. per month.

In 1904, when financial aide was pledged by the Missionary Society of Connecticut, the name of the church was changed to "The Swedish Congregational Church of North Granby."

From 1904 to 1908, a number of new Swedish families moved into the areas and the church grew. In 1908 a farm was bought for a

parsonage at the corner of Vining Hill Mort Vining Hill in Southwick. The pastor's salary was set at \$50.00 per month. Thus, from its beginnings Pilgrim Covenant Church has served a two state congregation.

In the early 1920s, Loomis Street was still a dirt road without electricity. To enable members to reach the church during the wet seasons and to fulfill the need for a social room, the church was moved to Route 10, then a paved road. The first service in the present building was held in 1926.

Until 1932, all services were conducted in Swedish. Then once service a month was conducted in English, and in 1941 all services except one per month were in English. In 1943 the name was changed again to the "Swedish Pilgrim Congregational Church."

Reflecting changes in association and composition, the church has since changed its name a number of times:

- 1902 "The Swedish Free Christians of North Granby"
- 1903 "The Swedish Congregational Church of North Granby"
- 1943 "The Swedish Pilgrim Congregational Church"
- 1948 "Pilgrim Congregational Church"
- 1964 "Pilgrim Covenant Church"

Swedish founding families and new families no longer used the Swedish language and the church began to serve the entire Granby community (1964 – "Pilgrim Covenant Church")

This final name change reaffirmed the association formed at the very beginning with the Evangelical Covenant Church.

The first expansion project at the present church was completed in 1964. The south wing was built to provide much needed classroom and office space. The sanctuary was renovated and rearranged to provide additional seating for Sunday worship.

The mission and building of Pilgrim Covenant Church as we know it today, is the result of the last Long Range Plan drafted in 1987 also referred to as the report entitled "Planning For A Second Hundred Years." In the years following that report membership increased significantly and as a result the largest and most costly capital improvement was added in 1993, Jackson Hall.

Increased membership and participation in the life of the congregation also led to the formation of a second Sunday morning service and to the hiring of full-time youth directors to serve our ever-growing youth program. The early years of

youth directors came as interns from North Park Seminary as a requirement for a Masters of Divinity degree. More recently our youth directors have been hired through a search process.

1993 saw a change in congregational governance from a traditional board format to a council format. This rationale was twofold. First, it spread the multitude of church life responsibilities from three boards to nine ministries allowing for more concentration in a specific ministry. Secondly, it incorporated many more members into the decision making process on the council with increased member participation on each ministry.

The most recent Constitutional change occurred in January of 2008 with the establishment of an Elder Committee, to encourage, nurture and access the spiritual growth and health of individuals, ministries and the church body.

## **Where We Are Now**

Pilgrim Covenant Church today is 178 members from approximately a 20 mile radius extending over two states. Friends and members travel regularly from distances of up to 40 miles to gather to celebrate our common Life in Christ.

Fourteen percent (14%) of our membership come from a Covenant background, down from 25% in the early 1990's, however a large number expressed a strong loyalty and appreciation to the Covenant denomination.

Statistically, Pilgrim Covenant Church appears to continue the trend of stability and is in overall good shape. Membership has increased by 61 since 2003, following the formal release and transferring of many members in 2002. Worship attendance, while increasing for several years, peaked in 2007 with an average attendance of 118. Since then we have experienced a decline in average worship attendance to 103 in 2009 with 2010 continuing the trend. Youth programs represent steady growth, while Children's Ministry, Adult Care and Education and Stewardship and Finance fluctuate in attendance and support.

Many new members are joining as families whose children are involved in children and youth programs. Married couples and singles without children, or grown children (those joining without specific need for children's and youth programs) are the largest contingent of new members, reflecting a trend of a growing middle and older congregation. All groups enhance the church's vitality in all age groups and place increased demands on program and facilities. Those young families who joined in the 1980's and 90's now have children in junior and senior high creating new demands for program and facility. Those members who

were the foundation of the membership prior to the late 1980's are now our senior members and in need of services and programs as well.

Pilgrim Covenant Church is a church for and of all ages. Never in its history has the responsibility for spiritual leadership been so great.

So, where does Pilgrim Covenant Church, that little white church on the state line, fit? What mission has the Lord given us for the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Our comfort and encouragement come from knowing,

“I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord.”

## **Governing Assumptions**

A plan of action concerns itself with questions of probability rather than certainty. Assumptions substitute for certainty and facts we do not have. Because we cannot always be sure of future conditions and variables, we must base our plan on solid assumptions that will direct our actions. The Governing Assumptions for this Vision Plan are as follows.

1. Our mission is proclamation, nurturance, service and celebration. We will not sacrifice these aims solely for the sake of numerical growth.
2. We wish to preserve the current positive aspects of the Church's ministry while growing in other areas as well.
3. We value our relationships together as a Church Family and believe God is revealing Himself in our individual and corporate lives. Thus, we seek to preserve the Church family atmosphere.
4. We assume continuity of a ministerial staff with no major gaps or problems in ministerial service. This does not imply however, that the current ministerial staff would continue to serve us over the coming decade.
5. We assume the membership will support and participate in the ongoing ministries and programs of the church.
6. We recognize at the conclusion of our Jackson Hall mortgage obligations, the opportunity to redirect funds to any number of ministries, staff, capital improvements and programs at the discretion and approval of the congregation.
7. We recognize that we are in a period of stability and community within the congregation, making this an ideal time to reassess our future as a church body.

## Process Used to Create the Strategy

In April, 2009, the Church Council commissioned a workgroup to lead development of the Visioning process for Pilgrim Covenant Church (PCC). This workgroup (the Vision Committee ) consisted of Don Johnson, Jean Rush, Bob Mocarisky, Meghan Burch, and Rodney Lee.

To begin the process, the Vision Committee first reviewed prior strategies completed at PCC such as The Long Range Planning Committee Report (1981), “Planning for the Next Hundred Years” (1989), and the Covenant Vision to Action (1999). They also took stock of the church’s current situation (The 2008 Annual Report), and began to review relevant literature regarding similar visioning initiatives at other churches across the country in recent years. They read and reviewed three books: The Full Kingdom Potential of your Congregation, Breaking the Missional Code, and God’s Vision for Your Church. From these readings they developed an overall approach to the Strategic Vision which included the following:

- A focus on prayerful discernment
- Identification of a Biblical theme (“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. *Jeremiah 29:11*)
- Full congregational involvement through prayer, surveys, and focus group discussions.
- Clear and consistent communication with both the Church Council and the congregation throughout the process

A copy of the survey (Appendix A) and a summary of survey results (Appendix B) were compiled and shared with the congregation in December, 2009. Key strengths of Pilgrim Covenant Church identified by members and friends included:

- Worship Services that effectively meet the need of the congregation
- A very strong Youth Program (inclusive of Youth Pastor and counselors)
- A distinct feeling of community; belonging to a close and caring church family
- An interest in greater outreach and mission related work

In addition, four areas emerged for which the Visioning Committee wanted deeper congregational input through the focus groups:

- Community Outreach and Service
- Children's Ministry
- Adult Ministry/Fellowship
- Sharing the Good News

Following the analysis of the feedback received from both the survey and the small focus group discussions, the Visioning Committee summarized both the current strengths of the church along with identification of five strategic themes for focus in the upcoming three years:

- Increased focus on Missions and Outreach (both local and remote)
- Revitalize Children's Ministry
- Expand Adult Ministry
- Enhance Leadership
- Improve Communication

## **Strategic Theme – Missions and Outreach**

### ***REACHING OUT TO INVITE IN***

***“Go into all the World and preach the gospel to all creation.” Mark 16:15***

Members of PCC recognize and accept the validity of this command. We also recognize that we have not been as obedient as we should be. There is a strong desire to be more mission oriented.

Where is “all the world”? Both local and afar!!

We need to sow the word and faith – MISSION - PLANT THE SEED, but sowing necessitates maintenance of the crop – NURTURE - SERVICE. We can not do one and not the other.

In order to successfully achieve this we must nurture and train our members through programs that prepare individuals, in an age appropriate way, to:

- Pray for direction
- Have comfort in talking to outsiders about the love and redemption of Jesus
- Demonstrate, in practical ways, our understanding of:
  - Who Jesus is,
  - What He has done for us and what he can do for all who trust in him.
  - Dispel the negative views of Christianity.
- Internalize the Word
- Understanding our responsibilities
- Having a willing heart to invite and serve.

To best use our resources we must:

- Pray for guidance.
- Be aware of needs both local and afar. Local mission projects and needs may not seem as attractive at times as a foreign mission but the spiritual and physical needs of both are significant. The opportunities for service in each field must be part of our mission planning.
- Maximize the resources of the Covenant – research what is out there; stay up to date on the Covenant activities – not only for the leaders but also the congregation. What the Covenant is doing is exciting. How do we, in PCC best plug in?
- Think outside our comfort zone – or as some may say – outside the box.
- Respond
- Communicate back to the congregation
- Be aware, but not turn away from, commitments that may lead to a long term relationship and long term support

To provide us with the resources we need to develop an emphasis in all our programs and activities, in an age appropriate way, on reaching out (MISSIONS) and inviting in (EVANGELISM). This is our response to God's call.

However, while we are nurturing within, if a need is presented, with prayer, we must respond as quickly and effectively as possible. We can not use the excuse that we are not ready.

## **Strategic Theme: Revitalize Children's Ministry**

### **SERVING CHILDREN SERVES ALL**

***"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14***

In the survey completed in October 2009, members and friends of PCC said that of all the programs at church, children's ministry is one of the 3 programs in the most need of attention.

In an effort to get clarification and more insight from the congregation, the committee identified children's ministry as one area to be addressed in the first round of small group discussions, and then again in a small group discussion focused specifically on children's ministry.

Through these discussions, the Vision Committee learned that members and friends of PCC recognize these things about children's ministry:

- Children's ministry offers the opportunity to reach the whole family with or through children.
- Children's ministry is a critical feeder for youth programs and beyond.

Members and friends of PCC also recognize:

- A revitalized children's ministry must serve and be served by families of single parent and two-working-parent homes.
- A revitalized ministry is possible at PCC, but what we've done in the past isn't necessarily what we have to do now and in the future.

The common suggestions and ideas for reestablishing vibrant children's ministry at PCC include:

- Increase outreach such as VBS and Mid-week Programs
- Investigate collaborative arrangements with other local churches
- Utilize an intergenerational approach (ie: involve senior high students, grandparents, etc)
- Increase visibility of our children in worship and other events
- Explore what is working at other churches (ie: best practices or new

- approaches)
- Investigate possibility/need for full or part time paid position (Family Ministry)
  - Investigate and make use of Covenant resources pertaining to children's ministry

The important thing to see is that some of these strategies will require prayer and dedication to see results over a long period of time, but some strategies can be put in place to make a valuable impact for the children of our church and community now.

## **Strategic Theme – Expansion of Adult Ministry**

### **Lifelong Growth**

**“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” – Colossians 3:17**

We live in a world that urges us to be independent. We are told to "pull our own strings" and warned not to become "dependent" on anyone. As a result of this teaching we may at times become isolated from each other. But this is not what God wants for His people. God calls us to be involved with each other.

God has designed the church so that we are inter-dependent. In fact, he uses the analogy of a human body. He says the Christian community is like a body: the body has different parts and different functions but must work together to be effective. Paul tells us that God has given us various gifts (or skills) that can be used in ministry.

A strong theme that was expressed in the survey was the appreciation of the strong fellowship and loving support that people feel in our church family. To

further develop and nourish this aspect of our church life we have come up with a number of recommendations.

- Bring spiritual development to the forefront in Adult Ministry by providing more options whether in missions work or theme based activities.
- Focus on and enhance programs that we currently have such as Bible Studies and Adult Sunday School by more effective and broad reaching communication about these programs.
- Use all communications processes to convey the message: email, bulletin, calendar, website, texting, and automatic electronic notification.
- Develop new programs that utilize small group activities that could help with community outreach and also boost fellowship within the church such as the Spiritual Retreat, Conventicles, and the Marriage Course.
- Sponsor social activities such as going to a Rock Cats game or a bowling and pizza night to encourage Christian fellowship.

## **Strategic Theme - Enhance Leadership**

### **Champion - Advocate – Servant**

**"We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone- with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ." - Colossians 1:28**

Jesus idea of leadership was to lead by serving. Jesus talks of leaders with words like:

- Compassion
- Humility
- Gentleness
- Patience
- Service

In addition, we need to seek out those who possess:

- A passion for the work of their ministry
- Knowledge of the ministry's responsibilities
- Strong communication skills
- Organizational and delegation skills

Christian Leadership sees the big picture. Effective leaders want to develop people not produce events. They want to see people grow not just show up for Church.

Leadership in the church is what drives us forward. Without leaders to champion the ministries and programs, the hard work of the church will not succeed. To support this, we need to:

- Develop an official succession planning process for key positions including both staff roles and ministry chairs.
- Establish a training program for the Ministry chairs including an overlap of Ministry chairs so an incoming chair could see how things flow and discuss how the Ministry works with the outgoing chair.
- Ministry goals should be set and monitored.
- There should be an endorsement of interaction between Ministries
- A formal planning process should be developed to link the strategy going forward to current ministry work.
- Establish an annual planning process to explore Ministry goals and ideas

## **Strategic Theme - Communications**

### ***BEING INFORMED***

**“Thy word is a Lamp unto my feet and a light unto my Path.” (Psalm 119:105)**

Just as the Lord communicates to us through His Word, lighting our path, we too must communicate with each other and the community, sharing not only our various church events but also His direction for living in this world.

Not knowing contributes to misunderstanding, confusion, mistrust, and lack of support and participation.

PCC's past communications, on various levels, have not been consistent and in some instances just plain lacking.

In today's world we communicate through a wide variety of methods. Internally the most common communications means are:

- monthly newsletter,
- weekly bulletins,
- telephone,
- email
- face to face

Externally we use:

- local newspapers
- street signs
- web site

Each has a valid function and is appropriate to communicate for one or more types of information. We need to use the most appropriate methods for the type of information being disseminated. Further, we need to recognize that individuals may prefer one method over another. To reach the maximum number of people, we need to consciously use a variety of communication methods .

In order for communication to be effective it should be

- *clear, concise and consistent.*
- In addition it must be timely, that is with sufficient lead time to allow planning around our busy schedules.

There must be a consistent and detailed program of communications to the congregation, to each part of the base and the larger community.

How can we do this? How do we assure it happens?

- By making it a *priority.*

Leaders of Council, each Ministry, and each Program must make communications a priority.

Each Ministry and Program needs a point person and the church should have one point person (not the office administrator) to go after information and make sure it gets reported, communicated in the most effective and timely way, using whatever technology is appropriate with each age group. Where it makes sense we should use face to face communication, developing relationships and building bridges.

## Implementation

In order for this strategy to benefit the future of Pilgrim Covenant Church, it is imperative that church leadership embrace it and link the strategy to the ministry work that they lead. In order to facilitate this transition, the Vision Committee is committed to working closely with the Church Council on this endeavor.

Once the strategy is approved by the congregation, the Council should work with their ministry members to fully understand how the strategy impacts their particular ministry and to determine what actions need to be implemented. The Vision Committee recommends that a formal planning process be used to identify how each ministry will respond to the strategy and to identify the specific goals they believe are important to ensure implementation.

Because we do what we measure, each ministry should also identify how they will measure the results of their action planning...in other words, how will we know when we have achieved what we set out to do?

Because communication is one of the key strategic themes, it should remain at the forefront of the implementation process, ensuring that the congregation knows what is happening and how they can contribute. We should also strive to collect ongoing feedback from the congregation, both members and friends, to be sure that the strategy is staying current with the needs of the church family and that everyone is being kept "in the communications loop".

All strategies need to be revamped from time to time, to account for changes in the world around us. Therefore, we recommend that the Church Council review the strategy at their annual planning retreat, updating it with any changes they believe are relevant for the upcoming year.

**"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."**

*Jeremiah 29:11*

## APPENDIX A

### **Pilgrim Covenant Church Visioning Process Survey**

Introduction - Visioning Process at Pilgrim Covenant Church

"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord" - Jeremiah 29:11

It has been over ten years since PCC engaged in a visioning process to help us discern where God is leading us as a body. During that time, a lot has changed and so this past spring the Church Council decided to establish a Vision Committee to initiate this process once again. Over the course of the past month, we have been asking all of you to pray for God's direction and guidance as we embark upon the next stage of our journey. What IS next in God's plan for PCC?

As we kickoff the Visioning process, we would like to ask your input regarding our church community. Below is a short survey intended to capture some initial thoughts and ideas. We will then use this information to develop more detailed questions that will be discussed in Small Groups this winter. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and please continue to keep our Visioning process in your prayers.

The PCC Vision Committee (Don Johnson, Bob Mocarsky, Meghan Burch, Rodney Lee, Jean Rush)

#### **1. How long have you been attending PCC?**

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 5 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 11 - 20 years
- Greater than 21 years

**2. Are you a Member or Friend?**

Member

Friend (non-Member)

**3. What is your age?**

12 - 20

21 - 30

31 - 40

41 - 50

51 - 60

61+

**4. What town do you live in?**

Granby

Southwick

Granville

Westfield

Suffield

Hartland

Simsbury

Other (please specify)

**5. How often do you attend service?**

Every week

Two to three times a month

Occasionally

**6. What brought you to PCC? (check all that apply)**

- Family or friends
- Programs
- Advertisement
- Past Covenant denominational experience
- Church's reputation within community
- Preaching/Worship Services
- Youth Group
- Other (please specify)

**7. What keeps you at PCC? (check all that apply)**

- Children's Program
- Adult Programs
- Youth Program
- Preaching/Worship Services
- Music
- Fellowship
- Missions
- Other (please specify)

**8. Describe your best church experience (overall at any church)**


**9. Describe your best church experience at PCC**


**10. Where would you say you are personally in your walk with Christ?**

Searching

Growing

Steadfast

Other (please specify)

**11. Please take a moment to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs at PCC (Check the answer that applies):**

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
<b>Children's Program</b>					
<b>Ministry to Adults</b>					
<b>Youth Program</b>					
<b>Missions</b>					
<b>Worship Services</b>					
<b>Music Program</b>					
<b>Ministry to the Community</b>					
<b>Elders</b>					

**12. What is our most effective program? Why?**


**13. What is our least effective program? Why?**


**14. Based on our charge to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, what do you as an individual need to be doing differently to meet this charge?**


**15. What should PCC as a body of believers be doing differently?**


**16. How important do you feel it is for a Christian to believe in or practice the following (check one box after each item)**

	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Maintain regular attendance at church			
Engage in daily prayer and meditation			
Study the Bible on a regular basis			
Read Christian literature			
Participate regularly in fellowship with Christians			
Share my faith with others			
Engage in a ministry as God leads me			
Be actively engaged in solving society's problems			
Attend retreats and conferences which renew faith			

**17. Please identify what you consider to be appropriate ways for our church to react to community issues (check all that apply):**

Not to be involved directly

Church staff should be directly involved in community issues

Deal with the question only in sermons or study groups

Individuals should work on special projects on their own initiative

Form special action groups to work on crisis problems  
Lead the community and help solve local issues

**18. Which best describes our congregation's structure and leadership? Check one box after each item.**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I have a strong sense of the church's mission				
Our Pastors and Council share leadership effectively				
The church provides a variety of opportunities to serve				
I understand the role of the Elders in our church				
Church leadership is sensitive to the concerns of the congregation				
The Pastor is accessible if I need him				
My views and concerns relating to PCC are easily communicated and addressed by church leadership				

I am satisfied with my membership at PCC				
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**19. Are you involved in activities outside your home or job? (Please check all that apply)**

- Church
- School
- Sports
- Community (ie. Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts, Lions Club, etc)
- Denominational organizations (i.e. Pilgrim Pines, Children's Home, Seafarers Mission)
- Other (please specify)

**20. Where do you connect with friends who support your faith and your walk with Christ? (Please check all that apply)**

- Sunday Morning Worship
- Small groups
- Ministry work
- Social gatherings
- Other (please specify)

**21. What methods of communication at PCC do you find most effective ? (Please check all that apply)**

- Newsletter
- Announcements during Service
- Web Site
- Emails
- Bulletins
- Quarterly Business Meetings
- Prayer Chain
- Local Newspaper
- Other (please specify)

**22. How would you like to participate in this visioning process at PCC?**

- Prayer
- Small groups
- Work groups
- Other (please specify)

**23. What else would you like us to know about your experience at PCC and about your hopes and wishes for our faith community?**


**If you are filling out this survey manually please return to:**

**Pilgrim Covenant Church  
605 Salmon Brook St  
Granby, CT 06035-1108  
Attention: Vision Committee**

**Thank you for your participation.**

## Appendix B

### Vision Committee Survey Results Summary

#### 1. How long have you been attending PCC?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than 1 year	3.3%
1 - 5 years	18.7%
6 - 10 years	23.1%
11 – 20 years	31.9%
Greater than 21 years	24.2%

#### 2. Are you a Member or Friend?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Member	78.0%
Friend (non-Member)	22.0%

#### 3. What is your age?

Answer Options	Response Percent
12 – 20	3.3%
21 – 30	2.2%
31 – 40	19.8%
41 – 50	41.8%
51 – 60	22.0%
61+	11.0%

#### 4. What town do you live in?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Granby	51.1%
Southwick	6.8%
Granville	2.3%
Westfield	18.2%
Suffield	1.1%
Hartland	3.4%
Simsbury	13.6%
Other (please specify)	4.5%

**5. How often do you attend service?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Every week	52.3%
Two to three times a month	39.8%
Occasionally	8.0%

**6. What brought you to PCC? (check all that apply)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Family or friends	36.3%
Programs	17.6%
Advertisement	2.2%
Past Covenant denominational experience	12.1%
Church's reputation within community	7.7%
Preaching/Worship Services	19.8%
Youth Group	33.0%
Other (please specify)	19.8%
"Other" includes: God's calling; location; searching for new church	

**7. What keeps you at PCC? (check all that apply)**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Children's Program	15.3%
Adult Programs	15.3%
Youth Program	62.4%
Preaching/Worship Services	57.6%
Music	29.4%
Fellowship	57.6%
Missions	14.1%
Other (please specify)	11.8%
"Other" includes: spiritual connectedness, being called, openness of church leadership.	

**8. Describe your best church experience (overall at any church)**

Fellowship, community, and small groups were frequent themes. Worship, special services, missions and youth group activities were also mentioned numerous times.

**9. Describe your best church experience at PCC**

Fellowship and worship services (including baptisms and confirmations) were again a prevalent theme. Support from the church in good times and bad was also mentioned several times.

**10. Where would you say you are personally in your walk with Christ?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Searching	18.2%
Growing	77.3%
Steadfast	37.5%
Other (please specify)	14.8%
"Other" includes: limbo, not sure, stopped growing	

**11. Please take a moment to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs at PCC:**

Answer Options	Children's Program	Ministry to Adults	Youth Program	Missions	Worship Services	Music Program	Ministry to the Community	Elders
Excellent	14	8	36	6	28	26	3	11
Good	31	19	42	26	39	34	24	27
Fair	29	18	4	20	16	20	21	9
Poor	2	31	0	28	0	1	33	28
Don't Know	8	6	2	3	0	2	4	9

**12. What is our most effective program? Why?**

The Youth Program was singled out as the most effective program with great leadership, great counselors, and diverse programs listed as the primary reasons. The weekly worship service is also identified as being effective.

**13. What is our least effective program? Why?**

The lack of ministry to the community and community outreach is the main theme drawn from this question. Children's ministry is also identified as a weak point. Adult ministry and Evangelism and Invitation were also mentioned.

**14. Based on our charge to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, what do you as an individual need to be doing differently to meet this charge?**

The overall theme here is the feeling that to discuss one's faith is not a comfortable thing to do. Whether it is speaking with friends, coworkers, or associates, taking that step is not easy.

Outreach to the community was also mentioned as another need. Prayer both personal and corporate was listed.

**15. What should PCC as a body of believers be doing differently?**

Outreach through Missions and Evangelism to the community by far is the dominant theme.

**16. How important do you feel it is for a Christian to believe in or practice the following**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Maintain regular attendance at church	47	36	2
Engage in daily prayer and meditation	80	7	0
Study the Bible on a regular basis	73	12	0
Read Christian literature	12	54	18
Participate regularly in fellowship with Christians	48	35	2
Share my faith with others	57	27	1
Engage in a ministry as God leads me	76	10	0
Be actively engaged in solving society's problems	29	30	25
Attend retreats and conferences which renew faith	15	41	24

**17. Please identify what you consider to be appropriate ways for our church to react to community issues**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Not to be involved directly	9.4%
Church staff should be directly involved in community issues	42.2%
Deal with the question only in sermons or study groups	10.9%
Individuals should work on special projects on their own initiative	56.3%
Form special action groups to work on crisis problems	64.1%
Lead the community and help solve local issues	50.0%

**18. Which best describes our congregation's structure and leadership?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
I have a strong sense of the church's mission	6	37	41	1
Our Pastors and Council share leadership effectively	31	24	21	9
The church provides a variety of opportunities to serve	26	25	24	10
I understand the role of the Elders in our church	13	28	27	16
Church leadership is sensitive to the concerns of the congregation	25	26	19	13
The Pastor is accessible if I need him	36	22	8	19
My views and concerns relating to PCC are easily communicated and addressed by church leadership	18	27	26	12
I am satisfied with my membership at PCC	25	38	17	0

**19. Are you involved in activities outside your home or job?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Church	79.3%
School	47.6%
Sports	42.7%
Community (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts, Lions Club, etc)	25.6%
Denominational organizations (i.e. Pilgrim Pines, Children's Home, Seafarers Mission)	24.4%
Other (please specify)	18.3%
"Other" includes: missions, family, and professional organizations.	

**20. Where do you connect with friends who support your faith and your walk with Christ?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Sunday Morning Worship	64.2%
Small groups	42.0%
Ministry work	69.1%
Social gatherings	48.1%
Other (please specify)	13.6%
"Other" includes: book discussions, work, prayer groups.	

**21. What methods of communication at PCC do you find most effective?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Newsletter	65.4%
Announcements during Service	64.2%
Web Site	9.9%
Emails	54.3%
Bulletins	77.8%
Quarterly Business Meetings	14.8%
Prayer Chain	42.0%
Local Newspaper	4.9%
Other (please specify)	6.2%

**22. How would you like to participate in this visioning process at PCC?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Prayer	85.1%	63
Small groups	70.3%	52
Work groups	36.5%	27
Other (please specify)	9.5%	7

**23. What else would you like us to know about your experience at PCC and about your hopes and wishes for our faith community?**

A major expression among survey participants was positive feeling of love for the church and church family.

- Need for community outreach was highlighted
- Need for more young families.
- Need to continue strengthening our faith