

SUNDAY SCHOOL MANUAL

_____ **BAPTIST CHURCH**
OF _____

THE PURPOSE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Reach others with the Gospel of Christ.

Teach the Bible to disciple the saved.

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Vision Statement

1 Peter 2:9-10 says, “*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*” In this verses, we see that the church is to be a living display of God’s glory, a people enraptured by that glory, proclaiming His “praises” to others, and dedicated to living corporately as “*the people of God,*” that is, “*His own special people.*”

The teaching ministry of _____ Baptist Church seeks to fulfill the vision of 1 Peter 2:9-10 and move the church more and more toward becoming a living display of the God’s glory. To achieve this end, we must have certain fixed principles: 1) A commitment to the inerrancy of God’s Word (2 Tim. 3:16); 2) Faith in its profitability and power to save (Rom. 1:16), instruct, and thoroughly equip the church (2 Tim. 3:17); 3) A commitment to faithfully teaching the whole counsel of God without compromise (Acts 20:27); 4) Willingness to teach with “longsuffering” or patience (2 Tim. 4:2), rather than quitting or giving in to discouragement; and 5) A readiness to work hard (2 Tim. 2:15).

Mission Statement

With our vision clearly before us and recognizing the preeminent place that God’s Word should occupy in the hearts and minds of all people touched by the ministry of _____ Baptist Church, Sunday School classes seek to meet this vision by fulfilling the Great Commission in the local church body and community as a whole, making disciples of Jesus Christ and teaching them to observe all things that He has commanded (Matt. 28:19-20).

Sunday School seeks to fulfill this goal in the following ways:

1. It seeks to draw individuals into a relationship with the Lord and challenge them to grow as believers through life-changing Bible studies presented by leaders who are Christ-centered and people oriented.
2. It encourages personal relationships and fellowship among members and guests who desire a deeper walk with the Lord.
3. It encourages class members to reach out to their community with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. It encourages leaders to make members and guests feel welcome and important to the class by following the Lord’s example of practicing love and care.

“Sunday School has weathered two centuries of theological and ecclesiological storms because it has remained true to its purpose: to be the vehicle through which the truths of Scripture are taught to all generations.”

- Thomas Rainer in *Effective Evangelistic Churches*

Sunday School Philosophy

In order to maximize the effectiveness of this ministry, several crucial elements need to be in place and working within each class. They are as follows:

- Quantity Elements: 1. Enrollment
- 2. Prospects
- Quality Elements: 3. Teaching Units (classes)
- 4. Leaders
- 5. Leadership Meetings
- Ministry Elements: 6. Inreach
- 7. Outreach
- 8. Prayer
- 9. Missions
- 10. Administration

With these elements in place, we believe that Sunday School will fulfill its purpose and honor God. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:31 that whatever a believers does, he is to do it for the glory of God. An individual glorifies God most when he or she confesses sin, submits to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Luke 15:7), and then diligently sets out on a life-long pursuit of Christ-likeness (1 Peter 2:2-3). Therefore, every Sunday School class should be engaged in the process of introducing unbelievers to the Savior and challenging Christians into a deeper relationship with the Lord.

Enrollment: We practice what is known as open enrollment, which means that any person can be enrolled in the class at any place and at any time, so long as he or she agrees. In other words, there are no qualifications for becoming a member of a class, membership in a class is not the same as membership within the church body, and every leader in the class is authorized and expected to enroll new class members.

Prospects: With regard to prospects, Sunday School classes should strive to have at least one valid prospect for each enrolled member who is a believer. In other words, each class should have a prospect file equal to the number of active Christians in that class. This file is to be reviewed regularly so that contacts can be initiated in an orderly manner. Each class should have an aggressive program for reaching these individuals, making them feel welcome, enrolling them in class, sharing the gospel, and bringing them into the life of the church.

New Classes: Every class should be looking for opportunities to reproduce itself. As a class grows, new leadership should be cultivated. These individuals at some point will depart from the existing class to begin a new work. This stimulates growth within Sunday School through a continuous process of planting new classes and provides opportunity for people to mature by serving in leadership positions.

Leaders: Sunday School involves teamwork. Those who agree to be leaders in this ministry are a special team committed to biblical principles of growth and faithfulness to God and each other.

Leadership Meetings: Planning is the only way teamwork is achieved. No group of people will ever meet its stated goals if they never come together to evaluate past events and formulate new strategies for the future. If a class is to reach its potential, all members of the leadership team must meet regularly for evaluation, planning and prayer. See pages 5 & 6 for suggestions on conducting an effective leadership meeting.

Inreach: The Inreach Ministry is to touch people not just by words, but also by actions. Inreach Leaders are to warmly greet everyone who enters the classroom, help new and lonely people feel included, contact class members regularly, being alert to needs expressed or observed and ministering to those needs through class members and/or the church staff. We want people to know that we care about them. Jesus said, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

Outreach: The outreach Ministry ensures that all visitors to the class receive appropriate attention and follow up contacts. Outreach Leaders also give immediate help to visitors by making sure they know the location of important places within the building and helping them to be at ease. Most importantly, these leaders help organize the class for ministry within the community.

Prayer: Prayer is the lifeline for a successful class. Prayer Leaders lead in organizing the prayer ministry, support and focus for the class. They also help members to participate in the larger prayer ministry of the whole church.

Missions: The Outreach Leader is to encourage class involvement in the church-wide missions ministry as _____ Baptist seeks to fulfill the Great Commission beyond the borders of our own community. In addition, this ministry involves the class in prayer for specific missionaries and keeps people abreast of mission news and updates.

Administration: The Administration Ministry makes sure that membership records are kept up to date, announces important events and keeps the lines of effective communication clear.

Summary: If our church is committed to fulfilling the Great Commission, we must reach people for Christ and provide opportunities for believers to mature in their faith. We are never to be satisfied with maintaining the status quo. The church is called to be an active force directed by God in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

Leadership Meetings

The value of a regular planning meeting is immeasurable. It provides a forum for problem solving, preparation, personal support and prayer. These in turn result in greater fellowship, more effective ministry efforts, an environment that fosters teamwork, organized outreach, greater commitment on the part of the leaders and class members, better teaching, more consistent prayer, and better communication.

Since our Sunday School recognizes the need for ongoing planning within each class, we encourage regular leadership meetings at a time that best suits the leadership of individual classes. Conducting planning sessions should be a priority for every leadership team so that there is a unified Spirit led thrust in the teaching and reaching efforts of the class. Furthermore, shared leadership allows for the weight of the ministry to be balanced as God intended and recognizes the distribution of different spiritual gifts throughout the church. Thus all members of the leadership team should take part in the meetings as well as any other class members that the Lord is leading to take part.

Leadership meetings should accomplish four major tasks:

1. Evaluation – Every Sunday School class team should seek the contributions of each member as to how the class is doing in accomplishing the mission of: teaching the Word of God; living the Word of God as evidenced by the practicing of love and care; mutually training and encouraging those in the body; and, ministering to those outside of the family of faith. Areas of improvement, refinement and change should be reviewed and discussed.
2. Planning and Strategizing – The planning meeting is the time to determine specific strategies for executing the mission of the Sunday School class in light of prior evaluations. This is a vital part of the Outreach and Inreach Leader's responsibilities. Ministry efforts should be discussed such as fellowships, service projects, visitation and other contacts and class administration.
3. Calendaring – Coordination of Sunday School ministry plans and church-wide ministry plans should be routinely examined through calendar review and planning so as to support an overall balanced ministry effort for class members, families and the church as a whole.
4. Prayer and Fellowship – When leaders come together on a regular basis, they form a sense of community and teamwork as they seek God's wisdom and express their dependence on Him in prayer.

These major tasks are essential to an effective meeting. The following is a recommended schedule for the meetings:

1. Prayer and Fellowship	15 Minutes
2. Evaluation	10 Minutes
3. Planning	15 Minutes
4. Calendaring	<u>10 Minutes</u>
	50 Minutes

These major tasks might include specific actions such as discussing prayer needs of the class members, evaluating overall class functions (teaching, prayer, music, etc.), planning fellowships, distributing prospect cards for contacts, discussing topics for teaching, planning prospect discovery events, planning specific outreach/evangelism and ministry events within the community.

Position Description Teacher

Principle Function:

The teacher is to effectively communicate the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit so that the lives of students are changed. Reports to the appropriate Sunday School Director.

Responsibilities:

1. Commit to teach for at least one year.
2. Participate in training events.
3. Communicate with the Pastor of Adult Education to plan, develop and teach a balance of Bible books and Bible-based topics to help class members increase their knowledge and ability to apply the Scriptures to their lives.
4. Work with the pastor of Adult Education to enlist and mentor an Assistant Teacher.
5. Support and encourage the ministries of Inreach, Outreach and Prayer within the class.
6. Base each lesson upon the fact that God's Word is the final authority for all we do as believers. It is infallible and inerrant and therefore completely trustworthy.
7. Take part in ministering to the needs of each person enrolled and each prospect of the class through cards, telephone calls, and prayer.
8. Strive to be in the classroom 10 minutes before the beginning of every teaching session.
9. Participate in outreach and encourage participation of other class members. Notify the class of special church outreach events and encourage participation.
9. Nurture a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer and personal Bible study.
10. Sign and commit to follow the Sunday School Leadership Covenant.

“The bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may delight in His presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts.” – A. W. Tozer

Position Description
Assistant Teacher

Principle Function:

The Assistant Teacher is to work alongside the class teacher in organizing the class for ministry and in teaching the word of God. Reports to the teacher.

Responsibilities:

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of the teacher when he or she is unavailable to do so.
2. Assist in leading the class by recruiting and developing a class leadership team.
3. Participate in Sunday School training events.
4. Assist the class by planning a meaningful worship and teaching time.
5. Work with the class teacher to ensure all teaching sessions are covered.
6. Support and encourage the ministries of Inreach, Outreach and Prayer within the class.
7. Take part in ministering to the needs of each person enrolled and each prospect of the class through cards, telephone calls, and prayer.
8. Nurture a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer and personal Bible study.
9. Sign and commit to follow the Sunday School Leadership Covenant.

Position Description Prayer Leader

Principle Function:

The Prayer Leader is to keep before the class the priority of prayer, both individual and corporate. Reports to the assistant teacher.

Responsibilities:

1. Lead in the sharing of praises/updates/new prayer requests during each week's session.
2. Organize a class network of prayer support with others in the class and through Care Group Leaders if applicable.
3. Encourage class members in their personal prayer lives and ensure that new members receive a copy of the church Prayer Guide.
4. Ensure that appropriate prayer requests are turned into the office staff for Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting and other ministry.
5. Participate in leadership training sessions.
6. Support and encourage the ministries of Inreach and Outreach within the class.
7. Take part in ministering to the needs of each person enrolled and each prospect of the class through cards, telephone calls, and prayer.
8. Nurture a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer and personal Bible study.
9. Sign and commit to follow the Sunday School Leadership Covenant.

Position Description Inreach Leader

Principle Function:

The Inreach Leader is to ensure that all class members are ministered to throughout the year. Reports to the Assistant Teacher.

Responsibilities:

1. Ensure that everyone is greeted with a handshake and warm smile.
2. Ensure that announcements are made and important information about individuals in the class is shared (e.g. births, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.).
3. Ensure that class refreshments are coordinated.
4. Ensure that every member is contacted regularly and coordinate contacts of the Leadership team.
5. Ensure that special needs of class members are met through the ministry of the class and/or the church staff (e.g. counseling, benevolence, etc.).
6. Participate in leadership training sessions.
7. Support and encourage the ministries of Outreach and Prayer within the class.
8. Compile the attendance records for the church secretary, enroll new members who visit the class, prepare and mail correspondences as requested by the class.
9. Serve as the primary coordinator and planner of class fellowships.
10. Take part in ministering to the needs of each person enrolled and each prospect of the class through cards, telephone calls, and prayer.
11. Nurture a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer and personal Bible study.
12. Sign and commit to follow the Sunday School Class Leadership Covenant.

Position Description Care Group Leader

Principle Function:

Larger classes may find it necessary to have multiple Care Group Leaders. The Care Group Leader is to ensure that an environment conducive to the development of interpersonal relationships is fostered within his/her small group. Reports to the class Inreach Leader.

Responsibilities:

1. Ensures that every member of his/her care group is contacted regularly, being alert to needs expressed or observed.
2. Assists the Inreach Leader in securing means to meet various special needs of class members (e.g. meals, babysitting, etc.).
3. Reports ministry and fellowship needs to Inreach Leader.
4. Participate in leadership training sessions.
5. Assist the Inreach Leader in planning, organizing and conducting class fellowships.
6. Support and encourage the ministries of inreach, outreach, and prayer within the class.
7. Take part in ministering to the needs of the each person enrolled and each prospect of the class through cards, telephone calls and prayer.
8. Nurture a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer and personal Bible study.
9. Sign and commit to follow the Sunday School Leadership Covenant.

Position Description Outreach Leader

Principle Function:

The Outreach Leader works to implement the outreach ministry of his/her Sunday School class. Reports to the Assistant Teacher.

Responsibilities:

1. Ensure that each visitor is greeted, introduced to the class and made aware of the various church ministries and events.
2. Following the class, ensure that each visitor knows the location of the worship center, his/her children's classrooms etc.
3. Contact each visitor within a week following their first visit and for a twelve-week period thereafter or until the visitor joins the class, visits another class, attends another church, or requests that no further contacts be made.
4. Ensure that a contact is made to every worship service visitor who has not attended a Sunday School class and who is assigned to your class by the church staff.
5. Motivate class members to reach out to non-Christians and the unchurched.
6. Share the good news of Jesus Christ with visitors who do not know Him as Savior.
7. Ensure accurate attendance records of visitors.
8. Develop outreach events and activities for the class.
9. Participate in outreach and encourage participation of other class members. Notify the class of special church outreach events and encourage participation.
10. Support and encourage the ministries of inreach and prayer within the class.
11. Take part in ministering to the needs of each person enrolled and each prospect of the class through cards, telephone calls, and prayer.
12. Nurture a growing relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer and personal Bible study.
13. Sign and commit to follow the Sunday School Class Leadership Covenant.

Steps in Enlisting Leaders

Question: What makes up the body of Christ? Answer: Redeemed People. If we are to build up the church, we must build up our people. Hence, we must develop individuals into leaders.

A Christian Leader is someone who:

Has a sense of calling	Gal. 1:1
Understands the Great Commission	Matt. 28:18-20
Seeks further understanding of Scripture	2 Tim. 2:7; Prov. 2:2
Is committed to living a godly life	Rom. 12:1
Has integrity	2 Cor. 1:12
Is prepared	2 Tim. 2:15
Loves	1 John 4:7-8
Is led by the Spirit	Eph. 5:18-19
Demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit	Gal. 5:22-24
Walks in humility	Phil. 2:3-8

Steps in enlisting leaders:

1. Make an appointment with the person where you can have privacy and adequate time. Pray for guidance as you prepare for the interview.
2. Present the challenge of the position. Prepare and present to the prospective worker available materials.
3. Be realistic about the ministry position.
4. Ask the person to spend time in pray about and reflection before giving you a decision.
5. Give a definite time when you need an answer.
6. Call to ask if there are any questions and remind them of your time frame, if necessary.
7. If the answer is “no,” accept it, leaving the door open for future enlistment.

Class Leadership Covenant

Having been brought by divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ and having been led to give myself in service to Him as a member of _____ Baptist Church, _____ and as a leader in Sunday School, I hereby covenant with the Lord, the leadership of the church and with the members of my class to:

1. Commit myself to the unity of the corporate body of _____ Baptist Church as I seek to follow the church's leadership in accordance with Hebrews 13:17 and love my fellow believers after the command of 1 John 4:7;
2. Commit myself to the concept of team ministry organized through the Sunday School class;
3. Commit myself to the development of a ministry team within the class with the understanding that this requires my participation in leadership meetings and a willingness to serve in leadership for at least one year;
4. Strive earnestly to fulfill the responsibilities included in my position description for Sunday School;
5. Promise to work with the Education Pastor, if circumstances allow, to find a replacement prior to resigning from my leadership position, if I am no longer able to fulfill the above commitments.

If the Lord wills (James 4:15), it is my intent to fulfill this covenant for the glory and praise of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Signature

Date