

# 2024 ANNUAL PLANNING & CHURCH LEADERSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

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This year 2023 is a crucial year for us, as a church. We have been pursuing our thrust of becoming an Intentional Disciplemaking Church (IDMC) for the past 13 years. We are slowly seeing the fruits of our labor of Multiplying Disciples. God has blessed us immeasurably especially during the pandemic and in our transition to the post-pandemic era.

Since late last year, God has been prodding our church leadership to continue to labor and toil as we strive to remain faithful to the Great Commission. God has also moved us to contemplate what we need to do to bring our ministry to the next level for the building up of His church and the glory of His Name. By the grace of God, He used the first six months of this year to crystallize what we need to do to achieve this.

God has been using the mentoring book, *The Trellis and the Vine*, for church leaders to give us clarity on where we are and what we need to do in the coming year. I had intended to use the book last year but God had a different plan. God's timing is always perfect. As we look forward to the next thirteen years, God gave our leadership team the following lessons from this book:

First, God revealed to us the danger of complacency. If we

keep on doing what we have been doing the past thirteen years, we will get the same results and it will not bring our ministry to the next level. God allowed us to go through a brief season of pruning in the second quarter of this year as we faced different challenges and divine corrections as we do our ministry.

Second, God recalibrated our focus from programs to people. Instead of thinking first about which programs will be effective and then plug people into such programs, we now shifted our focus on people, then we build programs around them. We now have two clear objectives as we are mindful of the people God brings in our midst. First, everything we do should lead them towards spiritual maturity. And second, we need to guide them on how to multiply disciples.

And third, God reoriented our minds on how we should look at people. God directed us back to the New Testament church where Paul considered every believer as a fellow minister or partner in the gospel. Yes, there are church leaders who lead their churches, but their main function, particularly the pastors, is to equip the people to do the work of the ministry. It means everyone who considers GCFSM as their church family is a fellow minister.

Anchored on this guidance from God, the church leadership has been going through our 2024 Annual Ministry Planning and Budgeting process. Since we now focus on people, we gave the Growth Group Mentors the opportunity to lead this year's planning process. They are the ones directly connected with people and are in the best position to discern what programs to build around them so they can grow toward spiritual maturity and multiply disciples.

We will endorse the 2024 Annual Ministry Plans and Budget for congregational approval during our Annual Business Meeting on December 9th, 2023, after the second service. During this meeting, we will also hold the Election and Affirmation of 2024 Board of Elders (BOE) and Board of Deacons (BOD). The nomination period for next year's elders and deacons will be from October 01 to 29. I have written today a letter addressed to our church family containing the details on our 2024 BOE and BOD Nomination and Election Guidelines.

As we go through these processes, I enjoin everyone to pray with us as we seek God's favor for our beloved church family. May we direct more people to Christ for the building up of His church! To God be all the glory! ✨