

# Anchor Church Palos

Strategic Plan 2023-2026



*"These men who have **turned the world upside down** have come here also...saying that there is another king, Jesus."*

**Acts 17:6-7**



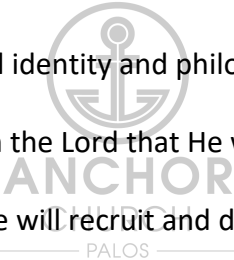
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## A Bold Vision: Let's Go Change the World!

### Background and Scope

In the fall of 2022, the elders of ACP prayed for God to give us a vision for fulfilling the mission of Christ in Chicagoland. Having come out of a global pandemic, installed a new governing team, and experienced much transition, the elders felt it was time for a **bold new vision**. Pastor Ryan invited the church to pray for a clear vision.

The elders also completed a "360-church health assessment." This strategic plan emerged from these efforts.

### OUT THERE...

**We are reaching half a million people with the Gospel  
In 40 cities  
Over the next 1,000 days  
For the glory of Christ!**

Anchor Church Palos plans to give 500,000 people an opportunity to hear the Gospel over the next 1,000 days. We are a regional church reaching about a 7-mile radius. About half a million people live within this area. Our region has over 40 cities. We are boldly going to share the Gospel with them. All of them.

### IN HERE...

**We are building a HOLY, HEALTHY, HUMBLE spiritual community.**

The 3 biggest problems in the church today are worldliness, conflict, and pride. We will become a beacon of light by inviting God to make us **holy, healthy, and humble** as a spiritual community. This is what we find in Acts, and this is what people are longing to plug into.

Every member of Anchor church is essential to completing this mission. God's people must understand He placed them strategically in their city for His purpose. We are sending all our people to GO and TELL others about Jesus Christ. We are inviting all our people to COME and BUILD a holy, healthy, humble spiritual community.

**This BOLD VISION is meant to cause "WOW" in the hearts of all who hear it.  
Everyone should learn to share our vision in a way that creates excitement in the hearts of others.  
The STRATEGIC PLAN that follows is meant to answer the question "HOW will this happen?"**



# 1. Identity Plan

Anchor Palos will align all activities with our Biblical identity.

## Foundation

- Jesus Christ, the risen Lord, is the foundation of all that we do and teach.

## Mission

- To Glorify God by making disciples of Christ in healthy spiritual community.  
(A condensed version of our original mission statement.)

## Vision

- OUT THERE: To reach half a million people with the Gospel over the next 1,000 days for the glory of Christ.
- IN HERE: To build a holy, healthy, humble spiritual community.

## Values

- The 4 Pillars-Everything is built on Prayer, Preaching, Worship, and Evangelism. This is HOW WE BUILD.
- The 4 W's-Everyone is learning to Worship, Walk, Work, and Witness for Christ. This is WHO WE BECOME.
- The Anchor Doctrinal Statement-this is WHAT WE BELIEVE AND TEACH.
- Elder Governance-this is HOW WE LEAD.
- Healthy Spiritual Community-this is HOW WE RELATE.

(The Biblical basis for our entire identity is listed on our website and in our membership literature.)



## Key Priorities

- Continue to cast a compelling vision and enlist everyone to understand and embrace it.
- Display our core values in more places and mention them regularly in every ministry.
- Highlight our Identity through more testimony videos and a church promo video.
- Instill confidence in our identity by demonstrating the Biblical foundations in sermons more often.
- Clearly define healthy community and invite people to build it together more frequently.
- Frontload our DNA in assimilation steps and help guests determine if Anchor is the right church for them.



## 2. Prayer Plan

Anchor Palos will build everything on a foundation of fervent prayer.

### The Heart of Prayer

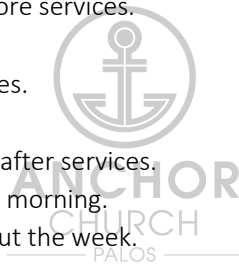
- We must be a Spirit-filled church through prayer, so we will promote our prayer pillar faithfully.
- Like Moses, we don't want to go another step without God's glorious presence (Exodus 33:15).
- We will strive to increase the quantity and the quality of church prayer.

### Annual Routines

- Week of prayer and fasting in the fall.
- Week of prayer and fasting in the winter/spring.
- See You at the Pole in the fall (Students).
- Printed prayer calendar in the fall and winter.

### Monthly/Weekly Routines

- Sunday morning prayer team meeting before services.
- Men's prayer breakfast (1x month).
- Sunday morning leader prayer after services.
- Small group prayer time weekly.
- Elder prayer/anointing with oil by request after services.
- Prayer requests collected on cards Sunday morning.
- Prayer requests collected online throughout the week.



### Staff/Leader Team Prayer Routines

- Post urgent prayer requests in a Telegram group (Urgent Shepherding Care).
- Pray at leader team meetings for priorities.
- Pray at weekly staff meetings for people and priorities.

### Special Prayer Routines

- Develop a prayer plan for big initiatives like a building program or campus expansion.
- Elders can issue a special call to prayer for major events or world problems.

### Key Priorities

- Routinely offer a week of prayer and fasting in fall and winter.
- Build prayer opportunities into the 1,000 Day plan. (Prayer walks, meetings, tools, etc.)
- Implement the FITT model of prayer development in our literature (Step 2, SG questions, Leader Training).
  - *Frequency, Intensity, Time, Together*
- Write a devotion book about the Prayer Gears for our congregation.
  - *Bold, Consistent, Humble, Loving, Persistent (offered as a small group study)*

### 3. Staff and Leader Development Plan

Anchor Palos will prioritize the development of holy, healthy, humble leaders and staff.

#### Elder and Deacon Development Plan

- Pursue ongoing training.
  - *Formal training through Send Network.*
  - *Informal training by reading and discussing books (2 books a year.)*
- Conduct annual reviews with a growth & care plan.
- Explore installing Deaconesses.

#### Leader Assimilation Plan

- Offer Welcome to Leadership twice a year.
- Collect signed Leader Covenants from all leaders and keep on file.
- Offer Transforming Leadership Level 2 once or twice a year.
- Offer Transforming Leadership Level 3 once a year.
- Offer Leader Acceleration Groups ([Leader Bootcamps](#)) (revised and relaunched) once a year.
- [We launched “True Face,” an in-depth leadership cohort.](#)

#### Leader Care Plan

- Establish clear leader coaching oversight.
- Offer compassionate soul care support to all leaders.
- Collect leader health surveys once a year.
- Send all leaders through Freedom Groups.



#### Key Priorities

- Emphasize a culture of godly male leadership throughout the church.
  - Systematically recruit and assess future elders and deacons.
  - Train men for leadership at W2L, TL Level 2, Leader Acceleration Groups.
  - Raise awareness of how and why men are in crisis today and why the church needs godly men.
- Build trust in our governance model and church officers.
  - Testimony videos, public appreciation, involvement in Sunday services and men’s events.
- Rebuild the Women’s Ministry Leader Team with holy, healthy, humble leaders.
- Hire godly, competent staff that align with our DNA. (Rukes Group consulting) [Hired Ryan Jackson](#)
- Help unhealthy leaders to get care, correction, and coaching.
- Promote healthy staff by building healthy rhythms of work, rest, and recovery. Avoid staff burnout.
- Relaunch Leader Acceleration Groups in 2023. ([Offered in 2023 and 2024, called “Leader Boot Camp”](#))



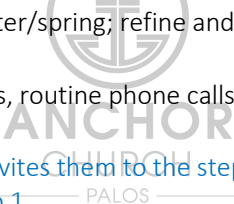
## 4. Ministry and Assimilation Plan

Anchor Palos will be intentional in deciding what ministries we do (and do not) offer.

### Ministries Offered (Walk with Christ)

- Children: Sunday morning, AWANA, VBS, [launched Little Lights](#)
- Youth: Sunday night
- [Young Adults: launched Adultish](#)
- Adults: Group life, discipleship classes
  - Small groups
  - Men's and Women's Bible Studies
  - ABI-Anchor Bible Institute
  - FPU-Financial Peace University ([relaunched](#))
  - Freedom Groups (targeted soul care discipleship)
  - Foundations-Fundamentals of the Christian faith and life ([will relaunch '24 as "Discipleship 101"](#))
  - Premarital Counseling and Marital counseling ([now integrating with "Prepare Enrich," and offered a marriage conference in 2024](#))
  - [Read through the Bible initiative in January](#)
  - [Launched Grief Share ministry](#)

### Assimilation Process

- 
- Schedule Steps 1, 2, & 3 in the fall and winter/spring; refine and improve all steps.
  - Paperwork
    - Refine and improve all emails, letters, routine phone calls.
  - People work
    - [Pastor Ryan texts new people and invites them to the steps.](#)
    - [Staff invite people in the gym to step 1.](#)
    - Maintain an effective C3 team (calls, cards, care).
    - Help new people to feel welcome and strive to be a very friendly church.

### Work for Christ

- Create an updated list of ministry teams, servants, and workers needed (Planning Center).
- Create a clear leader structure and a standard new leader training process.
- Expect consistent scheduling, oversight, and servant training from all leaders.
- Examine and update current policies and procedures for each team.

### Key Priorities

- Hire a new worship pastor and rebuild the worship and tech teams. ([Hired Ryan Jackson in spring of '24](#))
- Strengthen and develop the women's ministry by forming a new leader team. ([Aiming to launch fall '24](#))
- Sustain our momentum with ABI (Anchor Bible Institute), and offer more discipleship opportunities to go deeper into God's Word. ([Launched a third men's am Bible Study in '24](#))
- Prioritize more opportunities for family ministry, and improve ministry to young adults. ([Launched Adultish](#))
- Strengthen and develop Sunday morning service teams.
- Collect goals from all ministry leaders.



## 5. Healthy Community Plan

Anchor Palos will build and maintain a healthy biblical community in all ministries.

### Coaching

- Provide more Heart Theology training (Soul Care principles used in our classes).
  - Leadership classes (Transforming 201, 301, Acceleration Group, etc.).
  - Offer a Healthy Community sermon series (after our study in Acts). ([Spring 2024](#))
  - Build Heart Theology into sermon application points more often.
  - Begin integrating Heart Theology principles into student ministry and children's ministry.
- Tools
  - Teach the Circle of Flourishing (publish as a devotional, use as small group curriculum).
  - Promote the SOS tool (Severity, Ownership, Support).
  - Promote the Root to Fruit diagram more often.

### Care

- Continue to place people in small groups and offer ongoing fellowship opportunities.
- Provide ongoing training and support for small group leaders.
- Offer Freedom Groups each year.
- Promote counseling appointments at church ([now integrating with "Prepare Enrich," and offered a marriage conference in 2024](#))
- Make a list of local counselor recommendations.
- Make a list of intervention organization recommendations.

### Correction

- Use the SOS tool (Severity, Ownership, Support).
- Follow Anchor written policies and Biblical guidelines.
- Maintain a heart for restoration.

### Conflict Resolution

- Promote and adhere to Biblical Principles.
- Promote and adhere to Anchor written policies.
- Always resolve conflict in a mature, godly manner.

### Key Priorities

- Continue to offer Freedom Groups. Explore offering Freedom Groups in a small group format. ([2023-2024](#))
- Teach a sermon series on Heart Theology. ([2024](#))
- Define and sustain a care plan for leaders and staff.
- Offer Transforming Leadership Levels 3-6.
- Continue to restore order and confidence in our patterns of correction and conflict resolution.
- Create a culture of ongoing appreciation for Pastors and elders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).





## 6. Local/Regional/Global Outreach Plan

Anchor Palos will strive to fulfill the Great Commission.

### Local

- Launch an online hub for outreach and evangelism. ([Launched FindGodAgain.com in 2023](#))
- Create a culture of invitation and equip all members to reach their neighborhoods.
- Build a team of regional leaders to coordinate local outreach.
- Train our people in evangelism and apologetics through a targeted small group curriculum. ([Summer 2024](#))
- Bring ministry outside the church through backyard Bible clubs, service projects, and community events.
- Establish a local presence in parades and street fairs.

### Regional

- Support and promote Decision Point regional outreach events.
- Collaborate with regional church partners (Gospelife, Chicago West, Mosaic Joliet, High Point Naperville).
- Collaborate with “Explore God” online outreach ministry.
- Partner in regional service opportunities.
- Explore regional campus and church plant opportunities.
  - *Explore SEND Chicago Network for regional church planting. ([Joined Send Network in fall of 2023](#))*



### Global

- Leverage our partnership with GCC to plant churches globally. ([Exited GCC in fall of 2023](#))
- Develop our partnership with Vertical Church Kyiv and care for Alex’s family.
- Initiate our involvement with Harvest Glasgow-Mark and Sarah. ([Completed partnership in 2024](#))
- Clarify priorities with Philip in Uganda. ([Completed partnership in 2023](#))
- Explore a partnership with Paul and Molly in India. ([Not a viable connection](#))
- Clarify our involvement with individual missionaries like the Dawsons in Venezuela.
- [Launch mission trips to Kenya and the Dominican Republic in 2024-2025.](#)

### Key Priorities

- Launch an online hub for outreach and evangelism. (FindGodagain.com, FindChurchagain.com) ([completed](#))
- Develop a culture of invitation-invite thousands of people to church every year.
- Build a team of regional leaders to coordinate local outreach.
- Develop a local/regional outreach strategy for expansion by exploring multi-site ministry.
- Explore relaunching our relationship with the SEND Chicago network. ([Completed](#))
- Launch a church planting residency in Anchor Palos. ([Aiming for fall 2024](#))
- Launch an “Anchor Cares” center for local, regional, and global relief efforts.
- Recreate our Apologetics small group curriculum (Everyday Questions/I Don’t Know Where to Start).

## 7. Business and Operations Plan

Anchor Palos will steward all resources with integrity and gratitude.

### Stewardship and Discipleship

- Preach on Stewardship in January, August, and October/November.
- Hand out giving worksheets in January and September/October.
- Promote FPU (Financial Peace University).
- Promote special offerings (Global Fund in April and Building Fund in November).

### Budget

- Annual Budget
  - Aim for a margin of \$50,000 in the 2023 budget. *(cash positive in 2023)*
  - Be cash positive in 2024.
- Global Fund Budget
  - Raise funds for Alex, Decision Point, and other current partners.
  - Goal: \$25,000-\$30,000 in the spring (April/May). *(surpassed goal in 2023)*
- Facility Fund Budget
  - Present clear needs.
  - Raise \$25,000 in November. *(surpassed goal in 2023)*
- Benevolence Fund Budget
  - Maybe take up a late summer offering, or next spring.

### Facility

- Have deacons develop a maintenance and repair plan.
- Develop a building enhancement plan.

### Policies and Reports

- Adhere to the Financial Manual.
- Produce an accurate Annual Financial Report.
- Produce accurate Quarterly Financial Reports.

### Key Priorities

- Hold to our budget margins in 2023. *(reduced spending in all categories in 2023, adjust quarterly in 2024)*
- Hold the line on nonessential expenses in Q1. *(very strong Q1 in 2024)*
- Reassess giving projections quarterly using new metrics.
- Present clear and compelling stewardship goals.
- Provide ongoing giving devotions on Sundays, and tether offerings to the mission, ministry, and vision.
- *We renewed both loans and saved 2% through BFI.*
- *We are praying to pay off the mortgage by God's grace before the 1,000-day vision ends.*



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## Top 10 Priorities

(This list will be updated)

1. Be a **praying congregation**, full of the Holy Spirit, focused on the glory of Christ.
2. Continue to cast a **clear and compelling vision** to fulfill the mission of the Great Commission.
3. Generate **clarity, enthusiasm, and alignment** with our core DNA across all ministries.
4. Develop **holy, healthy, humble leaders** to shepherd God's flock. Especially keep the elder and deacon team full of godly men.
5. **Mobilize God's people** like never before to reach and impact their communities.
6. **Prioritize healthy community** and care well for the flock of God.
7. **Strengthen and expand** opportunities for deeper discipleship. Especially **sustain the momentum** with Anchor Bible Institute.
8. **Strengthen and prioritize** ministry to families, children, students, and young adults.
9. Develop a plan for **local expansion and regional church planting** at Anchor.
10. Revive our **global missions** trips to new targets in Africa and Central America.

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." --John 15:5*

(This Strategic Plan will be updated and revised regularly according to church needs and developments. We will reset all priorities each year and gather feedback from the congregation periodically.)

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# Timeline

## Prelaunch

- Vision Sunday: publicly share the vision and strategic plan on Sunday February 5th.
- Go through an 8-week **small group curriculum** that unpacks the plan.
- Develop the new website for local outreach and produce resources.
- Form a team of regional leaders to organize local outreach efforts.

## Launch

- Start the 1,000-day countdown clock **Easter weekend**.
- Invite the congregation to publicly own the vision.
- Activate initial community outreach plans.

## Execution

- Roll out community outreach opportunities.
- Highlight progress in each region.
- Innovate new ideas through congregational feedback.
- Build and expand each region to its fullest outreach potential.

## Completion

- Celebrate countdown completion of 1,000 days on New Year's Eve 2025 at a countdown party.
- Systematically collect and analyze all necessary information.
- Develop a full report for the congregation.
- Begin planning the next BOLD VISION for Anchor Church!
- **Launch the next 1,000-day vision on Easter weekend 2026.**