

# PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Transition Phase 2: Congregational Health and Identity

May 20, 2026

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“Now that you know all these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” — John 13:17

### Empowered Followers

- **Mission Statement:** Grow in Faith, Serve in Love, Live in Peace
- **Vision Statement:** Our vision is to be an engaged congregation that is growing in Christian mission.
- **Vision Elements:**
  - An Inviting and Inclusive Environment
  - Meaningful Christian Worship and Adult Education Aligned with Daily Living to Gain Spiritual Commitment
  - Thriving and Vibrant Environment with a Focus on Youth
  - Fulfilled Through Service to Others
  - Operating a Solid Foundation Utilizing New Technology
  - Delivering a Lasting Legacy Through Stewardship

**Values Statement:** We are united through the common values of GRACE: Giving of ourselves while Respecting, Appreciating, Celebrating and Energizing others.

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This document is meant to provide a current view of the health and identity of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Westlake, Ohio. It synthesizes findings from two independent assessments conducted in 2025 and 2026: the Gallup Member Engagement Survey (119 respondents) plus follow-up consulting from Gallup, the Congregation Vitality Assessment (72 respondents), and the mutual input of the Prince of Peace Transition Team and Church Council and the ELCA Northeast Ohio Synod. Together, these tools provide a comprehensive view of congregational health, member engagement, spiritual vitality, and organizational readiness for change for Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Westlake.

# SECTION 1: Overall Summary of Survey Results

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## 1.1 Gallup Member Engagement Survey — Key Findings

The 2025 Gallup Member Engagement Survey measured two primary dimensions: Member Engagement (12 items) and Spiritual Commitment (9 items), scored on a 1–5 scale against Protestant and Faith Overall benchmarks.

### Overall Engagement

Prince of Peace achieved a Grand Mean Engagement score of 4.15 (up from 3.91 in 2019 and 3.59 in 2017), representing steady, sustained improvement over eight years.

| Metric                | POP 2025 | Protestant Overall | Faith 50th % | Faith 75th % |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|
| % Engaged Members     | 62%      | 39%                | —            | 31%          |
| % Not Engaged         | 34%      | 45%                | —            | 48%          |
| % Actively Disengaged | 4%       | 16%                | —            | 21%          |
| Grand Mean Engagement | 4.15     | 3.79               | 3.68         | 3.83         |
| Grand Mean Commitment | 4.23     | 4.21               | 4.20         | 4.27         |

### Top Engagement Strengths (scores at or above Faith 75th percentile)

- Mission/Purpose — 4.48
- Know What's Expected — 4.48
- Cares About Me — 4.52
- Opportunity to Do Best — 4.44
- Learn & Grow — 4.42
- Members Committed to Spiritual Growth — 4.38

### Engagement Areas for Improvement

- Progress (ME21) — 2.53: The single lowest-scoring item, declining slightly from 2019 (2.60). Indicates members feel less certain they are making progress in their spiritual lives. In follow up consultation with Gallup (Steven Shields) a suggestion was made to put this as a high priority and to improve the quantity and quality of spiritual conversations. One way to do this is via open-ended questions along with using Allelon which could provide a blueprint for thriving relationships.
- Best Friend (ME20) — 3.50: Below the Faith 75th percentile (3.50); forming deeper congregational friendships remains an ongoing opportunity.

- Recognition (ME14) — 4.12: Lower relative to other engagement items, particularly among the 55–64 age group.

## **Spiritual Commitment**

The Grand Mean Commitment score of 4.23 is at the Protestant Overall level (4.21) and just below the Faith 75th percentile (4.27). Standout strengths include speaking words of kindness (4.63), faith gives inner peace (4.47), meaning and purpose (4.46), and spiritual commitment (4.38). Two areas trail benchmarks:

- Time in Worship/Prayer Every Day (3.76): Below the Faith 75th percentile (3.94); consistent across all demographic groups.
- Take Unpopular Stands (3.99): Has slightly declined from 2019 (4.06), suggesting members may feel less confident acting on conviction publicly.

## **Outcome Indicators**

- Personal Life Satisfaction: 91% rate their personal life highly (4 or 5), well above Protestant (73%) and Faith (75%) overall.
- Inviting Others: 50% did NOT invite someone in the past month — an opportunity for growth.
- Giving: 36% give \$5,000 or more annually vs. 27% Protestant and 9% Faith overall — POP members are notably more generous.
- Volunteer Hours: 80% volunteer 1+ hour weekly, compared to 66% Protestant overall.

## **Demographic Highlights**

- Gender: Female members score significantly higher on both Engagement (4.22 vs. 4.05) and Commitment (4.36 vs. 4.03). Male engagement represents a growth opportunity.
- Age: The 45–54 cohort scores lowest on Engagement (4.04) and Commitment (4.14), while those 35–44 and 65+ show higher scores.
- Worship Attendance: Regular attenders score meaningfully higher on nearly every item (Engaged: 69% vs. 45%). Reinforcing attendance habits is a high-leverage opportunity.
- Membership Duration: Members with 1–3 years of membership show the highest scores, suggesting the onboarding/integration period is effective. New members (<1 year) and long-tenured members who may have plateaued need targeted attention.

## **1.2 Congregation Vitality Assessment (CVA) — Key Findings**

The CVA assessed 13 domains of congregational life, each scored on a 1–4 scale. Ratings of “High Vitality” correspond to scores of approximately 3.00–4.00.

| Domain                                 | Score  | Rating            |
|----------------------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| I. Vision, Mission & Discernment       | 3.00/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| II. Lay Engagement & Empowerment       | 3.08/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| III. Context Awareness & Inclusion     | 2.80/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| IV. Change Readiness                   | 3.14/4 | High Vitality     |
| V. Dealing with Differences / Conflict | 2.94/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| VI. Worship                            | 3.37/4 | High Vitality     |
| VII. Spiritual Life                    | 3.17/4 | High Vitality     |
| VIII. Formation, Education & Training  | 2.87/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| IX. Outreach                           | 3.01/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| X. Leadership & Organization           | 2.99/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| XI. Stewardship                        | 2.99/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| XII. Internal Sustainability           | 2.61/4 | Moderate Vitality |
| XIII. External Sustainability          | 2.42/4 | Moderate Vitality |

### CVA High Vitality Areas

- Worship (3.37/4): Highest-scoring domain. The congregation delivers a rich worship experience, ranking as the highest among peer congregations surveyed.
- Change Readiness (3.14/4): POP demonstrates a healthy openness to change and innovation, a key enabler for future strategic initiatives.
- Spiritual Life (3.17/4): Programs and practices supporting individual and community spiritual growth are strong.

### CVA Moderate Vitality Areas Requiring Attention

- External Sustainability (2.42/4): Lowest-scoring domain. The congregation's ability to grow, attract new members, and thrive in the broader community context is the most pressing structural challenge.
- Internal Sustainability (2.61/4): Financial resilience, endowment management, and facility planning need strengthening as suggested by survey results, but may not be backed up

by actual situation (e.g. Operating surplus, endowment value, recently completed capital campaign)

- Context Awareness & Inclusion (2.80/4): Community engagement and building relationships outside the congregation is a primary growth opportunity.
- Formation, Education & Training (2.87/4): Faith formation for all ages, especially children and youth, needs a more defined scope and sequence.
- Vision, Mission & Discernment (3.00/4): Clear mission articulation exists but defining 3–5 bold, measurable goals is the recommended next step.

### **1.3 CVA Member Voice: What Members Say About Prince of Peace**

The CVA included three custom open-ended questions. These responses provide important qualitative context that complements the quantitative survey scores. Key themes are summarized below.

#### **What Members Love Most About Their Congregation**

Members consistently identify the people and relationships of Prince of Peace as its greatest strength. Four dominant themes emerged:

- Deep community, care, and belonging: The congregation is widely described as welcoming, friendly, and family-like, with members who genuinely know and care for one another.
- Inclusivity and openness: Members highlight the intentional welcome of visitors, new members, and diverse families, including affirmation of LGBTQ+ individuals and families.
- Meaningful worship and spiritual nourishment: Strong music traditions, children's involvement, and worship that is both grounding and joyful are frequently named.
- Service, outreach, and mission: Members value opportunities to serve and the congregation's community partnerships. POP is described not simply as a church people attend, but as a community they belong to.

#### **Five-Year Challenges Identified by the Congregation**

Members identified five recurring challenges facing Prince of Peace in the years ahead:

- Pastoral leadership transition and stability: The most frequently named concern. Members express anxiety about finding a pastor who can build on recent momentum, connect across generations, lead engaging worship, and remain for a meaningful length of time.
- Engaging and retaining younger generations: Members name the need to attract young families, retain children and youth beyond confirmation, and offer programming that fits contemporary family life.
- Aging membership and leadership capacity: Much of the congregation and its leadership are retirement-age, raising concerns about succession, volunteer sustainability, and generational balance.
- Financial and physical sustainability: Members reference the need for improved long-term financial planning, capital reserves, and stewardship decisions aligned with mission priorities.
- Maintaining momentum and adapting to a changing context: Members express both caution and hope about continuing recent growth, strengthening outreach, and responding faithfully to broader cultural shifts including secularization and political division.

## Members' Greatest Wishes for the Congregation

Member wishes reflect a hopeful, forward-looking vision centered on long-term vitality. Key themes:

- Long-term growth and vitality: The most common wish is that POP continues to grow — numerically, spiritually, and in mission impact — and remains strong for the next 30–40 years.
- Stable, relational pastoral leadership: Members hope for a pastor who leads with kindness and energy, preaches engaging scripture-grounded sermons, relates to all ages, and commits to staying for many years.
- Greater generational diversity: Many wish for more young families, children, and next-generation leaders, with stronger youth ministry and faith formation pathways.
- Welcoming, inclusive, and unified community: Members wish to preserve the caring and accepting culture of POP, rooted in Lutheran Christian values.
- Outreach, service, and lived faith: Members hope the congregation continues spreading the Gospel through visible mission and good works in the community.

## Perceived Impact of a Called Pastor

Members overwhelmingly view called pastoral leadership as foundational — not simply a staffing need, but a critical requirement for stability, growth, unity, and spiritual vitality. Key expectations include:

- Stability and restored confidence: A called pastor is seen as essential to restoring direction and cohesion after the period of vacancy.
- Sustaining and building on recent momentum: Members fear that prolonged vacancy could interrupt growth in worship attendance and young family engagement.
- Coherent leadership and organizational clarity: Respondents value “one leader rather than many” to align ministries, guide worship, and reduce the burden currently carried by lay leaders and staff.
- Long-term commitment and fit: There is a strong desire for a pastor who will stay for many years, lead with integrity, and serve as a trusted spiritual leader within the congregation and the wider community.

*Important note: The congregation's high expectations for pastoral leadership carry a caution worth naming explicitly. Healthy called pastoral leadership works alongside lay leadership, supporting and empowering them in the work of ministry — rather than doing everything themselves. The next pastor and congregation will benefit from clear, shared expectations about this collaborative model from the outset.*

## SECTION 2: Common Conclusions & Shared Opportunities

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Both assessments converge on several consistent themes that represent the core identity and most important growth edges of Prince of Peace.

### 2.1 Shared Strengths

#### Strength 1: Exceptional Spiritual Health & Commitment

- Gallup: Spiritual commitment grand mean of 4.23; 56% spiritually committed; inner peace (4.47) and kindness (4.63) are standout scores.
- CVA: Spiritual Life rated High Vitality (3.17/4) — highest of the three High Vitality domains outside of Worship.
- Conclusion: POP has cultivated a genuinely spiritually committed membership. This is the congregation's deepest asset and the foundation from which all other growth should flow.

#### Strength 2: Strong Worship Experience

- Gallup: 69% of regular worshippers are engaged vs. only 45% of non-attenders — worship attendance strongly predicts engagement.
- CVA: Worship is rated High Vitality (3.37/4), the highest domain score, ranking above all peer congregations in its comparison group.
- Conclusion: Worship is both a strength and a strategic lever. Deepening and broadening the worship experience directly drives member engagement.

#### Strength 3: Clear Mission Clarity & Member Alignment

- Gallup: Mission/Purpose scores 4.48 — one of the highest engagement items, well above Faith 75th percentile (4.01).
- CVA: Vision, Mission & Discernment rated Moderate Vitality (3.00/4) but at the top of comparison group. Members feel aligned with congregational purpose.
- Conclusion: A strong shared sense of mission exists. The opportunity is to sharpen this into defined, measurable strategic goals and ensure that the mission is well communicated.

#### Strength 4: Openness to Change & Lay Empowerment

- Gallup: Members show high scores on encouragement of spiritual development (4.17) and believing their opinions count (4.17).
- CVA: Change Readiness is rated High Vitality (3.14/4) — the congregation embraces innovation. Lay Engagement & Empowerment is at 3.08/4.

- Conclusion: POP has a cultural readiness to try new approaches. This is a strategic asset that should be harnessed in the planning process.

## 2.2 Shared Opportunities

### Opportunity 1: Inviting & Growing the Congregation

- Gallup: Only 50% of members invited someone to church in the last month; this is one of the weaker outcome indicators.
- CVA: External Sustainability (2.42/4) is the lowest-scoring domain, indicating the congregation must more intentionally attract and retain new members.
- Action: Launch a culture of invitation through sermon series, small group coaching, and member storytelling. Create welcoming pathways specifically designed for newcomers.

### Opportunity 2: Deepening Personal Spiritual Growth

- Gallup: 'Progress' (ME21) scores just 2.53 — the single lowest engagement item. Members do not feel they are advancing in their spiritual journey.
- CVA: Formation, Education & Training (2.87/4) identifies the need for clearer scope/sequence in faith formation across all ages.
- Action: Create intentional spiritual growth pathways and a system for members to identify and track their growth. Introduce spiritual gifts discernment programming.

### Opportunity 3: Community Engagement & Outreach

- Gallup: High levels of generosity and volunteerism already exist (80% volunteer 1+ hours/week).
- CVA: Context Awareness & Inclusion (2.80/4) and Outreach (3.01/4) both indicate that while the desire to serve exists, deeper community relationships and partnerships are needed.
- Action: Move from episodic service events to sustained community partnerships. Empower members as community ambassadors.

## 2.3 CVA Executive Brief: Five Strategic Priorities

The CVA Executive Brief prepared identifies five overarching strategic priorities that reinforce the shared opportunities above and provide an additional frame for leadership discernment:

1. Pastoral Leadership Stability: The congregation clearly desires long-term, relational pastoral leadership. The next pastor must sustain congregational momentum, provide visible and approachable leadership, demonstrate a high level of emotional intelligence, energize worship and children's ministry, and guide change with confidence and care. Stable pastoral leadership empowers lay leaders rather than replacing them.



2. **Mission and Vision Clarity:** While members believe the congregation’s mission matters, many struggle to articulate it clearly. Strengthening shared understanding of mission and vision — and ensuring all ministry decisions are evaluated against mission, vision, and values — is critical for the next chapter.
3. **Generational Engagement and Formation:** The CVA highlights the urgent need for intentional investment in youth, young adults, and parents, with clear faith formation pathways across the full lifespan. All generations should have educational and faith formational opportunities.
4. **Sustainability and Long-Range Planning:** Aging membership, leadership capacity gaps, financial planning, and facilities stewardship all point to the need to shift from maintenance-focused decisions to strategic, future-oriented leadership. This includes intentional succession planning in every ministry area.
5. **Mission-Aligned Outreach and Community Engagement:** Outreach is a core value and source of pride at POP. The CVA identifies opportunities to increase impact by aligning outreach more intentionally with identified community needs and integrating service more fully with worship and formation.

## SECTION 3: Differing Conclusions & Unique Perspectives

While both surveys show broad alignment, each instrument surfaces distinct perspectives that are not fully captured by the other.

### 3.1 Where the Surveys Diverge

| Gallup Unique Insights                                                                                                                                               | CVA Unique Insights                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Members feel spiritually fulfilled but are not making measurable PROGRESS (2.53) — a personal growth plateau that worship/community alone may not address.           | Internal Sustainability (2.61) and External Sustainability (2.42) surface structural concerns that individual member experience surveys do not capture.                             |
| Female engagement (70% engaged) significantly outpaces male engagement (51%). This gender gap is a specific demographic challenge not visible in aggregate CVA data. | Conflict management and written community norms are underdeveloped. CVA identifies this organizational health gap that members may not articulate in engagement surveys.            |
| The 45–54 age group is the weakest engagement segment — a mid-career life-stage challenge that suggests targeted programming may be needed.                          | Stewardship (2.99/4) is rated as having significant room for improvement. The CVA frames this as a year-round discipleship issue, not just a budget/financial concern.              |
| Despite strong giving, “inviting” behavior is weak. Gallup engagement does not automatically translate into congregational growth behaviors.                         | Leadership & Organization (2.99/4) points to the need for more structured lay leadership development and decision-making processes — a governance dimension Gallup does not assess. |

Worship attendance is a strong predictor of engagement (69% vs. 45%), highlighting the importance of re-engagement strategies for members who attend less regularly.

The CVA's finding on Context Awareness (2.80/4) points to a broader question of how POP is perceived in and connected to the wider Westlake community.

## 3.2 Synthesis: What the Combination Tells Us

Read together, the surveys paint a nuanced portrait:

- POP has a highly engaged, spiritually committed, generous membership that feels cared for and aligned with the mission — but this internal strength has not yet been fully translated into external growth and community impact.
- Members feel spiritually committed, but not necessarily spiritually progressing — suggesting the congregation delivers excellent spiritual community but may need to create more intentional individual growth pathways.
- The congregation is organizationally ready to take bold steps (high Change Readiness), but may need to build the structural and financial foundations to sustain them (low Sustainability scores).
- The male engagement gap and the 45–54 cohort plateau suggest specific demographic groups need targeted programming and attention.
- Member voice from the CVA custom questions confirms the congregation is deeply hopeful and forward-looking — but also realistic about the challenges ahead. The concerns expressed (pastoral stability, generational engagement, sustainability) are not signs of crisis, but of a church that knows decisive leadership decisions in the next five years will shape its long-term vitality.
- The congregation's strong desire for a long-term, relational, energizing pastor is both an asset and a risk. It reflects genuine investment in pastoral leadership, but also carries the potential for over-dependence on the pastor to 'fix' everything. Equipping lay leadership to share fully in the work of ministry will be essential alongside the pastoral call process.

## SECTION 4: Potential Strategic Action Plan

The following action plan organizes recommended initiatives by priority, drawing on both survey assessments. Actions are grouped into short-term (0–12 months), medium-term (1–2 years), and long-term (2–5 years) horizons.

The priorities below reflect not only the quantitative survey data but also the qualitative member voice gathered through the CVA custom questions (see Section 1.3). This plan should be reviewed and approved by Church Council and, once a Senior Pastor is called, adjusted based on his/her input. Ongoing management and accountability will be essential for ultimate success.

## 4.1 Priority Action Table

| Priority Area                                                    | Recommended Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Sources                                                                             | Timeframe     | Metric / Target                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>HIGHEST PRIORITY</b>                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                     |               |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Complete Senior Pastor Transition</b>                         | Complete the call of a new Senior Pastor with a strong alignment between Prince of Peace requirements and Senior Pastor qualities and desires.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | N/A                                                                                 | 4 to 8 months | Call extended and accepted; new pastor begins within target window; call committee satisfaction rating $\geq 4/5$                                                     |
| <b>NEAR TERM PRIORITIES (DOES NOT REQUIRE NEW SENIOR PASTOR)</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                     |               |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Develop and Implement Communication Plan</b>                  | Develop and implement a formal communication plan that incorporates aspects of survey results (Vitality, Gallup), transition team findings, call committee status, Mission and Vision communication and other priorities from ExCom/Council                                                                                                                    | Gallup, CVA, Transition Team Deliverable, Call Committee Status, Council Priorities | 0 – 8 months  | Communication plan developed with timing, responsibilities, key messages identified; executed plan; member feedback on communication effectiveness                    |
| <b>Mission Clarity &amp; Goal-Setting</b>                        | Ensure that the mission is well communicated and understood to all stakeholders. Articulate 3–5 bold, measurable God-sized goals with assigned owners and benchmarks. Communicate core values in all ministry communications. Build annual ministry plans aligned to mission. This may be some of these actions grouped into an overall target area of action. | Gallup: ME18; CVA: I, X                                                             | 0–12 months   | 3–5 God-sized goals documented, assigned, and communicated congregation-wide within 12 months; annual ministry plan adopted by Council                                |
| <b>NEAR TERM PRIORITIES (NEW SENIOR PASTOR LEADERSHIP INPUT)</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                     |               |                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Spiritual Growth Pathways</b>                                 | Develop a personal spiritual growth tracking system. Launch spiritual gifts discernment programming. Create a clear scope/sequence for faith formation at every life stage. Increase emphasis on daily prayer/devotion habits.                                                                                                                                 | Gallup: ME21, ME22; CVA: VIII                                                       | 0–12 months   | Gallup ME21 (Progress) score improves from 2.53 to $\geq 3.00$ by next survey; $\geq 50\%$ of members enrolled in a defined spiritual growth pathway within 18 months |

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                             |             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Invite Culture</b>                 | Launch a congregation-wide 'culture of invitation' initiative. Train small group leaders in invitation practices. Create newcomer welcome pathways and a 90-day integration process.                    | Gallup: ME23; CVA: IX, XIII | 0–12 months | % of members who invited someone in the past month increases from 50% to ≥65% by next Gallup survey; ≥25 newcomers complete 90-day integration process annually |
| <b>Male Engagement</b>                | Design specific ministry pathways, small groups, or service opportunities targeted to male members. Review programming schedules and formats for accessibility. Recruit male small group leaders.       | Gallup: Gender data         | 0–12 months | Male Gallup Engagement score improves from 51% to ≥60% engaged by next survey; ≥2 new male-focused ministry offerings launched within 12 months                 |
| <b>POTENTIAL FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                             |             |                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Community Partnerships</b>         | Identify and formalize 2–3 sustained community organization partnerships. Empower members as community ambassadors. Establish a community needs assessment process.                                     | CVA: III, IX; Gallup: ME25  | 1–2 years   | ≥2 formal community partnerships active within 2 years; ≥10 members serving as identified community ambassadors                                                 |
| <b>Worship Engagement Depth</b>       | Survey newer members on worship experience and accessibility. Develop pathways from worship to deeper congregational involvement. Explore worship offerings that serve underrepresented age groups.     | CVA: VI; Gallup: Attendance | 1–2 years   | Newcomer worship satisfaction score ≥4.0/5.0 (via survey); Gallup attendance gap narrows (non-attender engagement improves from 45% toward 55%+)                |
| <b>Lay Leadership Development</b>     | Create and publish written ministry role descriptions. Establish an annual leadership retreat. Transfer appropriate decision-making to lay leaders. Develop a leadership pipeline and succession model. | CVA: II, X; Gallup: ME17    | 1–2 years   | Written role descriptions published for all ministry positions; annual leadership retreat held; ≥3 lay-led decisions transferred from clergy within 18 months   |
| <b>Conflict &amp; Community Norms</b> | Develop and adopt written congregational community norms. Train leaders on                                                                                                                              | CVA: V; Gallup: ME17        | 1–2 years   | Written community norms adopted by Council and                                                                                                                  |

|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |             |                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                 | healthy conflict transformation. Establish accountability structures for respectful dialogue.                                                                                                 |                       |             | communicated to congregation; ≥80% of leaders complete conflict transformation training within 2 years                                                       |
| <b>Stewardship as Discipleship</b>                              | Reframe stewardship as a year-round spiritual discipline, not an annual campaign. Launch time/talent/treasure stewardship emphasis. Connect giving narratives to mission impact stories.      | CVA: XI; Gallup: ME24 | 1–2 years   | Gallup ME24 giving distribution maintained or improved; year-round stewardship calendar in place by Year 2; ≥1 new talent/time stewardship emphasis launched |
| <b>Financial Sustainability</b>                                 | Develop a capital reserve fund and facilities maintenance plan. Strengthen endowment management with a formal policy (4% draw guideline). Explore planned giving infrastructure.              | CVA: XII              | 2–5 years   | Capital reserve fund established with initial funding; endowment draw policy (≤4%) adopted; planned giving program infrastructure in place within 3 years    |
| <b>Denominational Collaboration</b>                             | Build active collaboration with neighboring ELCA/Lutheran congregations. Explore joint programming, shared resources, and community ministry partnerships to address External Sustainability. | CVA: XIII             | 2–5 years   | ≥2 active partnerships with neighboring ELCA congregations; ≥1 joint ministry initiative underway within 3 years                                             |
| <b>45–54 Cohort Engagement</b>                                  | Survey this demographic group on specific barriers to deeper engagement. Design targeted mid-life small groups, service opportunities, or affinity-based ministries.                          | Gallup: Age data      | 1–2 years   | 45–54 cohort Gallup Engagement score improves from 4.04 toward 4.20+; ≥1 targeted ministry offering for this cohort launched within 18 months                |
| <b>Develop A Revised Strategic Plan and Update Action Items</b> | Update the Strategic Plan with the primary inputs being from this document, from input of the new Senior Pastor, and natural update after 12 to 18 months of activity and learnings.          | N/A                   | 2 – 3 years | Updated strategic plan adopted by Council and presented to congregation; plan reflects new pastor input and 12–18 months of learnings                        |

## 4.2 Measurement & Accountability

To ensure accountability, the following measurement practices are recommended:

- Repeat the Gallup Member Engagement Survey every 2–3 years to track trend data.
- Repeat the Congregation Vitality Assessment every 2–3 years to monitor domain-level progress.
- Establish a quarterly strategic planning scorecard reviewed by council and staff.
- Assign a named owner to each of the action areas above.
- Celebrate progress publicly in worship, newsletters, and annual reports.

## 4.3 Resource Requirements & Leadership Responsibility by Priority Area

The table below provides an estimate of the primary resource requirements and leadership ownership for each priority action area. Resource estimates reflect typical effort for a congregation of POP's size and should be refined as planning matures. "Staff" refers to clergy and paid staff; "Lay" refers to volunteer lay leaders; "Council" refers to the Church Council or its designated committees.

| Priority Area                            | Est. Staff Time                                           | Est. Budget Impact                                                               | Primary Leadership                            | Key Support Needed                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Complete Senior Pastor Transition</b> | High — Call Committee (est. 200–300 volunteer hrs)        | Moderate — Travel, search costs, relocation assistance (~\$5K–\$15K)             | Council + Call Committee + Synod              | ELCA NE Ohio Synod guidance; lay discernment team; transition consultant if desired     |
| <b>Spiritual Growth Pathways</b>         | High — Senior Pastor leads; est. 4–6 hrs/wk ongoing       | Low–Moderate — Curriculum materials, Allelon or similar platform (~\$2K–\$5K/yr) | Senior Pastor (champion) + Lay Formation Team | Small group facilitators; Gallup/Allelon resources; member communication support        |
| <b>Invite Culture</b>                    | Moderate — Sermon series, 90-day integration coordination | Low–Moderate — Welcome materials, newcomer events                                | Senior Pastor + Lay Hospitality/Welcome Team  | Small group leaders; communications/marketing volunteer; member storytelling volunteers |

|                                           |                                                                              |                                                                               |                                                            |                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                           |                                                                              | (~\$1K–\$3K/yr)                                                               |                                                            |                                                                                               |
| <b>Mission Clarity &amp; Goal-Setting</b> | High — Planning retreats + council time (est. 2–4 facilitated sessions)      | Low–Moderate — Facilitator fees if external; retreat space (~\$2K–\$6K)       | Senior Pastor + Council (Council leads with Pastor)        | Transition team; ELCA Synod; external facilitator optional; congregation-wide input process   |
| <b>Male Engagement</b>                    | Moderate — Programming design + recruitment outreach                         | Low — Event costs, materials (~\$500–\$2K/yr)                                 | Lay Men’s Ministry Team + Senior Pastor (sponsor)          | Male small group leaders; scheduling flexibility; outreach through existing men’s networks    |
| <b>Community Partnerships</b>             | Moderate — Relationship-building and coordination time for Pastor + lay team | Low — Partnership in-kind contributions; event co-sponsorship (~\$1K–\$3K/yr) | Senior Pastor (external face) + Lay Outreach/Missions Team | Member ambassadors; community needs assessment volunteers; council approval of partnerships   |
| <b>Worship Engagement Depth</b>           | Moderate–High — Worship planning + newcomer feedback process                 | Low — Survey tools; minimal new spend if using existing worship structure     | Senior Pastor + Worship Committee + Music Staff            | Newcomer focus group participants; worship volunteers; connection pathway design team         |
| <b>Lay Leadership Development</b>         | Moderate — Annual retreat planning + ongoing mentoring time                  | Low–Moderate — Annual retreat, training materials (~\$2K–\$5K/yr)             | Council President + Senior Pastor (co-lead)                | HR/governance volunteers; leadership role description writers; retreat facilitator            |
| <b>Conflict &amp; Community Norms</b>     | Low–Moderate — Norm development process + leader training                    | Low — External trainer if used; printed materials (~\$500–\$2K)               | Senior Pastor + Council (adopts and upholds norms)         | Synod conflict resolution resources; all lay leaders trained; congregation-wide communication |
| <b>Stewardship as Discipleship</b>        | Moderate — Year-round integration into preaching                             | Low — Campaign materials, storytelling events (largely within                 | Stewardship Committee (Lay) + Senior Pastor (preaching)    | Council Treasurer; mission impact storytellers; year-round communication calendar             |

|                                       | and programming                                                        | existing budget)                                                                                          |                                                                      |                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial Sustainability</b>       | Low (Staff) / High (Lay) — Finance & Property committee time           | Moderate—High — Capital reserve seeding; planned giving infrastructure; legal/advisory fees (~\$5K–\$15K) | Council Treasurer + Finance Committee + Property Committee (Lay-led) | Financial advisor; attorney for planned giving docs; endowment policy drafters; property volunteers    |
| <b>Denominational Collaboration</b>   | Low—Moderate — Relationship-building meetings; joint planning sessions | Low — Shared resource contributions; largely time investment                                              | Senior Pastor + Council President (relationship owners)              | ELCA NE Ohio Synod; neighboring congregation clergy; joint ministry task force                         |
| <b>45–54 Cohort Engagement</b>        | Low—Moderate — Survey + focus group facilitation; targeted programming | Low — Survey tools; pilot program costs (~\$500–\$1.5K)                                                   | Lay Ministry Team + Senior Pastor (pastoral awareness)               | Members from the 45–54 cohort as co-designers; affinity group leaders; care team involvement           |
| <b>Develop Revised Strategic Plan</b> | High — Planning retreats, drafting, congregation input process         | Moderate — Facilitator fees if external; retreat costs (~\$3K–\$8K)                                       | Senior Pastor + Council (co-own and present to congregation)         | Transition team; all ministry area leaders; external facilitator; congregation-wide listening sessions |

**Notes on Resource Estimates:** Budget figures are approximate ranges based on typical congregational practice for a church of POP's size and budget. Many of the highest-priority actions (Spiritual Growth, Invite Culture, Stewardship) require primarily staff and lay leader time rather than significant new budget. The highest incremental budget demands are in Financial Sustainability and the Senior Pastor Transition. All estimates should be reviewed and approved through the normal budget process. "Staff Time" estimates reflect Senior Pastor and ministry staff combined; where an item is primarily lay-led, this is noted explicitly.



## 4.4 Closing Reflection

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church stands on a remarkably strong foundation. The Gallup data shows that 62% of members are fully engaged — significantly higher than the Protestant average — and eight years of continuous improvement demonstrates that intentional focus on engagement yields lasting results. The CVA confirms a congregation with genuine spiritual vitality, strong worship, and readiness for change.

The primary call to action is to turn this exceptional internal health outward — into the community, into bold mission goals, and into the lives of those not yet part of the Prince of Peace community. The data points clearly to where the next chapter of growth lies: invitation, sustainability, formation, and community partnership.

## SECTION 5: Implications for the Call of a New Senior Pastor

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The findings from both the Gallup Member Engagement Survey and the Congregation Vitality Assessment offer clear guidance on the gifts, experience, and leadership style that will best position Prince of Peace for its next chapter. The following criteria are drawn directly from the data and the strategic priorities identified in Section 4.

### 5.1 The Context: What the Data Tells Us About This Moment

Prince of Peace is not a congregation in crisis — it is a congregation at a crossroads of opportunity. With 62% of members fully engaged, a High Vitality worship life, and a culture ready for change, the next Senior Pastor inherits a healthy, motivated congregation. The call is not to fix what is broken, but to lead a spiritually mature community outward — into bolder mission, deeper formation, and stronger community presence.

Member responses to the CVA custom questions reinforce this picture. The congregation's greatest wishes — long-term vitality, stable relational pastoral leadership, generational growth, and faithful outreach — are aspirational rather than reactive. The primary anxiety expressed is not about survival but about sustaining momentum and ensuring that leadership decisions over the next five years are worthy of the strong foundation that has been built.

### 5.2 Essential Pastoral Competencies & Characteristics

The following competencies are organized from most critical to supporting, based on the weight of evidence from both surveys.

## 1. Preacher & Worship Leader Who Deepens Engagement

- Worship is POP's highest-rated domain (CVA: 3.37/4) and the single strongest predictor of member engagement (69% engaged among regular attenders vs. 45% among non-attenders).
- The new pastor must be an exceptional preacher who consistently connects scripture to daily life and inspires members toward spiritual growth and action.
- Should demonstrate ability to engage both long-tenured members AND newcomers in worship, as the CVA specifically flags the newcomer worship experience as a growth edge. A high level of emotional intelligence is seen as key to success.
- Comfort with and creativity in liturgical worship forms consistent with the ELCA tradition is essential.

## 2. Champion of Individual Spiritual Growth & Formation

- The single lowest Gallup score across all engagement items is 'Progress' (2.53) — members do not feel they are advancing personally in their spiritual lives.
- The CVA rates Formation, Education & Training at Moderate Vitality (2.87/4), with specific gaps in spiritual gifts discernment, daily devotional habits, and faith formation scope/sequence.
- The incoming pastor must be deeply committed to personal discipleship pathways — not just community faith, but helping each individual member grow.
- Should have experience developing or implementing faith formation systems, small group ministries, or spiritual direction frameworks. See discussion with Stephen Shields (Gallup) as a guide (e.g. Allelon)
- Ability to model and preach about personal spiritual disciplines (prayer, scripture, service) in practical, accessible ways is critical to moving the 'Progress' score.

## 3. Outward-Focused Mission Leader & Community Builder (“Face of Franchise”)

- External Sustainability is POP's lowest CVA domain (2.42/4). The congregation has not yet fully translated its internal health into external community impact and membership growth.
- Only 50% of members invited someone to church in the last month — a culture of invitation must be cultivated intentionally.
- Context Awareness & Inclusion (2.80/4) indicates the congregation needs stronger relationships with the surrounding Westlake community.
- The new pastor should have a demonstrated passion for community presence, be visible and engaged beyond the church walls, and inspire a 'congregation as mission outpost' mindset.
- Experience building community partnerships, leading evangelism initiatives, or growing a congregation's external reach is highly desirable.

#### 4. Equipper & Empowerer of Lay Leadership

- CVA Lay Engagement & Empowerment (3.08/4) and Leadership & Organization (2.99/4) both indicate the congregation is ready for a more robust lay leadership model.
- Gallup data shows members feel their opinions count (4.17) and want to do what they do best (4.44) — the congregation is ready to be deployed, not just served.
- The ideal pastor leads through others, building teams rather than centralizing authority, and is willing to transfer appropriate decision-making to lay leaders.
- Should have experience creating ministry role structures, mentoring lay leaders, and organizing annual leadership formation experiences.
- The CVA specifically recommends an annual leadership retreat — the new pastor should champion this practice.

#### 5. Strategic Thinker with Mission Clarity

- The CVA rates Vision, Mission & Discernment at 3.00/4 and recommends defining 3–5 bold, measurable God-sized goals with benchmarks — this is a leadership task that falls squarely to the Senior Pastor.
- Gallup's Mission/Purpose score (4.48) shows members are already aligned with mission — the pastor's role is to sharpen and channel that alignment into concrete strategy.
- Should be comfortable with data-informed decision-making and willing to use tools like Gallup and CVA as ongoing feedback mechanisms.
- Experience leading a congregation through a strategic planning process or mission discernment cycle is a significant asset.

#### 6. Pastoral Care Presence Who Builds Belonging

- Gallup's 'Cares About Me' score is strong (4.52) — members value pastoral care deeply, and this must be maintained through the transition.
- 'Best Friend' (ME20) scores at 3.50 below the Faith 75th percentile, indicating deeper relational community and friendship formation is needed.
- The incoming pastor should model and cultivate a culture of genuine pastoral relationship — not just programmatic care, but knowing and being known by the congregation.
- Particularly important is attention to the 45–54 age cohort (lowest engagement) and male members (51% engaged vs. 70% female), both of whom may benefit from targeted relational connection.

#### 7. Healthy Leadership in Conflict & Community Norms

- CVA Dealing with Differences/Conflict (2.94/4) indicates the congregation benefits from clearer norms and stronger conflict transformation practices.
- The new pastor should demonstrate emotional health, non-anxious presence, and skill in navigating congregational conflict without avoidance or escalation.

- Experience implementing community covenant agreements or leading congregations through difficult conversations is valuable.
- The Gallup data's slight decline in 'Take Unpopular Stands' (3.99) suggests members may benefit from pastoral modeling of courageous, grace-filled leadership.

## 8. Stewardship & Sustainability Advocate

- CVA Stewardship (2.99/4) and Internal Sustainability (2.61/4) point to the need for a pastor who frames stewardship as discipleship, not fundraising.
- Gallup data already shows exceptional generosity (36% give \$5,000+ vs. 9% Faith Overall) — this culture needs to be affirmed and deepened, not just maintained.
- The new pastor should be personally comfortable talking about money, time, and talent as spiritual gifts, and willing to preach stewardship year-round.
- Familiarity with endowment management, planned giving conversations, and mission-based budgeting is a plus.

## 5.3 Ideal Candidate Profile Summary

| Dimension                      | What Prince of Peace Needs                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Preaching &amp; Worship</b> | Compelling, life-connecting preacher; engages both long-tenured and new members; strong liturgical grounding                |
| <b>Spiritual Formation</b>     | Passionate about individual discipleship; builds formation pathways; models personal spiritual disciplines                  |
| <b>Community &amp; Mission</b> | Outward-focused; community presence; inspires invitation culture; builds external partnerships                              |
| <b>Leadership Style</b>        | Equipping and empowering; lay-leader developer; collaborative; non-controlling decision-making; high emotional intelligence |
| <b>Strategic Vision</b>        | Data-informed; experienced with planning processes; can articulate and pursue bold, measurable goals                        |
| <b>Pastoral Presence</b>       | Known and knowing; relational; attentive to those at the margins of engagement                                              |
| <b>Conflict &amp; Culture</b>  | Non-anxious; emotionally healthy; able to build community norms and navigate differences gracefully                         |
| <b>Stewardship</b>             | Frames stewardship as discipleship; comfortable with financial conversations; year-round advocate                           |
| <b>Demographics Focus</b>      | Attentive to male engagement gap and 45–54 cohort; flexible in ministry design                                              |
| <b>Denominational Fit</b>      | ELCA-rooted; open to collaboration with neighboring congregations; ecumenical spirit                                        |

## 5.4 Interview & Discernment Questions Suggested by the Data

The following questions are grounded in the specific findings from both surveys and may help the call committee assess candidate fit:

- How do you help individual members identify and pursue personal spiritual growth? Can you describe a system or approach you have used?
- Describe a time you helped a congregation build a culture of invitation. What worked, and what did you learn?
- How do you engage the community outside the church walls? What does being a 'community pastor' look like in your ministry?
- How do you develop and empower lay leaders? What decisions do you believe belong with lay leaders rather than clergy?
- Describe a situation where you used emotional intelligence to address an issue with a member, staff person, or community member? How did you assess the situation, what did you do, what was the outcome?
- Walk us through how you have approached strategic planning in a congregation. How do you set priorities and measure progress?
- How do you preach and teach about stewardship? How is stewardship connected to discipleship in your ministry philosophy?
- How do you approach conflict within a congregation? Can you share an example of leading through a difficult community dynamic?
- What experience do you have building worship that engages both long-tenured members and first-time visitors?
- How would you approach a demographic gap in engagement — for example, if men in a congregation were significantly less engaged than women?
- What is your theology of the church's relationship to its surrounding community, and how have you acted on it?

— END OF REPORT —

Transition Team | Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Westlake | 2026