

DEVELOPING A YEARLONG EVANGELISTIC STRATEGY

Kenny Rager D.Ed.Min
Evangelism Associate
Kentucky Baptist Convention
kenny.rager@kybaptist.org
(270) 314-2060

Greetings,

Thank you for taking time to pray through and develop your yearlong evangelistic strategy. This workbook is intended to help you develop a strategy you can use to reach your community for Christ. The workbook is intended to be completed in three phases.

1. Prayerful reading and review
2. First draft plan
3. Consultation with KBC evangelism associate

After meeting for a consultation, you will need to bring key leaders on board for feedback and review. After key leaders have a chance to contribute, you may then be ready to present the strategy to the church.

Beginning your evangelistic strategy may be intimidating. All strategies must plan ahead. John Maxwell, author of *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, uses the words, "plan ahead," in an acronym about strategy development.

- **P**redetermine a course of action
- **L**ay out your goals
- **A**adjust your priorities
- **N**otify key personnel

- **A**llow time for acceptance
- **H**ead into action
- **E**xpect problems
- **A**lways point to the success
- **D**aily review your plan

My prayer is that your evangelistic strategy will be more than words on paper and will be a real plan to reach people for Christ.

Kenny Rager
270-314-2060
kenny.rager@kybaptist.org

“Evangelism: the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ, which arises naturally from believers’ love for God and appreciation of all that God has done for them. The NT stresses the importance of evangelism, and provides guidance as to how it should be carried out.”

- *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies*

“Strategy: a careful plan or method; a clever stratagem.”

- *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*

“First-rate navigators always have in mind that other people are depending on them and their ability to chart a good course.”

- John Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

“Locusts have no king, yet all of them march in ranks,” (Proverbs 30:27).

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

What is an evangelism strategy?

Jesus commands us to take the gospel to the whole world. The Great Commission is for all believers in all times. Pastors (who are called to equip the saints for the work of ministry, Eph. 4:11) must do their part to mobilize their churches to fulfill the Great Commission. God has placed your church in your community and intends for you to lead it evangelistically.

An evangelism strategy attempts to mobilize your church to proclaim the good news. The pastor serves as a thoughtful navigator that organizes his people for evangelism success. He develops a careful and thoughtful plan to move the church from the pew to the people.

Evangelism Strategy: A thoughtful plan to organize the church to proclaim the gospel

Biblical examples of strategies

Creation

“On the seventh day God had completed his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done,” (Genesis 2:2).

Joshua

“Now Jericho was strongly fortified because of the Israelites—no one leaving or entering. The Lord said to Joshua, “Look, I have handed Jericho, its king, and its best soldiers over to you. March around the city with all the men of war, circling the city one time. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry seven ram’s-horn trumpets in front of the ark. But on the seventh day, march around the city seven times, while the priests blow the trumpets. When there is a prolonged blast of the horn and you hear its sound, have all the troops give a mighty shout.

Then the city wall will collapse, and the troops will advance, each man straight ahead,” (Joshua 6:1-5).

Nehemiah

“From that day on, half of my men did the work while the other half held spears, shields, bows, and armor. The officers supported all the people of Judah, who were rebuilding the wall. The laborers who carried the loads worked with one hand and held a weapon with the other. Each of the builders had his sword strapped around his waist while he was building, and the trumpeter was beside me,” (Nehemiah 4:16-18).

Jesus

“After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others, and he sent them ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself was about to go. He told them, ‘The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest. Now go; I’m sending you out like lambs among wolves. Don’t carry a money bag, traveling bag, or sandals; don’t greet anyone along the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this household.’ If a person of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they offer, for the worker is worthy of his wages. Don’t move from house to house. When you enter any town, and they welcome you, eat the things set before you. Heal the sick who are there, and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near you.’ When you enter any town, and they don’t welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ‘We are wiping off even the dust of your town that clings to our feet as a witness against you. Know this for certain: The kingdom of God has come near.’ I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town,” (Luke 10:1-12).

Paul

“As usual, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and rise from the dead: ‘This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,’” (Acts 17:2-3).

The End

“We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, concerning those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For we say this to you by a word from the Lord: We who are still alive at the Lord’s coming will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, a with the archangel’s voice, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are still alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words,” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-15).

STEP 1: THE EVANGELISTIC VISION

The first step to developing an evangelistic strategy is to develop an evangelistic vision. Why are you desiring to create an evangelistic strategy? What is the overall aim of your evangelistic strategy? What will your evangelistic strategy attempt to accomplish? By identifying what your evangelistic vision is, you will then be able to craft a strategy to fulfill the vision.

Wayne Cordeiro, in his book *Doing Church as a Team*, writes, "Vision may be a good exercise for getting your creative machine rolling, but is more than that. It begins with the leaders toiling over and agreeing what God will hold you accountable for as a church on that day. Of all the things we *can* do, what is it that we must do?"

When thinking about an evangelistic vision for your church, consider the following:

- Why did God place your church where it is?
- If this church could accomplish only four evangelistic tasks in a year, what would they be?
- How much of your ministry is geared toward the harvest, and how much is designed to take care of the grain?
- If your church had only had one year of existence left, what would you do?
- If you only had one year of existence left, how would you lead the church?
- What kind of evangelistic potential lies within the church that has not yet been tapped for the kingdom of God?¹

Examples of possible evangelistic visions:

- 25 more baptisms than last year
- 25 gospel conversations
- Train all church members in evangelism
- Evangelize every home in the community
- Plant a daughter church in a neighboring community

Pause, reflect, and pray: Think about the above questions and the above examples. Spend time reflecting and then pray. Ask God to give you an evangelistic vision for the year. Then, write down what you feel the evangelistic vision for your church is. Make it short and simple, 1-3 sentences.

¹ Adapted from Wayne Cordeiro's, *Doing Church as a Team*, pg. 125.

THE EVANGELISTIC VISION

STEP 2: CONSIDER EVANGELISTIC POSSIBILITIES

In military terms, a strategy is a plan of military operations or movements during a war or a battle. Evangelism is indeed a war, a war for souls that will be fought over a succession of battles. The evangelistic strategy must include various movements and operations in order to accomplish the vision. Listed below are several ideas to consider for your strategy.

- **Evangelism Training**— A set amount of time where either the pastor or a guest speaker teaches an evangelism strategy such as *Share Jesus Without Fear*, *Front Door Evangelism*, *Personal Evangelism*, *3 Circles*, or how to give an evangelistic testimony.
- **Servant evangelism**— Bringing God's kindness in practical ways such as coffee giveaways, bagging and loading groceries for people, or paying people's library fines. Visit <https://www.stevesjogren.com/94-servant-evangelism-ideas-for-your-church/> for more ideas)
- **Prayer walking**— Moving your people into the streets to pray for the people that live in those homes.
- **Community mission trip**— Take a mission trip in your own town by helping with home repair, a local community center, or in a needy neighborhood.
- **Evangelistic mission trip**— Take your church overseas to help an IMB missionary or into an urban city center to help a NAMB church planter share the gospel (these trips can create evangelistic passion when the people return home).
- **Front door evangelism**— Present the gospel door to door using a gospel presentation.
- **Friend and family day**— An intentional big day when church members invite lost loved ones and where the pastor preaches an evangelistic message.
- **Revival meetings**— A Sunday through Wednesday meeting where a gifted evangelist presents the gospel.
- **Evangelistic Christmas Eve service**— Invite the community to celebrate a candlelight Christmas Eve service where the gospel is clearly presented.

- **Search and rescue teams**— A Monday or Tuesday night visitation team for whom visits guests and participates in front door evangelism.
- **Oikos list**— Have members create a list of their lost friends and family that they will pray and commit to sharing the gospel.
- **Evangelism team**— A team of five people, led by the pastor, that meets monthly to evaluate and plan evangelistic activity.
- **Block party**— A free and fun community event held at either the church or a park that presents the gospel to neighbors.
- **Evangelistic campaign**— A 4- to 6-week sermon series and small group study that explores the faith such as *Purpose Driven Life*.
- **Membership class**— A monthly class that explains membership to potential members, but also clearly presents the gospel and gives an invitation.
- **Apologetics course**— An evangelistic course that equips believers to defend the faith.
- **Not yet a Christian class**— A class that explains the faith for people who are considering the faith.
- **Church planting**— Intentionally plant a daughter church in an area that needs a gospel witness. The KBC can partner with you for leadership and grants to assist with church plants.

Pause and pray: Which of these ideas do you think could be a possibility for your church?

*Reread the list and pray. **Circle four** ideas you feel led to pursue.*

(List continues to the next page.)

- Evangelism training
- Servant evangelism
- Prayer walking
- Community mission trip
- Evangelistic mission trip
- Front door evangelism
- Friend and family day
- Revival meetings
- Evangelistic Christmas Eve service
- Search and rescue team
- Gospel conversation goals
- Oikos list

- Evangelism team
- Block party
- Evangelistic campaign
- Membership class
- Apologetics course
- Not yet a Christian class
- Church planting
- Other idea _____

STEP 3: Identify Possible Obstacles

Identifying possible obstacles can be very beneficial. Build your evangelistic strategy with obstacles in mind.

Example 1:

OBSTACLE: CHURCH HAS NOT ALLOTTED MONEY FOR EVANGELISM.

Questions to ask:

- What is the process for adding or increasing a budgeted evangelism line item?
- What meetings and presentations will have to be done to add or increase an evangelism line item?
- What key leaders do I need to bring aboard to add or increase an evangelism line item?

Possible first step: Call a finance team meeting and present the strategy.

Example 2:

OBSTACLE: THE CHURCH HAS A BAD NAME IN THE COMMUNITY.

Questions to ask:

- What are the specific needs in my community?
- How can my church serve the community?
- What are ways that we can present the gospel while also speaking the heart language of the people?

Possible first step: Prayer walk the community.

Example 3:

OBSTACLE: SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE EVANGELISM DOESN'T WORK.

Questions to ask:

- What sermons or classes need to be taught to correct this view?
- Name some people who do believe evangelism works?
- Do I believe that evangelism works? If so, how will I model it?

Possible first step: Weekly share your evangelism story with the congregation.

Using the following prompts, identify possible obstacles and first steps for your church.

PEOPLE OBSTACLES

Who may be an obstacle to the evangelistic vision?

Why might they be an obstacle to the evangelistic vision?

What are some possible first steps that could help this situation?

FINANCIAL OBSTACLES

Are there any foreseeable financial obstacles to the evangelistic vision?

Why are these obstacles to the evangelistic vision?

What are some possible first steps that could help this situation?

SPIRITUAL OBSTACLES IN THE CHURCH

Are there any spiritual obstacles in the church that would impede the evangelistic vision?

Why are these obstacles to the evangelistic vision?

What are some possible first steps that could help this situation?

COMMUNITY OBSTACLES

Are there any community obstacles to the evangelistic vision?

Why are these obstacles to the evangelistic vision?

What are some possible first steps that could help this situation?

OTHER FORESEEABLE OBSTACLES

What other obstacles might there be to the evangelistic vision?

Why are these obstacles to the evangelistic vision?

What are some possible first steps that could help this situation?

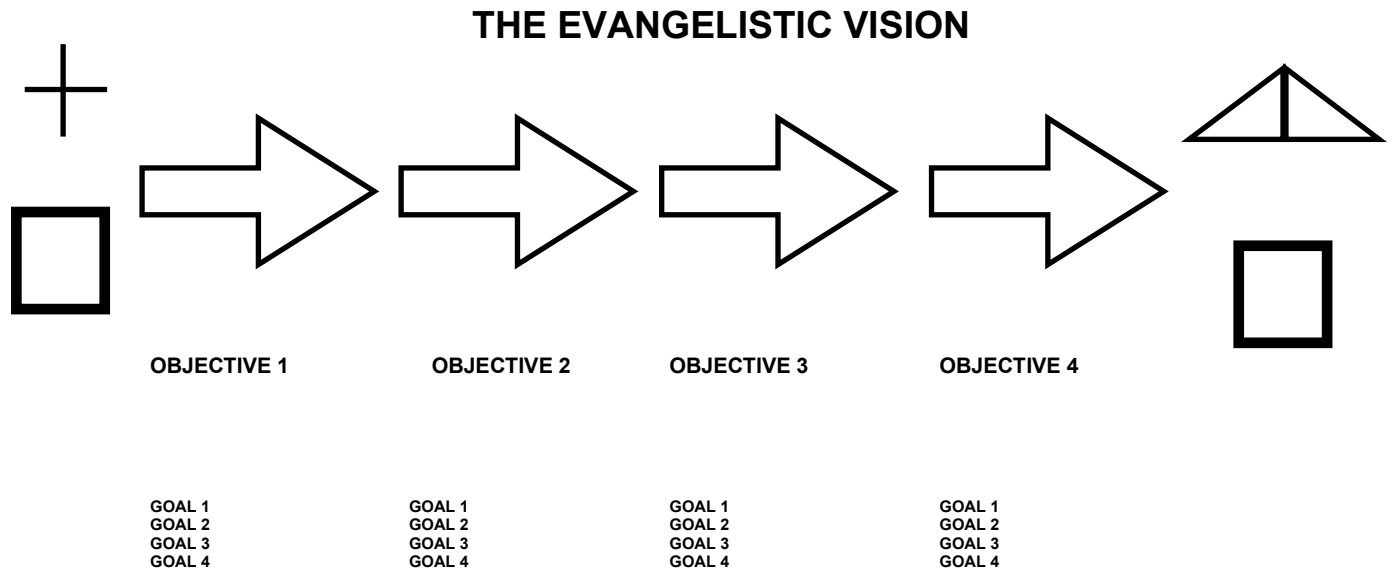
Questions to consider:

- How should I pray for those whom I perceive to be an obstacle to the vision?
- How do I need to pray for the church to prepare for the vision?
- What should I pray for my community?
- When will I begin to take my first steps to overcome evangelistic obstacles?
- How should my first steps impact the objectives of my evangelism strategy (see next section)?

Pray: "Nothing is impossible to him who believes," (Mark 9:23). Take a moment and ask God to give you the leadership to maneuver through these obstacles.

Step 4: The Evangelistic Highway

“Go out into the highways and hedges and make them come in,
so that my house may be filled,” (Luke 14:23).



At this point you have:

1. Defined an evangelistic strategy: a thoughtful plan to organize the church to proclaim the gospel.
2. Identified your evangelistic vision
3. Identified four possible evangelistic ideas
4. Identified possible obstacles to the vision

The *Evangelistic Highway* is a simple tool to help you develop your evangelistic strategy. The purpose of this tool is to lay out a simple path to accomplish the evangelistic vision that God has given you. It consists of four objectives to accomplish the goal. Underneath each objective are four goals needed to meet the objective.

For example

When goal 1 is completed I move to goal 2.
When goal 2 is completed I move to goal 3.
When goal 3 is completed I move to goal 4.
When goal 4 is completed the objective should be completed.
When the objective is completed then I move to the second objective.
Repeat until all four objectives are completed.

Why four objectives and why four goals?

Recall the biblical examples of strategy, specifically the creation account. The Lord could have created everything at once but instead chose to create day by day. The creation story can serve as an excellent example of finishing one task before moving to the next. All strategies involve a step-by-step process to complete objectives. When you divide your evangelistic strategy into four objectives with four goals, you will have a simplistic path to complete the evangelistic vision.

Your path could have more than four objectives with each objective having more goals. Your path could have less than four objectives with less goals. I would suggest four objectives with four goals for the following reasons:

1. You will have three months to complete each objective.
2. You will divide each objective into four sequential steps that must happen to complete it.
3. You will be forced to operate on a timeline to complete the goals and the objectives.
4. Four objectives is not overwhelming.

Your goals and objectives need to S.M.A.R.T.

Specific

Measure

Attainable

Relevant

Time bound

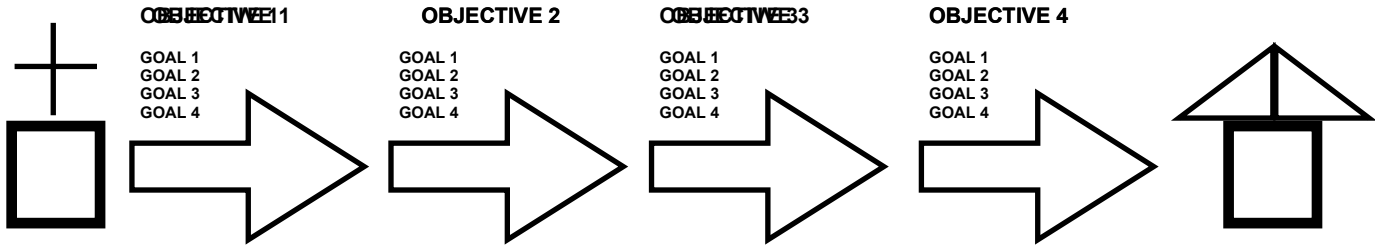
Some examples of S.M.A.R.T. statements (notice how they are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound):

- Major objective example: To see 50 gospel conversations through front door evangelism by the end of October.
- Goal 1 example: Schedule and promote front door evangelism training the first week of August.
- Goal 2 example: Train people in Front Door Evangelism by the end of August.
- Goal 3 Example: Conduct eight Monday night front door evangelism events that begin at 5:30 p.m. through the months of September and October.

- Goal 4 Example: Follow up and calculate how many more gospel conversations are needed by the third week of October.

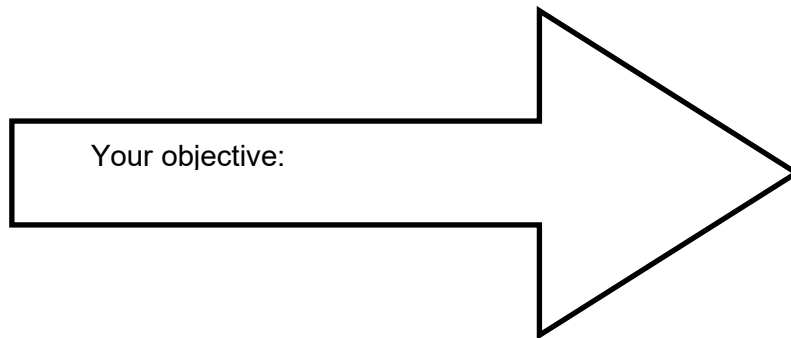
Fill in the blanks for your evangelistic strategy draft.

EVANGELISTIC VISION



THE EVANGELISTIC VISION: _____

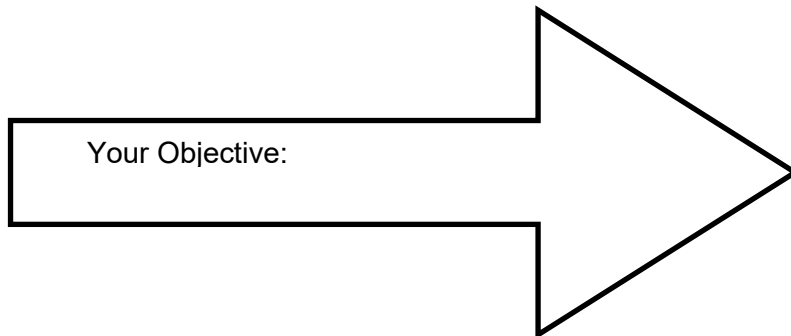
Objective 1, months 1-3: Refer back to possible evangelistic ideas you would like to see completed.



What four steps must be accomplished to fulfill the objective?

Goal 1 _____	Completed by _____
Goal 2 _____	Completed by _____
Goal 3 _____	Completed by _____
Goal 4 _____	Completed by _____

Objective 2, months 4-6: Refer back to possible evangelistic ideas that you would like to see completed.

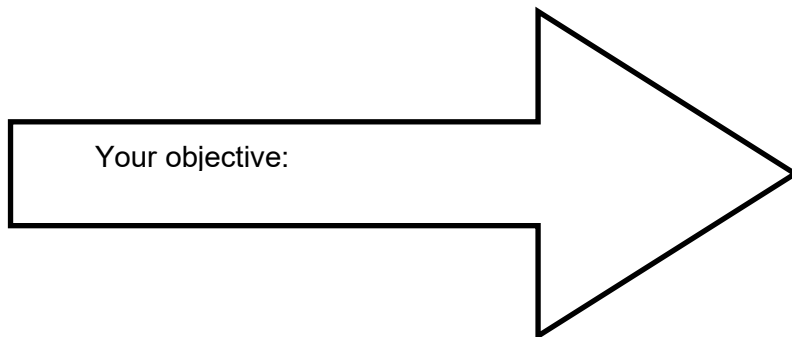


Your Objective:

What four steps must be accomplished to fulfill the objective?

Goal 1 _____ Completed by _____
Goal 2 _____ Completed by _____
Goal 3 _____ Completed by _____
Goal 4 _____ Completed by _____

Objective 3, months 7-9: Refer back to possible evangelistic ideas that you would like to see completed.

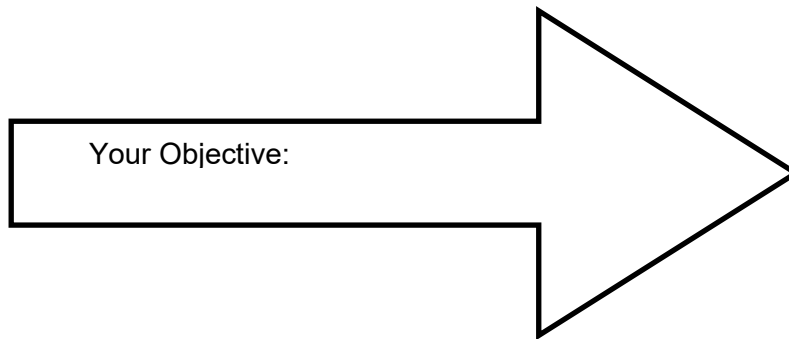


Your objective:

What four steps must be accomplished to fulfill the objective?

Goal 1 _____ Completed by _____
Goal 2 _____ Completed by _____
Goal 3 _____ Completed by _____
Goal 4 _____ Completed by _____

Objective 4, months 10-12: Refer back to possible evangelistic ideas that you would like to see completed.



Your Objective:

What four steps must be accomplished to fulfill the objective?

Goal 1	_____	Completed by	_____
Goal 2	_____	Completed by	_____
Goal 3	_____	Completed by	_____
Goal 4	_____	Completed by	_____

Question to consider: Will the four objectives help complete the vision?

Step 5: From the Paper to the People

You now have a clear path on paper. You may tweak and develop your strategy many times before you are comfortable with presenting it to your leadership team. After you have an initial vision, objectives, and goals, you will need to think through how you will implement this vision. Here are some suggestions for taking your strategy from the paper to the people:

Be prepared for your leaders and their questions. The more you can anticipate what they may ask, the better you will prepare them.

Below are some questions that you may need to anticipate.

How will this impact our previously planned events?

Double check the church calendar in advance. What traditional or planned church events are already on the calendar? How will this impact the evangelistic strategy?

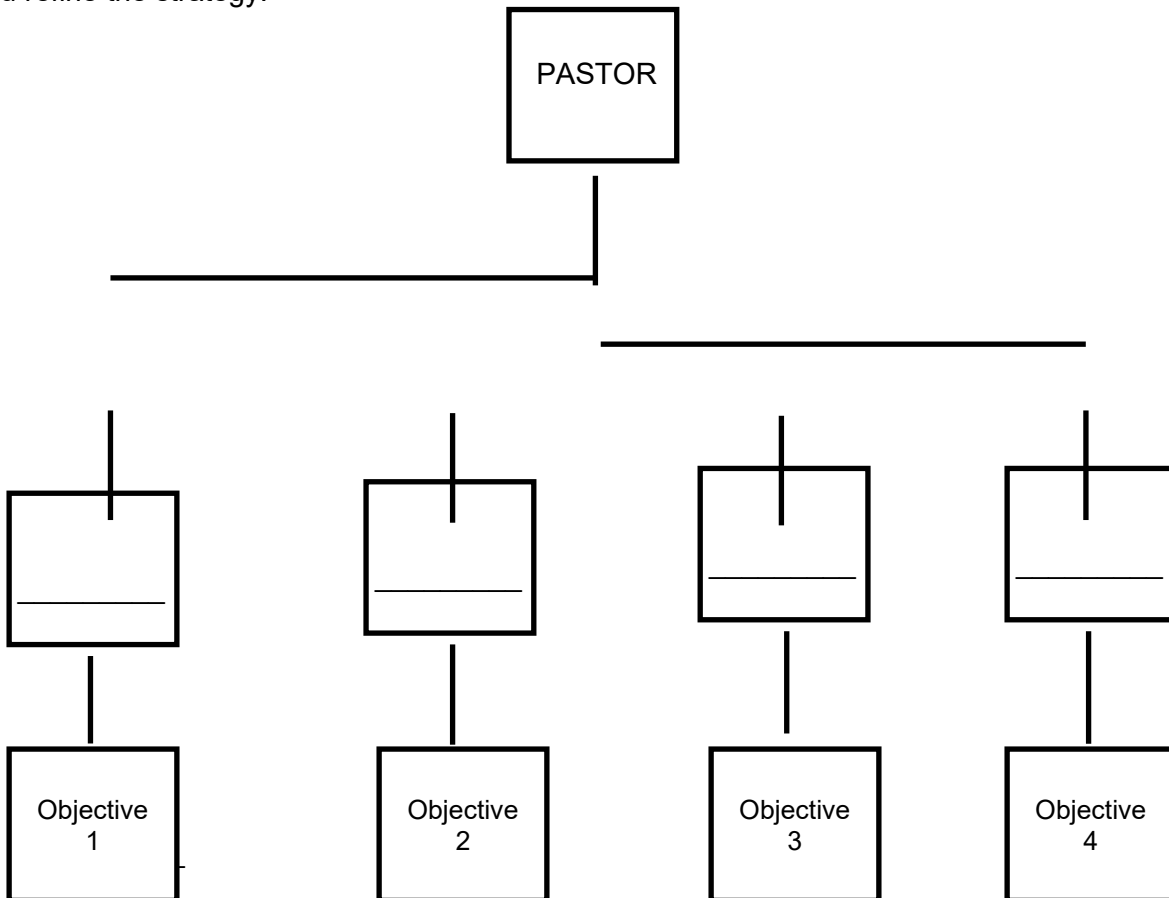
List traditional or planned church events.

Can any of these events be incorporated into your evangelistic strategy? If so, how will it be evangelistic and how will it help fulfill the objective?

Which of these events cannot and should not be removed from the calendar?

Who will help you do this?

List four people who could serve as an evangelism team. This should be a group of people who will help implement the evangelistic strategy. These should be responsible people who can be point persons for each objective and contribute to the overall team. This group can also help you refine the strategy.



What key leaders do I bring on board with the evangelistic strategy?

Additional questions

- Why does our community need this? What are the demographics?
- What happens to our church if we do not implement this strategy?
- Why does this matter?
- What are the real challenges to implementing this strategy and how will I lead the church through this?
- How are we going to afford this?
- Will I see this through?

Next Steps

What are the four next steps that I need to complete to make sure the evangelistic strategy happens.

What questions would you like to talk about with the strategist?
