

STRENGTHS

	Identified Strengths (Alpha order) (The number of words or phrases in each line show how often these items were identified as strengths)	Summary	Questions for Session and congregational consideration – from Jim Simpson
S1	Advent Lunch & Learn / Lunch & Learns / Church meals / Fellowship Lunches	Examples of some of the sorts of programs that people see as having been helpful in the recent past to encourage the life of the church	How can we plan for a level of programming that is sustainable by staff or volunteers that can help nurture the congregation? How can we support every continuing group in the life of the church to continue? How can we support and encourage every group within the church to better/best communicate their welcome to visitors and new(er) members? How can we best use the resource that we have in the staff to the maximum effect without wearing them out? Is it time to resume regular (monthly) church fellowship meals? At each monthly church meal we can add value by featuring one of missions or ministries of the congregation.
S2	Local Outreach / Blessing Box / Mission minded/Missions / Community minded / Community Service / Serve community – Blessing Box / Serving the elderly / Expanding Missions/ Open to Community / Welcoming / Outreach – Blood drive, voting	It is very clear Covenant members value the mission instinct of their church and all that is done to serve our neighbors	How can we better(best) communicate consistently all the ways of service in the congregation, in the community, with other user groups (seeking to invite and involve other people in our outreach)? Are there needs in the community to which we might respond? How can we find ways in helping and caring to be engaged more directly with people in order to invite and welcome them into the life of Covenant? Continuing and developing care and services through the local schools is an obvious way to connect with and reach people who live around our location. After school homework hall or mentoring program or something similar – link with the Education Department at KSU etc. etc.
S3	Broadcast / Broadcast service	The online Service is an asset during covid and but for shut-ins in short or long-term situations	How do we identify and train additional tech team members? Is there additional technology needed? Can we add value to what is streamed e.g. higher production values or stream other regular content or ??
S4	The Building / Buildings / Large worship space & campus /Building is used for many functions/meetings. / Building used by many other groups – AA, Aloha, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Family Promise)	Our extensive building space is an obvious strength. The congregation’s long-standing practice of welcoming groups reflects the mission-minded and caring nature of Covenant.	Can we look to identify ways to better connect with all the groups and individuals who spend time in the building? Communication in every room? Up to date and attractive information delivery? Regular in-person contact as appropriate? Participation from groups/people in special events or Services? Are there building adaptations/improvements that can enhance the building’s usability and sense of welcome that make financial sense?

S5	Location / Location – Real Estate	The highly visible location at the intersection of two busy roads is seen as a great strength	In what ways can we build upon our location? What communication can we develop and improve to passers-by? Are there restrictions on the use of banners/signs etc.? What means of printed or online publicity can we adopt or improve?
S6	Caring / Caring for others Congregation / Compassionate	The congregation sees themselves as a caring community	Two priorities in this area: 1. Create/identify a group/team/committee to help coordinate ongoing congregational care in the congregation. 2. Out of the link with ALOHA, and looking to find ways to support Covenant members and families who face issues relating to memory challenges/dementia, how can we best connect those with such needs with the resource present in ALOHA?
S7	Dedicated / Dependable / Dependable / Experienced	The congregation sees itself as dedicated	While members are dependable when they undertake to do things there is a recognition in our Weaknesses that it can be difficult to identify volunteers and new volunteers.
S8	Financial Support / Financially independent / Financially stable / Generosity / Giving / No Debt!	There is a sense that the congregation believes the church is well supported financially and in a somewhat strong position	<p>Encouraging greater participation by members of the church in the Administration Committee and its work relating to the church's finances e.g. budget, understanding the flow of funds, increased stewardship communication, would help spread the knowledge about the church's budget and financial condition.</p> <p>Timely and appropriate communication of the church's financial position to the membership on a regular basis would help educate people to the church's financial position. Due to the impact of covid it is difficult to fully assess the trends in giving over the past two years and the current year (2022). In 2022 the church is working with a deficit budget. The reality is that the church has funds in hand but these funds total less than one year's entire church budget. Consideration and action on Planned Giving through Estate Planning and Wills Emphasis is something that should be actively considered.</p> <p>Developing a plan to include more and eventually all of the planned mission contributions within the pledged budget would help make clearer the need of every member to pledge and contribute to the church budget that now includes mission giving and would simplify some of the accounting and communication procedures</p>
S9	Friendliness / Friendliness / Friendly / Friendly & welcoming / Friendly, Warm	The congregation sees itself as warm and friendly	Our calling is to weave this attitude of warmth and friendliness into everything the church is and does, at every encounter, at each gathering and meeting, making a place for everyone, helping connect people together to each other
S10	Great minister – enthusiasm / Interim PASTOR – exceptional	I would like to meet this Interim Pastor!	It seems obvious that your next Pastor should expect to be energetic in a balanced, creative and imaginative way alongside a focused and energized congregation ready to move forward into the IDENTIFIED and <u>next</u> season of its story and ministry

S11	Like family / Loving congregation / Support to each other / Go the extra mile	There is gratitude for the sense of connection and inter-connection many people experience at Covenant	See Comments on Strength #10. Family means different things to different people. Covenant might aim to be a family of families – always with a concern for the person or persons at the edge, ready to do all it can to draw them in
S12	Mature/seasoned members	In this section of the Mission Study this this is a strength – it also appears in section identifying Weaknesses	It is possible to be a thriving, engaged and engaging congregation mainly consisting of people in their mature/more mature years
S13	Music / Music / Music / Music Ministry / Music Program is STRONG	There is widespread appreciation for the contribution the music ministry makes to the life and worship of the church	Joyce Carr is a highly-skilled and talented Director of Music with much experience and helpful knowledge in the styles and types of church music appreciated by the Covenant congregation. It is also quite obvious that the volunteer base in choir, and handbells is a continuing challenge, and that recruitment of new participants is needed and is difficult. Supporting and appreciating the choir members and looking to see ways to bring in other musicians, singers and instrumentalists needs to be a priority. Consideration might be made of a group going to the Montreat Worship & Music Conference might be an encouragement to our music volunteers. There may be options for doing some joint projects with choirs from neighboring churches. Developing links with the Music Department at KSU or local High Schools could help identify singers and musicians.
S14	Non-judgmental / Open & accepting of ALL People / Open minded	The congregation sees itself as being open and accepting	There would be value in hosting some learning experiences around what it is to be open and accepting in which we address some of our personal or communal challenges or growing edges. How can we learn to practice openness and be able to convey our openness in terms other people outside the church can experience this welcome? Just how far would the congregation be fully comfortable saying they are open? [In my time at Covenant it is unclear to me that we have actual examples of standing with and for families who have members who choose differing lifestyles. I may just not yet be aware of such examples. I have heard some comment of “living according to the Bible” and that has seemed to me to be quite narrow and could be off-putting to some individuals and families. A lot to unpack here even before we talk about race and immigration which is a further challenging aspect of welcome and inclusion.]
S15	Able to pivot and adapt during Covid	People noted that changes were made when we faced the challenge of covid	It might be worth asking people to describe in more detail all the ways pivots/changes happened as the result of covid. Were there new learnings on who and how and why this was effected? Was this an easy pivot or difficult?

S16	Positive / Sense of renewed hope/energy / Status quo (keep things going just as they are)	As the Interim period has progressed and as the limitations resulting from covid19 have lessened there is some sense that the church is moving forward in its outreach	Being able to name that the congregation is ready to embrace a season of renewal and revitalization and has the energy for such work and a desire and a passion to look to the future leading of God in service to other people will be very important in seeking and then engaging with a Pastor able to lead and support the church into and through such a season of change. How can we help nurture within the congregation a sense that (some) change is needed and will be good for Covenant? What barriers to change do we think exist and could be removed?
S17	Traditional / Traditional ambiance	Covenant sees itself as a traditional church in terms of outlook and values and worship style	In my arrival as Interim Pastor the Order of Worship and range of musical selections and hymns underwent some revision and change and expansion leading to encouragement for many and some limited worry for a few people. Traditional should never mean boring or stuffy or repetitive or unimaginative. Covenant will likely continue to follow a somewhat traditional style and so the next Pastor must be comfortable with that while also being encouraged to bring spice and variety and new things. [Pastors are a package deal... effective pastors in my experience enjoy and are energized by looking to do new things and to do all things with active participation and engagement from the congregation. How can you communicate to your next Pastor that you are open to their input even as they are open to understand the Covenant story?]
S18	VBS – all programs themed Preschool / Remembering the visiting committee / Day Camp / Exceptional Class / Exceptional Class / Fall Festival	Examples of current or past programs that helped express the church’s mission	<p>Of the list of legacy programs, the only one that is currently active is the Exceptional Class. This important outreach once in the past more strategic or potentially strategic for the life of the overall church. Due to limited participation currently it mainly serves as a welcome and much needed resource for two church families.</p> <p>There is a very active possibility by partnering with ALOHA in their Fall Expo (third Sunday in October) for the church to adopt this event as like a Fall Festival – we should plan soon to encourage participation by church groups and church-supported mission and ministries in the Expo in conversation with the leaders of ALOHA. (The 2021 Expo brought a large number of people onto the grounds of the church). We should seize this as an opportunity.</p> <p>Decisions about other programs that used to serve the church well or could be considered need to be taken after a clearer focus on the church’s future goals and passions comes into focus and bear in mind the challenge of identifying potential volunteers – leaders and helpers.</p>

	WEAKNESSES (Alpha order) (The number of words or phrases in each line show how often these items were identified as strengths)	Summary	Questions for Session and congregational consideration – from Jim Simpson
W1	AGING CONGREGATION: Aging congregation / Aging congregation & Physical challenges / Congregation older / Health concerns – physical / Mature congregation / We are a church of “old people” / Older members not as energetic	It is obvious to all who participate in the life of Covenant that the majority of the current members and participants in the life of the church are more mature.	While not minimizing the impact that being an “aging congregation” has on our current experience and future hopes we might agree to notice that this is a very familiar trend in the church in the USA – we are not alone! That said, our current congregational profile does make it extremely difficult - absent significant change – to welcome and include a significant number of younger people, or families with young(er) children. (See also W2). The current make up of the active congregation contributes to the desire expressed in W5 for programs, activities and occasions to deepen inter-personal connections, and to the challenge of W7 concerning the struggle to identify capable and willing volunteers. Every weakness also offers a challenge and opportunity – developing a clear, visible and consistent system of support for more mature people would be a potential “door into” the Covenant congregation. It is entirely possible for congregations consisting almost entirely of those in the “autumn” of their lives to be vibrant and renewing and growing. The church’s support for ALOHA to Aging means we are already connected to a significant community resource which could and should in time become a significant resource for members and participants at Covenant and their extended families and friends. We should identify all the ways to best communicate the work, focus and resource that is represented by ALOHA across the congregation.
W2	CHILDREN AND YOUTH: Nothing to attract youth / Programs for young people / no children’s choir / No children’s programs / No families with young children / No kids / No young people / No youth program	The members and participants at Covenant notice, regret and mourn, the lack of children and youth in the active life of the congregation	The lack of children, youth and families with young(er) children did not happen for any one reason or at one time, it just happened and as it was happening no ways were identified to stem the tide. An assessment of ways the church could interact with, and serve the children who attend the public schools closest to the church’s location, and the parents and families of these children, should be investigated as fully and as quickly as possible, with the implementation of some outreach options as soon as is feasible. In undertaking such an approach it should be recognized that some of those brought into connection with the life of the church will only further increase the demands upon the congregation, rather than immediately providing new participants, contributors and volunteers. The “Christian After School Academy” offered by the congregation of John Knox Presbyterian Church would be one model to be reviewed.
W3	COMMUNICATION: Means/ Methods of Communication - (Email? Informer? Mail?) Robo calls?/ Lack of communication to cong. (ex. Work on building during Service) / Communication to Pastor from congregation	There are communication challenges, and so opportunities to improve our communication internally and externally	Since the beginning of time, and since the beginning of the church God’s people have been and need to be in the Communication’s Industry – God has things to communicate and we have the Good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to pass on to everyone! A frank and urgent assessment should be made of the methods and effectiveness of the church’s means and methods of communication should be undertaken. For sure the church will benefit from the best use of every means and method of communication – in print, virtual and online, personal connections. Are there some members and participants in the life of the church who belong to groups or organizations within which they receive communication and/or design and assist in such communication. By gathering these individuals together and tasking them to review what we can do better some enhancements can be quickly identified and implemented.

W4	COVID: Covid aftermath / Set back by Covid	Covenant was affected by all the effects of the covid19 pandemic (and so maybe there are also hopes we can work upon)	Will there come a time when Covenant might wish to “name” to all members and participants that we have arrived at a “somewhat post-covid” season and communicate and invite and encourage a renewed commitment to worship participation and participation in other church activities? This might be helped by bringing together a few people who themselves navigated covid19 in their own ways, according to their life choices. By involving a range of different people, we might be able to reach out to the entire congregation. This may be helped by developing a pattern or series of events or occasions e.g. monthly church lunches, so that people see that things are opening up and there is a place for them. (Such a pattern of gatherings etc. could also connect to the hopes described in W5 about deepening relationships.)
W5	DEVELOPING/DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS: Socializing – need more / Lack of adult Sunday School and including programs/ More activities (BBQ Club, Bus Tours, etc.)	There is a desire to see programing and activities that provide ways for people to connect and deepening inter-personal relationships	In relation to every church activity an emphasis should be placed upon connecting participants in meaningful ways. In my observation Covenant Presbyterian Church is somewhat limited in its overall sense of connection between members by the received notion that some people do certain things and participate in certain ways and thus they will not or choose not to participate in other or alternate opportunities... can we identify and name a few “new” things that can appeal and include everyone? Every time a significant number of Covenant folks gather we have the opportunity to help them be nurtured in body, mind and spirit and in their connection to each other and to communicate the vision and goals of the church (W7, W8, W9).
W6	FACILITIES: Expand on Church space as “community center” / “Jesus as Community Organizer” (ex. Serve Hispanic congregations– community / Dated – 1970’s look	The members and participants recognize that the building “ages” our church and while it meets the needs of those currently participating it may be a barrier to welcoming in other people, but it is a huge asset	<p>We note that the Building, its location, size and accessibility appears also as a STRENGTH, and by implication it is a factor in Opportunities.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance and some improvements might be cost-effective ways of enhancing the attractiveness of the building but any major decisions on such spending should await the identification of the church’s main passion, vision and goals.</p> <p>Improvements that seem to me to be worthy of consideration from my experience and time at Covenant include improved lighting in the Sanctuary, KW and the office area and signage form the parking lots and around the campus in general – it is somewhat confusing to new(er) visitors.</p> <p>Can a more orderly space be identified as a Mission/Donation closet area where donation items can be given/collected thus relieving some clutter in FH with the desire to</p>

W7	<p>LACK OF VOLUNTEERS: Lack of varied manpower / Lack of volunteers / Lack of volunteers / Limited pool of volunteers / Too few people wearing too many hats / Small congregation</p>	<p>There always seems to be a struggle to identify and recruit enough capable volunteers</p>	<p>Assessments of each mission or outreach activity should be undertaken – how many people does it take to do each activity and what different levels of skill, time and participation are needed for each outreach activity. Communicating specific needs and the actual ways people can offer their skills and time (see W3 Communication) may help identify additional volunteers – not everyone for example will know or remember what the specific tasks are in hosting Family Promise – a few, active, engaged people will likely know all the parts of that program but there will be some who don't yet know what they can do to make a meaningful contribution that strengthens the whole and brings new energy and participation. Are there some small(er) achievable tasks in our building and grounds that could create value in a shared work day involving church members and participants in every and any organization or activity hosted in the building? Could there be some achievable projects in support of members and/or friends of the church or those in the community with whom we have contact? Sometimes it takes us to be planning and doing things to unearth volunteers and helpers! New opportunities such as that envisaged for the ALOHA coffee/snack time and/or office helpers and volunteers or the Church Communication Team, and others, might see people step up and join in!</p>
W8	<p>MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION: Declining membership / Declining membership & Attendance on Sunday / Inability to attract new members (Only 4 visitors in past 6 months) / Not hardnosed enough to track visitors</p>	<p>It has become the norm to watch as the membership and number of participants decreased over time</p>	<p>As 2022 has progressed we are beginning to see at least an increase in the number of first time and returning guests. The Worship and Evangelism Committee, the Interim Pastor and the Session are being more intentional in sharing the names and information of new(er) visitors and Administration Team will ask counters to write down names, addresses and telephone numbers of visitors/guests who donate by check. The return of “gathering the offering” in June 2022 will hopefully increase the number of Worship Attendance Cards being returned. The Interim Pastor has provided a very helpful “Getting to Know You” Form that Ushers can provide to guests as appropriate.</p> <p>The provision of a pattern of additional church gatherings and activities – Sunday Lunches; Bible Study etc. provide other occasions to which guests and visitors can be invited.</p> <p>Training and encouragement of greeters and ushers and all of us to better interface with guests would be an asset.</p> <p>Encouraging worshipers to sit closer to the front and to one another could be a helpful step with ample and sufficient interpretation around the reasons for doing this.</p>
W9	<p>UNCERTAIN VISION FOR THE FUTURE Unknown future / What didn't happen in past 5 years? No planning, No follow-up / Sense of complacency & resistance to change (Note: Different “balance point”) / No clear future plans / No long-term vision / No permanent minister / Lack of ambition! / Status Quo</p>	<p>The sense of the church diminishing over time and no clear and unifying plan or vision being adopted and implemented has been frustrating to many individuals</p>	<p>My sense is that this is the crucial and central question for Covenant Presbyterian Church?</p> <p>Is the church ready to acknowledge that it needs to change?</p> <p>Is the church ready to passionately and prayerfully and communally, seek to discern its vision and direction from God, and then set out to follow that vision?</p> <p>In this next season of your life together, and in calling and welcoming and partnering with your next Pastor it will be important to communicate that this is what you seek and desire and expect that together people and pastor this will be the journey that you will undertake together.</p>

W10	PRE-SCHOOL: No preschool	The closure of the pre-school due to covid is somewhat regretted (it was only noted one time in one group)	Most people acknowledge that while we miss the sight and sound and sense of pre-school children on school days very few if any new participants or members arose for the population served by the pre-school.
W11	VARIOUS: One service / Answer to hunger / Choir / Remember people's names / Repave parking lot – relationship with Elan Salon / What do members worry about? Concern for church's future / Why aren't people "intrigued"? / Why? To expand relationships - (ex. Schools, Scouts) / Don't sing hymns we know		

	OPPORTUNITIES (Alpha order) (The number of words or phrases in each line show how often these items were identified as strengths)	Summary	Questions for Session and congregational consideration – from Jim Simpson
O1	Aloha / Health services Senior services (Aloha) / Retired population / Transportation for elderly (nursing homes)	There is an awareness that both the church and the surrounding community includes an increasing number of seniors who require support and services	Two days each week a number of people – care receivers, care givers, and program volunteers – enter the Covenant building by virtue of the church hosting the Aloha to Aging program. The church has adopted ALOHA as a supported mission and the Interim Pastor offers a monthly inspirational talk to Day Club participants. Other ideas being considered include the offering of a post-Club coffee and conversation opportunity in the Fellowship Hall staffed by Covenant volunteers. Designing and implementing ways to connect with the population served by ALOHA should be A HIGH PRIORITY and encouragement if early implementation of opportunities for connection. An ALOHA Simulation of Aging for the Covenant congregation should be put on the calendar and widespread participation encouraged.
O2	Become Community Church / Change Church Name / Church to still be here / Drop the “Presbyterian” from our name / Merge with John Knox / Merge with other congregations (ethnic/ Share resources / Building Use	People see/hear of other churches adopting a change of name or dropping obvious denominational affiliation and some see advantages in partnerships/relationships with other congregations	As noted at the Mission Study Gathering some Pastors who might consider serving as the next Pastor at Covenant would have very different views about a congregation considering dropping the name “Presbyterian”. In the summer of 2022 we anticipate welcoming back the Hispanic congregation, Casa Conexion, who previously were hosted by Covenant, and conversations continue with an additional potential immigrant congregation. If the Session at Covenant consider an affiliation or relationship with one or more Presbyterian congregations the correct approach would be to work through Cherokee Presbytery.
O3	Community Singing Event / Fall Festival / Fall Festival	Events that present the public face of Covenant to the community are viewed as being helpful	The church needs to plan to maximize awareness of and participation in the planned ALOHA Expo in October. Conversations with ALOHA leadership can provide an outline for planned involvement for congregational groups and mission agencies supported by the congregation at the EXPO.
O4	EASL / Increase Diversity / Outreach to different groups, ethnicities	In the past such classes were beneficial and deepened relationships among participants	The anticipated return of the Hispanic congregation could very likely lead to the re-establishment of EASL classes, not limited to simply that one congregation. It would also be an advantage to have some Covenant members learn some Spanish from Hispanic congregants.
O5	Expanded missions / Increases outreach / Revival / Grow	Prior to Covenant was very active in expanding its mission and outreach	Careful thought and prayer should be given to how the various aspects of all mission and outreach opportunities can be coordinated and so encourage people to share their time and talent in serving God. It could be that a more precise focus on certain aspects will be helpful rather than trying to do everything. For example, services to seniors could be one area of focus.

O6	Fear about the Future / Find our passion focus / Long range vision committee / Need to have a passion / VISION / Not be discouraged	There is a level of anxiety in the congregation over its ability to maintain and continue its life. There is a hope that this Mission Study and the pastoral search can play a role in helping Covenant identify a central focus for its future	<p>The Session Committees have all been asked to bring THREE suggestions for things to be working on to the June 2022 Session Meeting.</p> <p>Either using the current identified focus – “Our Mission: To be actively involved in: Bringing a relevant message to the world; Growing the body of Christ; and Proclaiming God’s love through mission and outreach.” “WORSHIP – SERVE – LEARN – LOVE” or a revision of this mission/vision – there is a need to see the focus define the life and work of the congregation and to be relentless and imaginative in communicating this mission/vision focus and how it connects to every aspect of the congregation’s life and witness.</p> <p>Can the Session free itself for a time from too many details to give energy to this need to communicate and celebrate the central focus of the church’s mission or does there need to be a separate “Guiding Coalition” or Vision Committee charged to coordinate these efforts?</p> <p>Is there value in changing “WORSHIP – SERVE – LEARN – LOVE” to WORSHIPING – SERVING – LEARNING – LOVING – in order to indicate action and activity?</p>
O7	Kennesaw State University / KSU / Service Hour programs for seniors in college	The presence of the student population and faculty/staff resources is one possible venue for outreach and community connection	Links with the Music Department and options for unpaid internships (website development; singing; communication; tech. support etc.) should all be considered as ways of connecting with the KSU community.
O8	Increasing population / Lots of new housing in the area		When new units of housing are being built and opening up Covenant needs to be aware of this and develop a plan to connect with new residents in the area.
O9	More programs / Mother’s Morning Out/Mothers morning out/Music Programs open to public/Offer worship alternatives/Youth/praise worship/Sunday afternoon youth activities/Sunday School for young/ Preschool / preschool / Re-open day care/ VBS / VBS / Summer school for working parents	There is a long list of things Covenant used to do that people sense might be important to offer again as an expression of the vitality of the church	People remember when some or all of these programs existed, when the life of the church was more energetic and vibrant and so suggest that the programs be re-started as a way to recover that previous vitality. The reality is that it would overwhelm the congregation if attempts were made to immediately re-starts all these programs. Care and consideration needs to be given to what is possible, feasible and viable not only in the short-term but in the medium to long term.

O10	Shepherding group	There is currently no Committee or Team assigned to provide and coordinate pastoral/ congregational care in the life of the church	The Clerk of Session with the support of the Interim Pastor is working to identify a charge for a shepherding system that will aim to utilize the gifts of members in supporting each other through a number of existing groups and the creation of shepherding groups.
O11	Virtual church / Website	During covid restrictions people valued the online service	There is a need to develop and implement a strategy for communication using the church website and Facebook page. Communication is an overriding issue for the church and may require a combination of staff training and time and volunteers to ensure communication that is relevant, timely, consistent, and effective. The identification and training of additional tech helpers for the Sanctuary camera and online system is an immediate priority.
O12	Work with elementary students at Bells Ferry / Working with schools		As noted elsewhere in the write up of the Mission Study working with the schools located closest to the church does help connect the church to people living near(er) to the church.
O13	VARIOUS Book repair, Christian book store / Coffee Fellowships / Great location/ Shredder Day / Blood Drive / Blood drive		This is a list of one off or more regular opportunities that some people identified as being ways to bring people onto the church property. In pursuing some or any of these ideas a determination would need to be made as to potential effectiveness and amount of time and effort required to make them happen.

	THREATS (Alpha order) (The number of words or phrases in each line show how often these items were identified as strengths)	Summary	Questions for Session and congregational consideration – from Jim Simpson
T1	Covid / Covid / Covid	The experience of the last two years and the unknown future of the continuation of the effects of covid19 are all on people's minds	In response to this threat it might be a great help and encouragement to continually communicate all that the church plans and hopes to do and be in the next 1 month / 3 months / 6 months. Identifying events such as the return of monthly Sunday lunches will communicate a sense of purpose and connection.
T2	Fear / Fear / Fear of the unknown	Related likely to T1 (Covid) there is a sense of fear within the church concerning its future vitality and existence	Church leaders need to be aware of the fears that exist but we must look to act and plan NOT out of fear, but out of faith and hope and expectation. Our motivation should always be loving and worshiping and serving God; caring for one another and seeing and serving our neighbors.
T3	Financial Stress / Financial stress	People sense that the church's finances are under real pressure, even if not too many people have a full and clear picture of the church's financial position	<p>Timely, consistent, regular and effective communication of how the church receives, assigns and uses the gifts and offerings contributed by the people can over time help people understand the bigger picture. The Administration Committee has started including a helpful Communication piece along with the Quarterly Giving Statements. Consideration of a regular simple monthly report in the Sunday Bulletin and Electronic Informer may help keep this information in front of the congregation without it seemingly being negative.</p> <p>The management of the church budget is complicated by the long-standing practice of allowing and using special giving to support various mission causes and the maintenance of the church property. Communicating the advantages of a more unified budget should begin with invitations to anyone with questions or concerns to speak with the Interim Pastor and Administration Elders.</p> <p>The Administration Team should look to plan for a greater emphasis on Planned Giving in the congregation.</p>
T4	General disbelief / Increasing secular world / Living in secular culture / Culture – “No Need for Religion”	People are aware of the changing society within which they live and ways the change in culture impact the church	<p>As a church we cannot change our entire society, but we can look to understand ways we can re-claim people for the Kingdom, who have grown weary or disappointed by their experience of or impression of “The Church”.</p> <p>In what ways can we offer programs or opportunities for people to more directly connect their life of faith with the real world around us with all its problems and needs and opportunities.</p>

T5	Changing Church Culture / What's in it for me? / No Community Church / Being denominational / Virtual Church	People are aware of different ways of being church; and of different worship styles and organizational models	Every effort needs to be made to plug people into some group or activity or service opportunity within which they can make a contribution and make and deepen relationships
T6	Changing worship habits of younger generation / Lack of attendance by young / No Youth Focus	People miss the presence of children and youth and perceive that attracting younger people is not a priority for the church	While we want to continue to encourage the fullest possible regular participation by people in the life of the church how can Covenant look to remain in effective contact with and engagement with people who may attend in person less often than in the past e.g. social media, regular communication; shepherding etc. etc.
T7	Other Churches / People who are against "organized" religion	There are many other churches in the area that offer many diverse programs and worship styles	To the extent that there is an awareness of the evolving landscape in attitudes to religion and Christianity in society, Covenant should look to find ways to be creative in communicating and connecting with the varieties of people found in its locality. This will include people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds as well as people with limited exposure to mainstream or Presbyterian forms of church life.
T8	Older aged members/ Shrinking membership/ Sense of giving up / Lack of enthusiasm, energy, and passion / Death	Members see a smaller, older, diminishing congregation but want people to not lose heart	There is a need to find several ways to inform, encourage and invite members to see what is imagined for the future of Covenant and to invite their fullest prayerful and active participation in being the church that moves forward together.
T9	Status quo (Comfort zone) / Comfortable with the way it is	Some think everything should stay as it is.	The voices of people trusted in the life of the church can play an important role in communicating firmly and gently that things if they go on as they are will end.....
T10	Why visitors don't return	There is a desire to do better in connecting with visitors and knowing how to best follow up with them	Covenant can learn from its past and from other congregations and experiences as to how best to appropriately connect with and follow up with visitors. What worked in the past may no longer be most effective and fruitful. Engaging an active group of members in this task should be a high priority even as we do not communicate "anxiety" by being too "pushy" in expressing our genuine welcome.
T11	Satan		

STRENGTHS (GROUPED BY TOPIC/FOCUS)

Advent Lunch & Learn / Lunch & Learns / Church meals / Fellowship Lunches

Local Outreach / Blessing Box / Mission minded / Missions / Community minded / Community Service / Serve community – Blessing Box / Serving the elderly / Expanding Missions

Broadcast / Broadcast service

The Building / Buildings / Large worship space & campus

Location / Location – Real Estate

Building is used for many functions/meetings. / Building used by many other groups – AA, Aloha, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Family Promise)

Caring / Caring for others Congregation / Compassionate

Dedicated / Dependable / Dependable / Experienced

Financial Support / Financially independent / Financially stable / Generosity / Giving / No Debt!

Friendliness / Friendliness / Friendly / Friendly & welcoming / Friendly, Warm

Great minister – enthusiasm / Interim PASTOR – exceptional

Like family / Loving congregation / Support to each other / Go the extra mile

Mature/seasoned members

Music / Music / Music / Music Ministry / Music Program is STRONG

Non-judgmental / Open & accepting of ALL People / Open minded

Open to Community / Welcoming / Outreach – Blood drive, voting

Able to pivot and adapt during Covid

Positive / Sense of renewed hope/energy / Status quo (keep things going just as they are)

Traditional / Traditional ambiance

VBS – all programs themed

Preschool

Remembering the visiting committee

Day Camp

Exceptional Class / Exceptional Class

Fall Festival

STRENGTHS (ALPHABETIZED)

Advent Lunch & Learn	Exceptional Class	Large worship space & campus	Outreach – Blood drive, voting
Blessing Box	Exceptional Class	Like family	Pivot and adapt during Covid
Broadcast	Expanding Missions	Local Outreach	Positive
Broadcast service	Experienced	Location	Preschool
Building is used for many functions/meetings	Fall Festival	Loving congregation	Remembering the visiting committee
Building used by many other groups – AA, Aloha, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Family Promise)	Fellowship Lunches	Lunch & Learns	Sense of renewed hope/energy
Buildings	Financial Support	Mature/seasoned members	Serve community – Blessing Box
Caring	Financially independent	Mission minded	Serving the elderly
Caring for others Congregation	Financially stable	Missions	Status quo
Church meals	Friendliness	Music	Support to each other
Community minded	Friendliness	Music	Building
Community Service	Friendly	Music	Traditional
Compassionate	Friendly & welcoming	Music Ministry	Traditional ambiance
Day Camp	Friendly, Warm	Music Program is STRONG	VBS – all programs themed Location – R.E.
Dedicated	Generosity	No Debt!	Welcoming
Dependable	Giving	Non-judgmental	
Dependable	Go the extra mile	Open & accepting of ALL People	
	Great minister – enthusiasm	Open minded	
	Interim PASTOR – exceptionally	Open to Community	

STRENGTHS (BY GROUP IDENTIFYING THEM)

STRENGTH (Session)	Blessing Box	Broadcast	Building is used for many functions/meetings	Day Camp	
Exceptional Class	Expanding Missions	Fall Festival	Fellowship Lunches		
Financial Support	Friendly, Warm	Great minister – enthusiasm	Local Outreach	Lunch & Learns	
Music Program is STRONG	Open & accepting of ALL People	Preschool	Remembering the visiting committee		
Sense of renewed hope/energy	Serving the elderly	VBS – all programs themed			
STRENGTHS (Blue Team)	Location – R.E.	Buildings	Loving congregation	Friendly	Giving
No Debt!	Dedicated	Open to Community	Support to each other	Missions	Music
STRENGTHS (Green Team)	Mission minded	Music Ministry	Caring for others	Congregation	Traditional
Exceptional Class	Friendly & welcoming	Compassionate	Interim PASTOR – exceptionally	Advent Lunch & Learn	
Serve community – Blessing Box	Church meals	Financially stable	Building used by many other groups – AA, Aloha, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Family Promise)		
STRENGTHS (Red Team)	Financially independent	Location	Community minded	Mature/seasoned members	
Open minded	Non-judgmental	Dependable	Generosity	Status quo	
Friendliness	Large worship space & campus	Music	Pivot and adapt during Covid	Experienced	
STRENGTHS (Orange Team)	Friendliness	Music	Outreach – Blood drive, voting	Like family	Go the extra mile
Caring	Positive	Community Service	The Building	Traditional ambiance	Welcoming
Dependable	Broadcast service				

WEAKNESSES (BY GROUP IDENTIFYING THEM)

WEAKNESSES (SESSION) Inability to attract new members (Only 4 visitors in past 6 months) Why aren't people "intrigued"? Declining membership & Attendance on Sunday

Aging congregation & Physical challenges Lack of communication to congregation (ex. Work on building during Service) Communication to Pastor from congregation

Methods & Means of Communication - (Email? Informer? Mail?) Robo calls? What didn't happen over past five years? No planning, No follow-up

Expand on Church space as "community center" Why? To expand relationships - (ex. Schools, Scouts) "Jesus as Community Organizer" (ex. Serve Hispanic congregations- community

What do members worry about? Concern for church's future Repave parking lot - relationship with Elan Salon Lack of volunteers Covid aftermath

Sense of complacency & resistance to change (Note: Different "balance point") We are a church of "old people"

WEAKNESS (ORANGE TEAM) Answer to hunger Lack of ambition! Lack of volunteers Mature congregation

More activities (BBQ Club, Bus Tours, etc) Nothing to attract youth Programs for young people Set back by Covid Small congregation

Socializing - need more

WEAKNESS & CHALLENGES (BLUE TEAM) Aging congregation No kids No preschool Declining membership

No permanent minister Dated - 1970's look One service Limited pool of volunteers Don't sing hymns we know

WEAKNESS & CHALLENGES (GREEN TEAM) No young people No families with young children No clear future plans

Older members not as energetic Too few people wearing too many hats No children's choir No children's programs

Not hardnosed enough to track visitors Remember people's names

WEAKNESS & CHALLENGES (RED TEAM) No youth program Health concerns - physical Congregation older Lack of varied manpower

Lack of adult Sunday School and including programs Choir Status Quo Unknown future No long-term vision

WEAKNESSES (ALPHABETIZED)

Aging congregation	“Jesus as Community Organizer” (ex. Serve Hispanic congregations– community	No children’s programs	Sense of complacency & resistance to change (Note: Different “balance point”)
Aging congregation & Physical challenges	Lack of adult Sunday School and including programs	No clear future plans	
Answer to hunger	Lack of ambition!	No families with young children	Set back by Covid
Choir	Lack of communication to congregation (ex. Work on building during Service)	No kids	Small congregation
Communication to Pastor from congregation	Lack of varied manpower	No long-term vision	Socializing – need more
Congregation older	Lack of volunteers	No permanent minister	Status Quo
Covid aftermath	Lack of volunteers	No preschool	Too few people wearing too many hats
Dated – 1970’s look	Lack of volunteers	No young people	Unknown future
Declining membership	Limited pool of volunteers	No youth program	We are a church of “old people”
Declining membership & Attendance on Sunday	Mature congregation	Not hardnosed enough to track visitors	What didn’t happen over past five years? No planning, No follow-up
Don’t sing hymns we know	Methods & Means of Communication - (Email? Informer? Mail?) Robo calls?	Older members not as energetic	What do members worry about? Concern for church’s future
Expand on Church space as “community center”	More activities (BBQ Club, Bus Tours, etc)	One service	Why aren’t people “intrigued”?
Health concerns – physical	Nothing to attract youth	Programs for young people	Why? To expand relationships - (ex. Schools, Scouts)
Inability to attract new members (Only 4 visitors in past 6 months)	No children’s choir	Remember people’s names	
		Repave parking lot – relationship with Elan Salon	

WEAKNESSES (GROUPED BY TOPIC/FOCUS)

AGING CONGREGATION: Aging congregation / Aging congregation & Physical challenges / Congregation older / Health concerns – physical / Mature congregation / We are a church of “old people” / Older members not as energetic

CHILDREN AND YOUTH: Nothing to attract youth / Programs for young people / no children’s choir / No children’s programs / No families with young children / No kids / No young people / No youth program

COMMUNICATION: Methods & Means of Communication - (Email? Informer? Mail?) Robo calls? / Lack of communication to congregation (ex. Work on building during Service) / Communication to Pastor from congregation

COVID: Covid aftermath / Set back by Covid

DEVELOPING/DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS: Socializing – need more / Lack of adult Sunday School and including programs/ More activities (BBQ Club, Bus Tours, etc)

FACILITIES: Expand on Church space as “community center” / “Jesus as Community Organizer” (ex. Serve Hispanic congregations– community / Dated – 1970’s look

LACK OF VOLUNTEERS: Lack of varied manpower / Lack of volunteers / Lack of volunteers / Limited pool of volunteers / Too few people wearing too many hats / Small congregation

MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION: Declining membership / Declining membership & Attendance on Sunday / Inability to attract new members (Only 4 visitors in past 6 months) / Not hardnosed enough to track visitors

UNCERTAIN VISION FOR THE FUTURE Unknown future / What didn’t happen over past five years? No planning, No follow-up / Sense of complacency & resistance to change (Note: Different “balance point”) / No clear future plans / No long-term vision / No permanent minister / Lack of ambition! / Status Quo

PRE-SCHOOL: No preschool

VARIOUS: One service / Answer to hunger / Choir / Remember people’s names / Repave parking lot – relationship with Elan Salon / What do members worry about? Concern for church’s future / Why aren’t people “intrigued”? / Why? To expand relationships - (ex. Schools, Scouts) / Don’t sing hymns we know

OPPORTUNITIES (BY GROUP IDENTIFYING THEM)

OPPORTUNITIES (SESSION)

Blood Drive	Building Use	Change Church Name	Church to still be here	Fear about the Future	
Grow	Health services	Increase Diversity	Increasing population	Kennesaw State University	
More programs	Revival	Senior services (Aloha)	Share resources	Shredder Day	Website

OPPORTUNITIES (ORANGE)

Book repair, Christian book store	Coffee Fellowships	Music Programs – open to public	Re-open day care	Mothers morning out
Sunday afternoon youth activities	EASL	Increases outreach	Transportation for elderly (nursing homes)	Shepherding group

OPPORTUNITIES (Green team)

Lots of new housing in the area	Working with schools	Preschool	Fall Festival	Vacation Bible School
Great location	Community Singing Event	Blood drive	Need to have a passion	Find our <u>passion focus</u>

OPPORTUNITIES (Blue Team)

Expanded missions	Virtual church	KSU	Aloha	<u>VISION</u>
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OPPORTUNITIES (Red Team)

Work with elementary students at Bells Ferry

Bring back:	-Vacation Bible School	-Preschool	-Sunday School for young ones	-Summer school for working parents	-Mother's Morning Out
Drop the "Presbyterian" from our name.	Become Community Church	Merge with other congregations (ethnic)		Merge with John Knox	
Long range vision committee	Outreach to different groups, ethnicities	Fall Festival	Service Hour programs for seniors in college	Offer worship alternatives	
Youth/praise worship	Retired population	Not be discouraged			

OPPORTUNITIES (ALPHABETIZED)

Aloha	Fear about the Future	Mothers morning out	Shredder Day
Become Community Church	Find our <u>passion focus</u>	Music Programs – open to public	Summer school for working parents
Blood Drive	Great location	Need to have a passion	Sunday afternoon youth activities
Blood drive	Grow	Not be discouraged	Sunday School for young ones
Book repair, Christian book store	Health services	Offer worship alternatives	Transportation for elderly (nursing home)
Building Use	Increase Diversity	Outreach to different groups, ethnicities	Vacation Bible School
Change Church Name	Increases outreach	Preschool	Vacation Bible School
Church to still be here	Increasing population	Preschool	Virtual church
Coffee Fellowships	Kennesaw State University	Re-open day care	<u>VISION</u>
Community Singing Event	KSU	Retired population	Website
Drop the “Presbyterian” from our name.	Long range vision committee	Revival	Work with elementary students at Bells Ferry
EASL	Lots of new housing in the area	Senior services (Aloha)	Working with schools
Expanded missions	Merge with John Knox	Service Hour programs for seniors in college	Youth/praise worship
Fall Festival	Merge with other congregations (ethnic)	Share resources	
Fall Festival	More programs	Shepherding group	
	Mother’s Morning Out		

OPPORTUNITIES (GROUPED BY TOPIC/FOCUS)

Aloha / Health services Senior services
(Aloha) / Retired population /
Transportation for elderly (nursing home

Become Community Church / Change
Church Name / Church to still be here /
Drop the “Presbyterian” from our name /
Merge with John Knox / Merge with other
congregations (ethnic/ Share resources /
Building Use

Community Singing Event / Fall Festival /
Fall Festival

EASL / Increase Diversity / Outreach to
different groups, ethnicities

Expanded missions / Increases outreach /
Revival / Grow

Fear about the Future / Find our passion
focus / Long range vision committee /
Need to have a passion / VISION / Not be
discouraged

Kennesaw State University / KSU /
Service Hour programs for seniors in
college

Increasing population / Lots of new
housing in the area

More programs / Mother’s Morning Out /
Mothers morning out / Music Programs –
open to public

Offer worship alternatives / Youth/praise
worship / Sunday afternoon youth
activities / Sunday School for young ones

Preschool / preschool / Re-open day care

Shepherding group

Vacation Bible School / Vacation Bible
School / Summer school for working
parents

Virtual church / Website

Work with elementary students at Bells
Ferry / Working with schools

VARIOUS

Book repair, Christian book store / Coffee
Fellowships / Great location / Shredder
Day / Blood Drive / Blood drive

THREATS (BY GROUP IDENTIFYING THEM)

THREATS (SESSION)

Covid Fear Financial Stress Living in secular culture Other Churches

THREATS (Green Team)

Older aged members Lack of enthusiasm, energy, and passion Comfortable with the way it is Fear of the unknown Changing worship habits of younger generation
Lack of attendance by young “What’s in it for me?” Changing Church Culture Sense of giving up Why visitors don’t return

THREATS (Blue Team)

Shrinking membership Financial stress Fear Being denominational Covid Increasing secular world

THREATS (Orange team)

Covid No Youth Focus Culture – “No Need for Religion” Virtual Church No Community Church General disbelief

THREATS (Red Team)

Death People who are against “organized” religion Satan Status quo (Comfort zone)

THREATS (ALPHABETIZED)

Being denominational

Changing Church Culture

Changing worship habits of younger generation

Comfortable with the way it is

Covid

Covid

Covid

Culture – “No Need for Religion”

Death

Fear

Fear

Fear of the unknown

Financial Stress

Financial stress

General disbelief

Increasing secular world

Lack of attendance by young

Lack of enthusiasm, energy, and passion

Living in secular culture

No Community Church

No Youth Focus

Older aged members

Other Churches

People who are against “organized” religion

Satan

Sense of giving up

Shrinking membership

Status quo (Comfort zone)

Virtual Church

What’s in it for me?

Why visitors don’t return

THREATS (GROUPED BY TOPIC/FOCUS)

Covid / Covid / Covid

General disbelief / Increasing secular world / Living in secular culture / Culture – “No Need for Religion”

Changing worship habits of younger generation / Lack of attendance by young / No Youth Focus

Status quo (Comfort zone) / Comfortable with the way it is

Fear / Fear / Fear of the unknown

Changing Church Culture / What’s in it for me? / No Community Church / Being denominational Virtual Church

Other Churches / People who are against “organized” religion

Why visitors don’t return

Financial Stress / Financial stress

Older aged members/ Shrinking membership / Sense of giving up / Lack of enthusiasm, energy, and passion

Death / Satan