



AEC Strategic Plan 2017-2020

The AEC Strategic Plan for 2017 - 2020 should be able to pass four basic test to be considered a winner:

- **The Fit Test:** How well does this strategy fit into the theological, ecological, cultural, resource and process content of the AEC's mission and vision? (Is this AEC strategic plan well matched to the conditions of the territories, regions, cities, towns, communities, urban challenges and individual households we want to reach for Christ?)
- **The Competitive Advantage Test:** Can this strategy help the AEC achieve a sustainable competitive advantage? (As we understand the local, regional, national and international conditions of today's church and what we can imagine to come in the very near future.)
- **The Performance Test:** Does this strategy produce good, measurable performance which can be managed, monitored and measured
 - Competitive strength and market standing (Is the AEC winning in its efforts to win Souls for the Kingdom of God at a level consistent with God's expectations and gifts?)
 - Profitability and financial strength (Is the AEC able to provide its workers with the knowledge, opportunity and resources they need to succeed; Is the AEC able to provide the resources necessary to holistically change the trajectory of the individual lives it touches through spiritual and economic growth and development, education, housing and community health & wellness?)
- **The Social Capital Test:** Does this strategic plan make provisions for community interaction and educational exchanges of information which informs leadership and laity, and brings them closer to understanding social and moral issues.

If the answers to the above questions are yes, then we have arrived at a good place and with God continuing to whisper in our ears, we can move forward in faithful anticipation of great things yet to come.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Allegheny East Conference of Seventh-day Adventists exists to promote the sharing of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ ethnically [TA ETHNAE - "to all people groups"] within its assigned territory through Christ-centered leadership and responsible resource management.

VISION STATEMENT

We see the Allegheny East Conference becoming the prime model for efficient, pace-setting Seventh-day Adventist Church organizations world-wide. It will be Christ-centered, dynamic, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It will be the prototype for unified leadership, responsible resource management, innovative methodologies, excellence in ministry and community service. Within its congregations, it will *evangelize, educate, disciple and grow* all of God's people for His service. It will go forth, beautiful as "an army with banners"...

CORE VALUES

Excellence – We will offer superior service to every church and institution we serve, and give the utmost care to every relationship we establish.

Commitment – We commit to serve, support, and empower the churches and schools in our trust. This is the reason for our existence.

Innovation – We value a culture of innovation which stimulates and supports cutting-edge ideas that modernize our processes, while perpetually seeking new ways to better serve our constituency and community.

Communication – With transparency, we consult, ask, inform, receive and share information in an open, non-judgmental atmosphere.

Team Work – Our people are the most important resource. We are most effective when each person is harmoniously contributing to the level of their capabilities.

Creativity – We will utilize our spiritual gifts to glorify God

Authenticity – Through prayer, our actions will be legitimized by the word of God

SEIZE MISSION OPPORTUNITIES AND NULLIFY EXTERNAL THREATS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS & COMETITIVE ASSESTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and staff are supportive, experience and committed together to help the AEC reach its full potential • AEC leadership, pastors and workers have strong leadership, partnership and collaborative skills • Cohesiveness and alignment regarding the work of the organization throughout the leadership and constituency of the Conference • Workers have a strong passion to do the Work in the Conference • HQ location provides a unique opportunity for conference wide growth and development • The AEC is strategically located and positioned for growth in the DC/DE/VA/MD/NJ/WVA communities it serves • Increase in successfully revitalized churches 	<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES & COMPETITIVE DEFICIENCIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized passion shuns team work, creating divisiveness on a ministerial and conference level • Ineffective communication creates internal misunderstandings that can form generational barriers among workers and negatively impact team morale • A lack of worker coaching, oversight and accountability leads to poor resource utilization • Redundancies in work effort and resentments between workers may occur when workers are not clear on the purpose of their role and what makes that role important to the whole • Workers unclear of their specific roles, responsibilities and evaluation criteria • Workers priorities misaligned with NA Divisional Policy due to a lack of awareness • Charismatic leadership based on the personality and charisma of a senior leader • Staff structure and positions have not evolved to meet the changing needs of the conference of churches • Lack of support for small group ministries including Sabbath School, to drive (When church members are a part of a small group they attend more faithfully, evangelize more frequently and give more
<p style="text-align: center;">MISSION OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the spirit of partnership within the AEC so that all workers see themselves as part of a team • Ensure leadership opportunities are equally available to all qualified personnel including women and young-adult workers • Broaden the AEC's reach to attract a more diversified community of believers within its territory • Strengthen existing alliances and build new strategic partnerships • Establish local and area-wide goals and performance objectives to more effectively plan, manage and allocate AEC resources • Church facilities need to be used as part of the discipleship process (church facilities are one of the most expensive and most critical tools church leaders use in shepherding God's people) • Transformational leadership to inspire, develop, train, and mentor future talent people to reach for a common goal • Meet the needs of Millennials desiring a more personal relationship with their church family • Older urban communities are becoming revitalized providing new opportunities for church planting, 	<p style="text-align: center;">EXTERNAL THREATS TO FUTURE GROWTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker inability to adjust to a changing leadership culture and engagement strategy invokes resistance and impede progress • Greater emphasis planning, analyzing, measuring and accountability may result in work impatience and frustration • Overextension and exhaustion of workers may occur when goals are actively pursued in many different areas at once • Workers who feel that they do not have a voice or the ability to give input to the decision makers may choose to take things into their own hands which could unintentionally undermine the structure of the organization • Increases in church violence and charges of sex abuse requiring serious security measures, policies and equipment (evolving into a major church ministry)

<p>membership growth and ministry expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recommit ourselves to the biblical mission that is meant to prepare us for the city whose builder and maker is God Increased training in leadership, relational skills, and ministry development 	
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Emerging Trends:

- Increase in the number of millennials becoming believers
- Shift in senior adult ministry participation from the entertainment model to an activist model
- Increase in pastoral tenure given the five-year mark is where the most fruitful years of ministry typically begin
- More bi-vocational pastors for reasons other than finance
- The Internet and podcast wired generational boom will give way to a more local, personal touch than that of a man-made-screen
- Theologically conservative and deep doctrinally sound teaching are becoming more popular
- Millennials, the largest generation of potential believers, desire to stay connected with their immediate and extended families
- A church that is not racially and ethnically diverse will soon become the exception instead of the norm
- Church security as the fastest growing ministry
- Decline in Church relevance

AEC STRATEGIC PILLARS

I. EVANGELISM & DISCIPLESHIP

Deploy innovative praxis (lifestyle evangelistic approaches) to facilitate multi-generational and multi-cultural inclusion to enable a radical response to discipleship.

Strategies:

- Deploy lifestyle evangelistic methodology to reach new believers and reclaim others
- Create a culture of compassionate engagement for every member to utilize their spiritual gifts in local ministry and community based service (sharing and living the Word of Christ)
- Invest in urban ministries to foster holistic transformation through economic revitalization, education, and health and wellness initiatives which meet the needs of the communities and ethnic groups we serve

Actions:

- Establish an Office of Evangelism to develop, facilitate and support conference-wide church growth programs to enable church planting, resource allocation and benefits realization
 - *Define processes and programs to enable multi-generational inclusion*
 - *Health Ministries Department development of a resources Tool Box for churches and community interaction*
- Identify and build regionally focused partnership to facilitate needs based community services and urban church growth

- Establish and resource Urban Ministry Center of Excellence to initiate community service programs and advocate for social justice

Metric:

Establish Office of Evangelism

Plant (7) new churches annually

Engage in (1) economic development project per ministerial

Develop (5) Area wide Outreach Programs

Retain and reclaim 25% of lost members annually

Grow at an annualized rate of 30%

II. EDUCATION & TRAINING

Pursue excellence in preparing students for Christian service in this world and equipping leaders for all stages of evangelism.

Education Strategies:

- Improve operational efficiencies to increase constituent support and position schools for growth
- Enhance teacher recruitment and career development to increase student achievement and enrollment
- Better align education with evangelism to strengthen pastoral support
- Broaden facility usage to better service communities served

Actions:

- Re-establish link between schools, churches, pastors and educators
- Identify and build new partnerships and corporate alliances
- Encourage local churches to support the expansion of extracurricular activities
 - *Launch AEC wide sports and recreational programs*

Metric:

Establish and maintain (2) new partnerships and corporate alliances per year

Expand number of extracurricular activities

Increase facilities usage rate by 15%

Training Strategies:

Provide on-site and remote training for staff and members

Actions:

- Develop training priorities and timeline for staff and local churches
- Train pastors in community advocacy, service and activism
- Provide culturally diverse Health Tool Box development and training encompassing spiritual, mental, physical and social needs

Metric:

Define training curriculum and publish annual schedule

Develop and distribute wellness lifestyle Health Tool Box

III. STEWARDSHIP & PHILANTHROPY

Establish an effective assimilation plan to enable continuous church growth and retention, while creating a philanthropic culture of equal sacrifice.

Stewardship Strategies:

- Reinforce the sacredness of giving tithes and offerings to God's mission and vision for the AEC (Giving to God requires an understanding of ownership, responsibility, accountability and reward)
- Teach stewardship as a way of life that connects what we do with what God is doing in our conference of churches

Actions:

- Create a culture to support philanthropic giving and financial/estate planning
- Reduce conference operating expenses
- Develop age appropriate stewardship curriculum

Metrics:

10% increase in tithe and local offerings

Philanthropy Strategies:

Great Vision + Solid Plans + Appropriate Fundraising Techniques = Needed Funds

- Align fundraising with ministry (ensure leaders and members understand the mission, vision and case for giving)
- Engage Philanthropic Service for Institutions resources

Action:

- Develop case of support
- Engage Philanthropic resources to assist with planning and execution
- Identify Partners in Fundraising

Metrics:

10% increase in philanthropic giving

IV. CHURCH GROWTH & SUSTAINMENT

Develop an intentional approach to building strategic internal and external relationships to ensure AEC concerns and positions on major issues are understood within the Church at large and our surrounding communities.

Church Growth & Sustainment Strategies

- Build an internal team culture for why AEC matters
- Develop relationships strategic offices with GC, NAD and other 12 world division, while engaging leadership on unofficial advisory committees
- Resource alignment to accelerate growth and strength financial position

- Ensure local Church strategic plans are align with AEC goals and objectives
- Ensure alignment with General Conference Unity of Mission

Actions:

- Identify, assign and engage list of key contacts
- Continuously improve internal process for conference-wide management and bi-directional communication

Metrics:

Quarterly review of assignments and priority messaging ensuring adjustments as required