



TAG Vision + Progress 2017-2019

Without a vision, the people perish (Proverbs 29:18 KJV).

In August 2016, after a successful multi-year effort to separate from the PC(USA), it was clear our church needed to develop a new vision and strategy for the future.

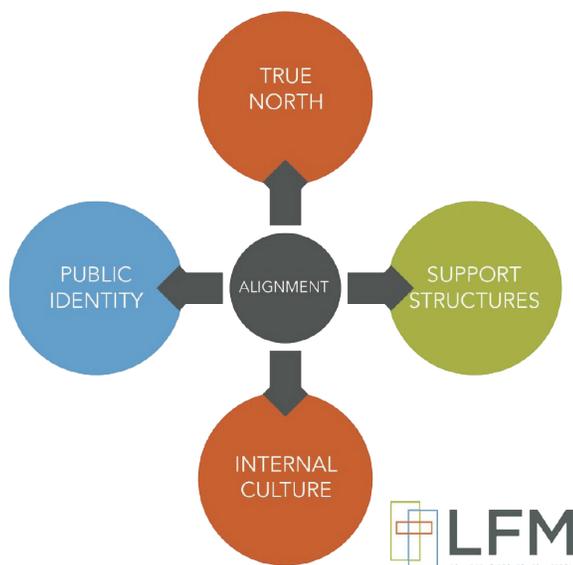
To that end, we invited TAG Consulting to facilitate a process of strategic focus and renewal. Through numerous visits and a series of 6 retreats over 30 months, our church leaders have been working toward clarity to refresh our sense of purpose and direction. We want you to know, we have made big steps forward.

Our Lead Pastor, Erik Hanson, has reported on this process in several venues including our annual meetings in 2017, 2018 and 2019. However, this is our most comprehensive report to date. **Our elders are pleased to share our church's progress and begin setting the horizon for our future.**

What follows is a snapshot of our process, our vision, our progress, and some **big next steps for 2019-2020** as we grow in our boldness to engage our community. We are eager to surprise Boulder with the gospel. Read on.

The TAG Process

To understand church health, TAG introduced a four-point compass. Flourishing churches take intentional steps to sharpen each point. Ideally, the points reinforce one another over time, achieving alignment.



True North – is the core ideology and the unchanging values of a church. Said another way, it is the DNA of a church put into motion in light of our current environment, challenges and opportunities.

Support Structures – are the (usually) under appreciated and often hidden church infrastructure put into place that supports our True North.

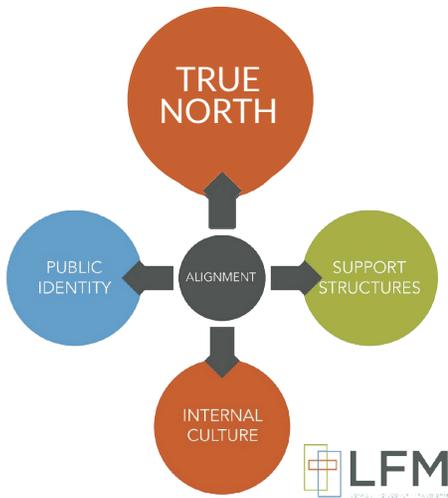
Internal Culture – is the set of practices and actions that express our True North and allow it to be experienced and embraced by the community.

Public Identity – is the name, brand and symbols by which the church's story becomes easily recognizable to its own members and to the broader community.

**Note: TAG Consulting has recently become LFM.*

True North—

is the core ideology and the unchanging values of a church with a strategy to connect with our era.



While core values rarely—if ever—change, strategy must adapt in order for an organization to remain relevant in a fast-changing world. A successful strategy applies our True North to the present challenges and opportunities in our context.

Said differently, our message is eternal, but our method adapts.

Our Story:

Ever since gold was discovered nearby in 1859, Boulder has been a pioneering town of miners, entrepreneurs and dreamers. Boulder was founded as a supply village with this notion—even fiercely independent pioneers need a place to gather, rest, supply and connect.

After 160 years, our village is now a county full of pioneers still searching and digging for opportunity. We are creators, business leaders, students, researchers and more. Over time, our global influence has far surpassed our front range location.

We have been here as a church since 1872 to worship God and be part of the fabric of our community's life. We gather, rest, supply, connect and worship in Boulder. As we do this, we reaffirm the deep legacy of our church's core values.

Jesus Christ

He transforms lives as He is encountered in scripture and community.

Boulder

We pursue God's heart for a flourishing city and beyond.

Youth

We follow Jesus' example in inviting and discipling younger generations.

Prayer

God meets and shapes us as we submit to His Spirit.

Multi-Generational Community

We worship and serve together, side by side.

Leadership

We invest in emerging disciples for the next generation of gospel leaders here and around the world.

Our Strategic Focus

After 2+ years of prayerful vision, listening to our church, and guided discernment, our elders believe we can meet our 21st century challenges. We clearly see that we have both a mandate and opportunity to

Surprise Boulder with the gospel by being a place for spiritual discovery and relational connection.

We are eager to manifest the love of Jesus in ways that cut across the expectations many have of a Christ-centered church.

Before + After—

Where we are now...

Along with a series of interviews, our work with TAG started Fall of 2016 with a proprietary congregational survey called the TCI.

Over 600 of us participated by taking the TCI with its almost 170 questions. We had nearly the highest level of participation TAG had ever seen from a church our size. Well done.

Though the foundations of a healthy church were clearly present, TAG's findings also revealed several layers of challenges. Among them were:

- A lack of understanding of the church's vision.
- A struggle to feel relationally connected.
- A growing insulation from our broader community as a congregation.
- A fully developed but aging facility.

We were below the national average in nearly every category and scored in the 43rd percentile over all. We had work to do.

With TAG's facilitation and the focused work of our leaders on our Strategic Focus, we have spent the last 2 years seeking to strengthen every point of the compass. 

Now, 30 months have passed since the TCI survey and 24 months since we started to refocus on our True North. **How are we doing?**

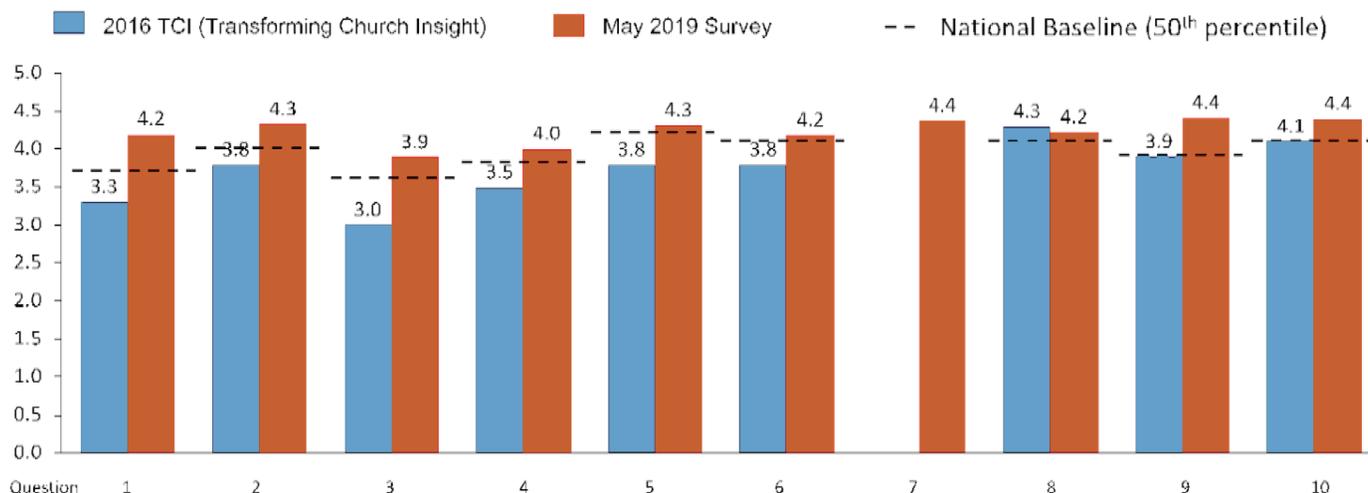
Recently, 235 of us responded to a "short form" survey using just 10 key questions from the TCI.

Our elders are so encouraged by the results. We are now above the 50th percentile in every category we re-examined!

The 9 questions we returned to from the Transforming Church Indicator (TCI) were meant to get a broad sense of our programs and ministries.

Those 9 in addition to 1 we added seeking confirmation of our investment in University ministry are below:

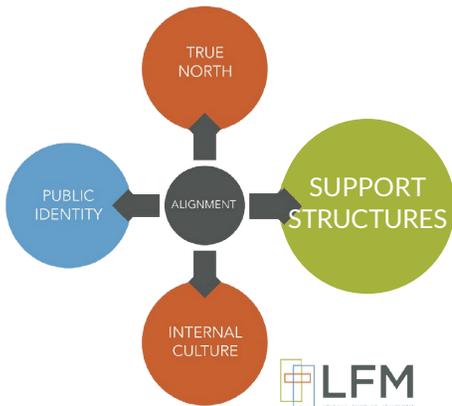
1. I have a clear understanding of my role in fulfilling the church's mission.
2. The church has helped me be more effective in my everyday life.
3. This church's goals and direction are clear to me.
4. I am excited about where our church is headed in the next few years.
5. Our minister's sermons are helpful to me in everyday life.
6. I am growing deeper in my relationship with God through our worship services.
7. It is important to me that our church spends significant resources to minister to and disciple university students.
8. The church effectively meets the needs of its children.
9. My knowledge of the Bible is growing as a result of attending this church.
10. Our church strives to make a difference in people's lives outside our church.



We are beyond grateful for the way God has led us in this season of improved health and stability. Read on to see a summary of what we have been doing, and what's coming next.

Support Structures—

the under appreciated and hidden infrastructure



With some big exceptions, support structures are generally not noticeable to congregants and should not draw attention to themselves.

But, they are still vital to the health of our church. Done well, support structures empower operations and leadership to focus rather than be distracted from our vision to **Surprise Boulder with the gospel.**

We have been making strides in a number of ways.



Staff

A key priority for our church has been finding the right leader for a new department of Missions, Outreach and Engagement. We waited nearly 2 years after our last Missions Pastor departed to get the strategy, department and job description aligned. ***We are ecstatic that Daniel Susenbach is our new Assistant Pastor of Missions, Outreach and Engagement.*** He is called to lead our church in engaging the city and the world with Gospel hope.



Place

Our trustees have worked hard to modestly improve our spaces in advance of a larger facility project to come. Those improvements include Sheldon Jackson, centralizing our library, turning Geneva into a youth ministry hub and refreshing the front office.



Financial Structures

- We shifted our fiscal year to end June 30 to match our program year.
- We redesigned our budget and budgeting process to better pursue budget priorities.
- New financial software improves our practices of budgeting, financial tracking and also reporting.
- We are renewing our approach to endowments, long-term investments and institutional Foundation. (More news to come soon.)



Database

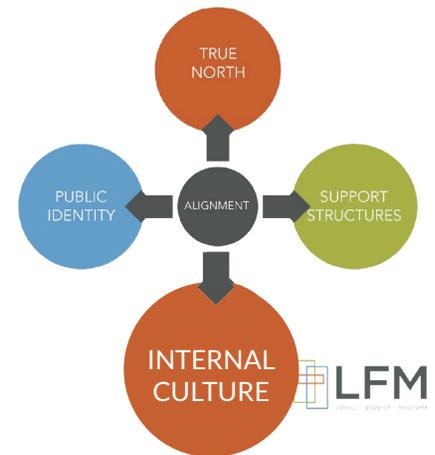
We have adopted a new and robust relational database. It equips us for much improved congregational care and communication.

Internal Culture—

Reshaping our practices and experienced life together.

This is the “above ground” set of practices and experiences in the community that help to create and reinforce our internal church culture. They ready us and set us free to be focused on mission together.

Below we highlight some of the initiatives since 2016 that are new expressions of ministry and directly connected to our strategy. We are intent on continuing our ministries that have already been ‘seeking the welfare of the city’ (Jeremiah 29:7). Deacons’ Closet and Lamb’s Lunch are two prominent examples.



Annual Themes

They help us to relationally connect, grow spiritually and focus our communication efforts as a church.

The first, **Eat Together**, helped us develop *external focus* and grow a heart for hospitality as a church and as personal followers of Jesus.

The second, **Shaped by Scripture**, launched 40 small groups and invites us to grow *internally strong* through God’s Word.

Next year’s theme, **Love Local**, returns back to a practice that is *externally focused*. Stay tuned for more news on this front.



Stephen Ministry

79 people have received 40 hours of training preparing us to connect more intentionally and care for those who are hurting.



Boulder Faith + Work Initiative

We are glad to be invested in this initiative, seeking to explore the gospel’s power to transform work and help people to see that work is part of God’s plan for us to be part of redemption now.



Hosting Our City

We proudly open our doors to Boulder International Film Festival and to the Boulder Symphony. Our space is being used as a place for our community to connect!



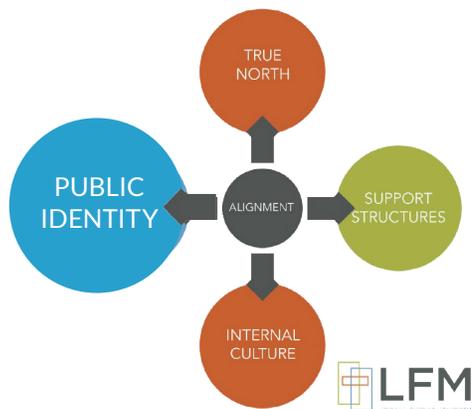
Prayer

Without intentionally seeking God’s face and blessing, we are simply busy bodies. Our prayer practices are on the grow. The Ash Wednesday service was re-designed to invite the whole community to drop-in for a prayer experience. Wednesday Night Worship and Prayer services are open to all seeking healing.



Public Identity

Aligning the church's name, brand, and symbols toward True North.



Over two years our primary focus has been on only 3 of the 4 TAG Compass points: True North, Support Structures and Internal Culture. Our progress as a church is encouraging, but also incomplete. There is more on the horizon, including the one point not yet explored above: **Public Identity.**

Some readers will know that the question of our name and public identity has been an active one since we settled our departure from the PC(USA) in 2016. However, our elders were reluctant to address this issue then. **Shifts to our Public Identity should be among the final puzzle pieces of church renewal, not the first.**

We are clear. We want to love and serve our city above our own self-interest. We desire to be radically generous with our building. We long to demonstrate the love of Christ to a community with low expectations for us. We believe we have a story to tell, a gospel to live, an identity to celebrate.

With that at the forefront of our minds, our most recent and final TAG retreat focused on this important issue:

Does our Public Identity align and support our vision to the greatest number of people possible with as little confusion as possible? Are we doing everything we should for the sake of the gospel and the future of our church?

After a clarifying discussion of our desired future, and after re-examining a series of statements our Session first developed in June 2016, our elders approved this motion:

Motion Concerning our Public Identity

Following the work of our final TAG retreat, and for the sake of our ongoing vision and mission to our community, we approve the development of a new name and brand for our church as an important tool for our external communication and internal sense of identity.

Session has decided. Now is the time to re-build our public identity for the sake of our mission going forward. Session identified some early criteria. A new name must (1) deeply root us in our city, (2) connect to our legacy, and (3) set a horizon of gospel hope for our future. **Our Elders are inviting submissions for possible names through September 8, 2019.**

In Session's discussion, a possible church name rose to the top as an initial submission. You will find it on the back page as a sample submission.

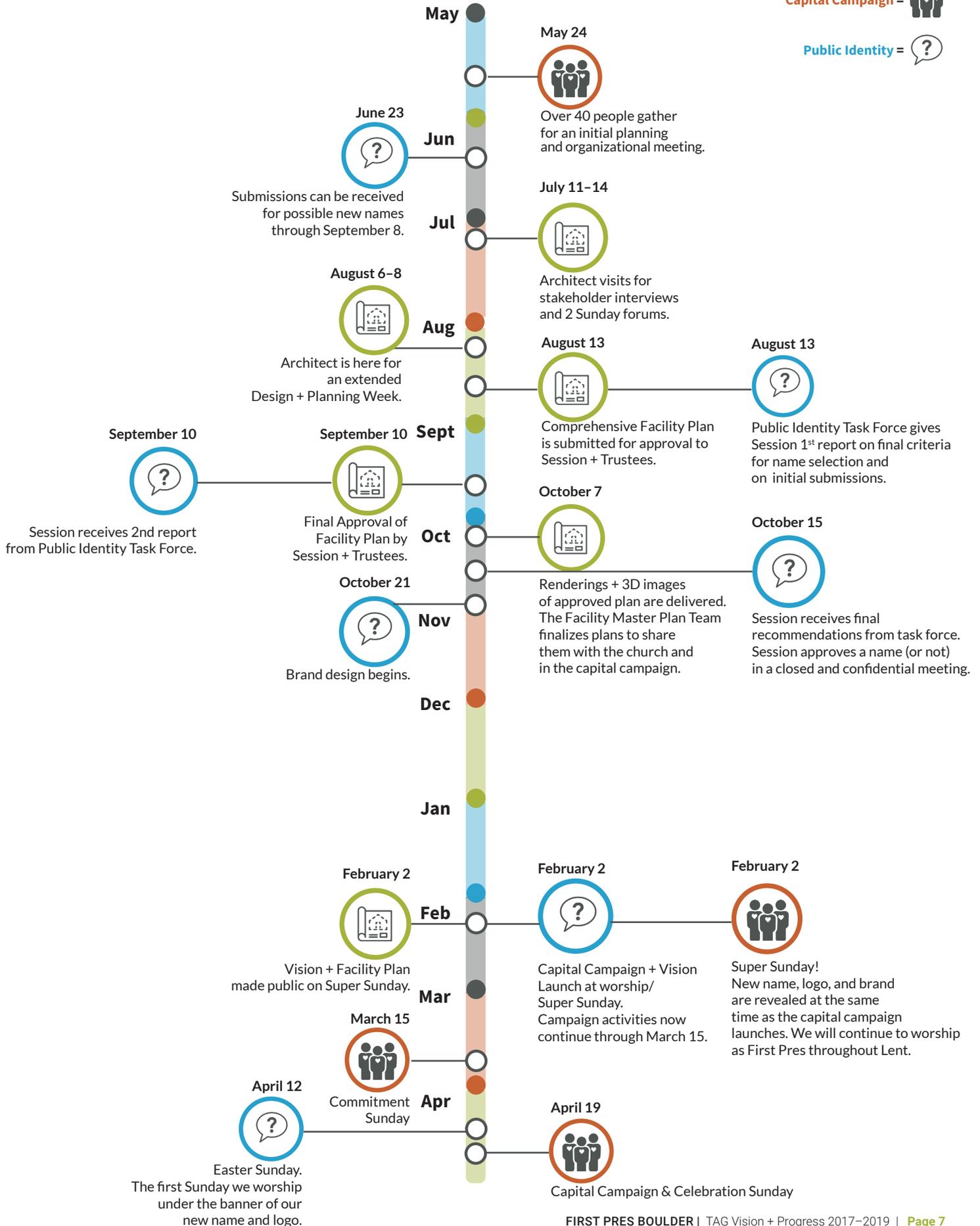
A task force led by Rev. Dr. Carl Hofmann will filter through the various submissions and guide our elders through a selection process beginning with the criteria listed above. More about the process will unfold in future communication, but our elders are excited about this decision and the direction of our church.

Next Steps 2019–2020

Facility Plan = 

Capital Campaign = 

Public Identity = 





Pastor's Coffee

Sun, Jun 30 in Westminster Hall at 10:30am and noon.
All are welcome. No RSVP necessary

Coming Soon!

love local

Join us this fall for Love Local, a BOCO Discipleship Emphasis with engagement opportunities, service projects, Small Groups & sermon series

Help us capture the name for our church



Go to fpcboulder.org/name



Use the provided form.



Include any scripture or other relevant explanation

A new name should strive to:

deeply root us in our city,
connect to our legacy,
set the horizon of gospel hope for our future.

Session has an initial name that it is offering up as the first submission:

Name: Water Street Church

Scripture Reference: Psalm 46:2; Revelation 22:1-2; John 4; John 7

Description: The image of refreshing water, even running through a street, describes God's desire to flow, bless and refresh a community. Water Street is also the original street name of Canyon Boulevard. It declares our lasting connection to our location.

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