

History of Vision 2 Serve

Prior to his work with Vision 2 Serve (V2S), John and his wife Jan have been involved in youth work and fund-raising for many years. He and Jan founded the Rawhide Boys Ranch that provides a very successful Christian residential program for delinquent teenage boys referred by Wisconsin Juvenile Courts. Under John's leadership Rawhide has raised over 100 million dollars in contributions and has redirected the lives of thousands of teenage young men.

V2S originally operated under the name Bayside Growth Team and was a traditional stewardship company that helped churches with capital campaigns. In 2001, John Gillespie was hired to manage BGT. In 2003 he acquired the ministry and adjusted the focus to ministry expansion. The name has been changed to Vision 2 Serve to more accurately reflect the new expanded approach to helping churches grow their ministries.

Overview

V2S uses a simple process that helps churches define their VISION and communicate it effectively to their congregation. A team approach gathers input from the congregation and a leadership team guided by the Senior Pastor formulates the Vision. Long-term and 12-month goals are set and published in a Vision Brochure. Goals include service to the Congregation, the Community and the World. It may also include Debt Reduction and Capital Expansion Projects.

Rather than using the Senior Pastor or other church staff to carry the workload of this program, V2S uses a process that involves 40% or more of the congregation, serving on various teams, all doing a small part, while adding little additional effort for staff. Through the process, the congregation grows in enthusiasm, new leaders are developed, and uninvolved members become active in the church.

The program has 8-Preparation Weeks where committees begin their work, followed by 8-Service Weeks where the program is an active part of weekly services. Through Personal Visits, a Dessert Feast, a Prayer Vigil and other events the congregation becomes motivated to volunteer time and finances in support of the clearly defined Church Vision. Financial giving increases as a natural by-product of increased congregational involvement and excitement.

Members are never individually asked to increase giving. They are given a very comfortable and confidential invitation, during a church service, to complete an annual pledge card that allows them to: Pledge to invest their time in a church ministry; Pledge an additional amount in their regular weekly offering; and Pledge a special monthly gift for ministry expansion. Members are more comfortable pledging because they know they can revise pledges annually rather than committing for three years or longer.

Perpetual Leadership & Stewardship Training

After implementing the V2S Program the first year, the church repeats the program annually. It provides an effective and on-going way to develop leaders and encourage stewardship. This is usually in place of your current annual stewardship effort, but can be in addition to it. A significant benefit is that your own leaders are trained to repeat the program without ever having to rehire consultants.