




THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHALLENGE

MOVING TOWARD A HEALTHY, GROWING SUNDAY SCHOOL

REACH

TEACH

INVOLVE



“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28: 19-20



PHILADELPHIA BAPTIST CHURCH

LOVING GOD - LOVING OTHERS - SHOWING OTHERS GOD'S LOVE



2019

PBC Sunday School Challenge Fall 2019
Leaders Meeting Sunday August 18th @ PBC HD
4:00 PM for Teachers and SS Champions

Sunday School Teachers

will share the vision with classes between
Sunday, August 25th — September 8th.

Bro. Phillip & Bro. Clay **will share the SSC in**
service Sunday, September 1st.

Each Sunday School Class **will be responsible to**
turn in their 3 goals on Sunday, Sept, 8th after SS.

Challenge will run from Sunday, September 1st —
Sunday, November 17th.

Sunday, November 24th will be *Celebration*
***Sunday* at both PBC Deville and PBC-HD**

The Sunday School Challenge Guide

For Pastors and Sunday School Champions

Welcome to the Sunday School Challenge. In this guide, we will provide a clear, step-by-step approach to a successful campaign. **The goal is to provide the Pastor and Sunday School Champions a tool to equip teachers and other leaders to develop a healthy, growing Sunday School class or Small Group.** ¹⁹ *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* **Matthew 28:19-20 (HCSB)**

Pastors should delegate the responsibility for the ministry of Sunday School to others. However, the Pastor needs to be the visible and public supporter of the work of Sunday School and those who lead it. He also needs to be the driving force to lead the church, the Sunday School leadership and members to accomplish what God desires them to accomplish. ¹⁸ *“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”* **Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)**

Our Objectives are to:

- 1. Reach & Enroll New People** – *Will we reach new people?* The focus is on those people who have not yet joined a class. Every class should do their best to discover, invite, enroll and follow up with people that they know. They must also be intentional about reaching out to new people they have not yet met in order to connect them with their class or group. ⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.* **Acts 1:8 (CSB Bible)**
- 2. Teach Toward Life-Change** – *Will I and those I lead be a better student of God’s Word?* The focus is on God’s Word and growing in Christ-likeness. Every class should prepare for the best Bible study possible every week, but also seek to engage God’s Word every day. Every teacher and leader should seek to Know, Understand, and Apply God’s Word daily. In addition, they should equip, challenge and encourage everyone else in their class/group to do the same. ¹⁵ *Be diligent to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who doesn’t need to be ashamed, correctly teaching the word of truth.* **2 Timothy 2:15 (CSB Bible)** ¹⁶ *All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness.* **2 Timothy 3:16 (CSB Bible)**
- 3. Involve Members in Ongoing Ministry** – *Will I discover, understand, and use my spiritual gifts and equip those I lead to do the same?* The focus is on engaging every member in service and ministry. Every member is gifted by God to serve Him, the class, the church and the community. Every class should help members identify their gifts, equip them to understand and practice their gifts, and provide opportunities to use their gifts. ¹⁰ *Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.* **1 Peter 4:10 (CSB Bible)**

Goal Setting:

The Sunday School Challenge seeks to engage every teacher/leader of every class to set a minimum of 3 goals during The Challenge.

Merriam Webster defines a goal as, “the end toward which effort is directed”. Or, “something that you are trying to do or achieve”. **The purpose of each goal is to clearly describe what you hope to accomplish during the length of The Challenge. Each goal needs to be measureable,** (i.e. how will you know you have accomplished your goal?). **It should also describe what is expected of each person in order to achieve the goal.**

There are varying levels of goals that a class can set based upon the vision of the Pastor, the wisdom of the Sunday School Champion, and the leadership of the class. Each class will set one or more goals to...

- Reach and Enroll New People – Every church and every class loses members over time. Some die. Some move away. Some stop coming. Some choose a different church. Regardless of why a class or group loses a member, there has to be an INTENTIONAL, ONGOING effort to reach new people. Things change. People change. Reaching new people is not always easy, but the future of the class and the group requires new people.
- Teach Toward Life-Change – The number one attribute of a healthy, maturing Christian is regularly reading/studying God's Word. The second attribute is regular attendance and participation in worship and in a small group. These two attributes greatly impact the spiritual life of a believer. What every leader does, matters. At the center of our work is God's Word. When we interact with God's Word and God's people, we are more open to God's Work through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.
- Involve Members in Ongoing Ministry – The more involved and invested a member is in the class or group, the greater likelihood that they will stay longer and enjoy life more. Stats don't lie. Every member of God's church is equipped with a gift to be used by God for the purpose of the church and its work in the community. Not every person is a leader, but every person should be a servant. We are all called to serve; that means everyone.

Below are some sample goals that should give leaders an idea of how to write a goal.

REACH — TEACH — INVOLVE

REACH — Reach and Enroll New People

In the next 8 weeks, our class/group will...

Level One—Sample Goals

- Develop a list of 10 lost people and pray for them weekly
- Invite 5 guests each week to join us for Bible study/fellowship
- Have 10 first time guests to our Bible study/fellowship time weekly
- Recruit 2 people to connect first-time guests to our class/group

Level Two—Sample Goals

- Enroll 5 new members
- Add 10 prospects (with accurate contact information) to our prospect list
- Pray weekly for 10 prospects
- Make 10 prospect contacts (phone, visit, email, text, mail) each week

Level Three—Sample Goals

- Enlist and train 2 outreach leaders to make contacts weekly with prospects
- Plan 2 ministry projects to help connect with prospects
- Develop a plan and start a new class/group by (date)

TEACH — Teach Towards Life-Change

In the next 8 weeks, our class/group will...

Level One—Sample Goals

- Have an average weekly attendance of 15
- Commit to daily Bible reading with 15 members participating
- Challenge the class to engage 15 members in daily Bible reading
- Enlist and begin a prayer chain with 15 members participating
- Pray weekly for each other with 15 members participating

Level Two—Sample Goals

- Read through the Bible in a year with 15 members participating
- Plan and conduct an annual prayer/planning retreat for our class/group
- Attend/participate in 3 training opportunities for leadership development

Level Three—Sample Goals

- Do 2 online studies that will help us teach/lead/learn better
- Read 2 Sunday School/Small Group training books
- Start 2 D-Groups (discipleship) or 3-4 groups (3 or 4 people) from my class

INVOLVE — Involve Members in Ongoing Ministry

In the next 8 weeks, our class/group will...

Level One—Sample Goals

- Pray for 15 members every week (How can I pray for you?)
- Contact 15 members every week (R U Ok)
- Minister to 2 families in need

Level Two—Sample Goals

- Conduct a spiritual gift survey for all members on (date)
- Enlist 5 people to serve in various roles in our class/group
- Meet with the leadership of our class/group for prayer and planning monthly (weekly, monthly, etc.)
- Enlist and train 1 apprentice teacher/leader for our class

Level Three

- Plan and conduct 2 events to assist other ministries in the church
- Develop 2 ministry projects to impact families in our community
- Develop a plan to start a new class/group by (date)

Develop Plans:

After setting goals, each class will develop a plan to accomplish the goals they have established with the help of their Sunday School Champion. Merriam Webster describes a plan as, “a method for achieving an end” or “a set of actions that have been thought of as a way to do or achieve something”. A plan is what each class will do in order to achieve each goal.

Specific tasks include calendaring dates and assigning responsibilities in the class. A plan must be specific. The class needs to know who is doing what and when it will happen. Half the work of achieving the desired results is getting started. The other half is the execution of those plans. Poor planning achieves poor results. No planning achieves no results.

A Guide for How to Plan

What specifically do you plan to do to achieve your goal?

When will you carry out this plan?

Who is responsible for each aspect/part of the plan?

Has a date been calendared?

Have responsibilities been delegated/assigned?

Recognition/Rewards:

At the conclusion of The Challenge, the Pastor, in conjunction with the Sunday School Champion(s) will recognize and/or give rewards to the classes who have achieved their goals. Affirmation needs to be a consistent part of the work and ministry of the Pastor, staff and leadership. Whatever choice you make about public and private affirmation/recognition/rewards needs to be natural to you.

If you are not already an encourager, think through this process carefully. Every leader needs to establish a habit of affirming others. When we handle affirmation/recognition/rewards poorly, it can affect, and sometimes, even hurt others. Some examples of how to affirm/recognize/reward people will be in one of the steps below.

Suggested Schedule for the Challenge/Campaign:

- Preparation Steps – 4 Weeks
- Challenge/Campaign Steps – 8—12 Weeks
- Celebration/Evaluation Steps – 2 Weeks—Turn in Goal Reports then Celebrate the results

Preparation Steps - (2 to 4 Weeks)

Step 1 - Pray

As the Pastor, your first task is to lead the church to pray. You don't need a new program, a new book or a new consultant. What you and the leadership of your church need most is a Word from God. Your church needs a call from God to accomplish something God sized. ⁶ *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.* ⁷ *So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.* ⁸ *Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.* **1 Corinthians 3:6-8 (CSB Bible)**

Call your people to pray for God's mighty hand in accomplishing His impossible task. A healthy, growing Sunday School is a product of God's work, not ours. Have people pray at the altar. Assemble your leadership for a time of prayer. Ask Sunday School classes or Small Groups to pray every week for a mighty outpouring of God's Spirit. Take your time with this. Make sure it is done carefully and thoughtfully. The success of The Challenge depends on our reliance on God and His work.

Step 2 - Enlist

Pastor, your role is crucial to the success of the Sunday School Challenge. Here are a few of the responsibilities you will need to accept:

Recruit a Sunday School Champion (or Champions).

You will need one Sunday School Champion for each 4 or 5 classes or small groups including Children, Youth and Adult classes. They need to be the best you can find. See the job description below. Don't recruit from the pulpit. Personally ask them to pray and accept the role you are asking them to take.

- Work to prepare the church, Sunday School Champion(s), Teachers and other class leaders for The Challenge.
- Create buy-in from leaders and members.
- Cast the vision for the purpose and reason for the campaign (The Challenge) from the pulpit, in meetings and in one-on-one interactions.
- Encourage leaders and members from the pulpit, in meetings and in one-on-one interactions. The Pastor should personally visit as many classes as possible each Sunday (or whenever they meet), to encourage them prior to and during The Challenge.
- Celebrate publicly what God has done during The Challenge and affirm and/or reward the achievements of each class.

When you enlist your **Sunday School Champions**, these will be their **key responsibilities**:

- ***Meet with Pastor to agree upon the objectives and the strategy to achieve them.***
- ***Assist each class to set specific goals and develop realistic plans to achieve those goals.***
- ***Monitor progress of each class. Report to the Pastor weekly the progress of each class involved.***
- ***Encourage faithfulness to The Challenge. (NOTE: not every class will participate fully. Work with those who are willing and encourage those who are on the fence).***
- ***Keep the focus on achieving the objectives. (Reach and enroll new people, Teach toward life-change, and Involve members in ongoing ministry). Remind them that every class can improve.***
- ***Help modify existing plans for those classes who are struggling.***

Step 3 – Cast the Vision

From the Pulpit - For weeks, talk about what you believe God wants to happen in your Sunday School or Small Group Ministry. Utilize a whole sermon or several sermons to cast the vision. Help your members understand the important role that Sunday School plays in accomplishing the mission of the church.

Leadership Meetings - Invite your Sunday School or Small Group leadership to a meeting to stress the importance of a healthy, growing Sunday School and what it means to the church. Challenge them to step up and lead their classes or small groups to Reach and enroll new people, Teach toward life-change, and Involve members in ongoing ministry. Personally follow up with each class that did not have a representative at the meeting. You are pivotal in getting your leadership to take on The Challenge. If it's not important to you, your leaders will not think it is important.

You need to answer the why question. Why are we doing this? What is so important about reaching and enrolling new people; teaching towards life-change; and involving members in ongoing ministry? Knowing the why motivates the people to “buy-in” to the process. Knowing the what, helps them to be more precise in their planning. Knowing the how helps them to work toward accomplishing their goals.

Challenge/Campaign Strategy Steps – (4-12 weeks)

Step 4 – The Launch – Challenge Sunday

From the pulpit, in leadership meetings, and in one-on-one conversations, ask every leader and every class/group to set goals and develop plans to achieve those goals. Ask everyone to participate. Involve as many people as possible and realize that some may not participate. They are, after all, volunteers.

On the launch date, have each class turn in their goals. You can do so publicly in the Worship Service or through the Sunday School Champions during the Sunday School hour. The key is to make sure every class has the opportunity to set some goals and submit them. They need to know there will be a public announcement about the goals that are set. There is no need to publicly announce what each class is working on, but the church needs to know at least how many classes are participating. One is better than none.

If you have some classes who do not set goals, they should be encouraged to continue to work on setting goals. Don't point out the specific classes who did or did not set goals. (Everyone probably already knows that anyway).

Step 5 - Goals Set/Action Plans

Now that the goals have been set and turned in to the Sunday School Champion, it's time to put plans into action. Challenge Sunday is when every class turns in their goals. Once that is done, it is time to work on each class's/group's plans to accomplish their goals. This step is critical to the success of the Sunday School Challenge. No plan, no success. Some are better at this than others. The Sunday School Champion needs to encourage, assist and lead each class in developing a plan. Some will be easier than others. Don't lose heart, keep trying. This is one of those “it's worth it” to keep after it. Half the effort of achieving goals is developing a plan. Even if the plan doesn't work, it is a step in the right direction.

The greatest thing missing from most Sunday School classes or Small Groups is intentionality. ⁶ *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:6 (CSB Bible)* This verse skillfully reminds us that God gives the growth. Nonetheless, Paul planted and Apollos watered. We are to do our part. ⁵ *I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me. John 15:5 (CSB Bible)* This gentle reminder should encourage us to be faithful and obedient to do and accomplish what God desires.

Setting goals, developing plans, and working to achieve those goals should be an important and regular part of the work of the Sunday School class or Small Group. After all, the church's best strategy to accomplish the purpose of the church, "to make disciples of all the nations", is the Sunday School ministry or the Small Group ministry.

Step 6 - Regular updates

The Sunday School Champions should ask for weekly updates from each participating class/group. On a weekly basis, each Sunday School Champion should update the Pastor on the progress or lack of progress from each class/group. The Pastor and Sunday School Champion (s) should spend time weekly praying for each class/group. The Sunday School Champion can give the Pastor some idea of the health and status of each class/group. Some classes/groups may require more attention from the Pastor and/or Sunday School Champion than others.

The Pastor needs to visit each class as often as possible to encourage faithfulness to the process. The Pastor's presence in each class reinforces the importance/significance of Sunday School to the teachers, leaders and members of the class/group. There are just some things you can't know about your Sunday School or Small Group ministry unless you are there to see, hear and experience for yourself.

Celebration/Evaluation Strategy Status – (2-4 Weeks)

Step 7 - Celebrate Victories/Successes

Schedule a Celebration Sunday at the end of The Challenge. First and foremost, thank God for what He has done. Our efforts are important, but it is God and the movement of the Holy Spirit that produces changed lives and the fruit of our ministry. Publicly acknowledge that this is God's church and we are His people accomplishing His work for the glory of God.

Pastor, publicly and privately affirm the efforts and hard work of the Sunday School Champions and the teachers and leaders of each class. As the Pastor and Sunday School Champions, make sure you take the time to stop by every class and thank them for their contribution.

A healthy, growing Sunday School class or Small Group doesn't happen by accident. It is intentional. Many of the leaders and members of each class need to know that they are appreciated and valued.

Taking the time to recognize and affirm your leaders is critical to the success of The Challenge. How you do that is up to you. You know your people best. Here are a few suggestions.

- Recognize each class that participated in The Challenge during the Celebration Service. Offer them some kind of prize. Some suggestions are a meal, tokens, medals, trophies, gift cards, certificates, etc. Whatever you can think of that your people would value and appreciate. Their participation in The Challenge has pushed them to go above and beyond. Make sure their reward/gift lets them know how much their work has been valued and appreciated.
- Bring a representative from each participating class to the front and give them a reward/trophy that the class can keep in their room. It could be a certificate, a plaque, a medal, etc.
- Have each class share a testimony of something God did during The Challenge in the life of the class, someone in the class or a new person who joined the class.
- Honor one class a week until every class has been recognized.

Step 8 – Evaluate

It is important to gather your Sunday School Champions and a few of the leaders from the participating classes, to sit down and talk about what happened. We can learn from our successes and our failures. Not every class can get it right the first time. What worked well? What didn't? How could we promote this better? How can we get more classes/groups involved in The Challenge? How can we do a better job with our prayer strategy?

How did our Celebration Service go? Do we change how we reward/affirm our leadership and classes? What do our leaders and classes need in order to set goals and develop action plans?

Post Challenge/Campaign

Step 9 - Re-Launch

Let's Do It Again - The Sunday School Challenge is designed with enough flexibility that you can do it over and over again. Building a strong, healthy, and growing Sunday School takes time. It will not happen after just one challenge/campaign. You will need to find and discover a way to do this over and over again.

Help us know how we can help you more. You will find lots of additional resources at www.louisianabaptists.org/SSC. There you will find training opportunities, videos, this guide, sample class/group goals, articles on how to plan, and tons of tools and resources that will help the class/group be successful.

Lastly, you will see a link to a survey on the website. Give us your input. How can we make the Sunday School Challenge better? Our goal is to make this strategy simple and yet flexible. The Sunday School Challenge can work in your church no matter how small or large it may be.

Conclusion

Thank you for all you do in your church and community. Thank you for your commitment to God and His work in the community where your church exists.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHALLENGE
REACH — TEACH — INVOLVE
CLASS GOAL SHEET

Class Name: _____

		Deville Campus		HD Campus
Class Hour (circle one):	8:00 AM	9:00 AM	10:30 AM	9:30 AM

Teacher Name(s): _____

Sunday School Challenge Leader (contact person):_____

Best way to contact the SSC Leader:_____

Our Sunday School Champion is:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

<u>REACH—Reach and Enroll New People</u>	(Circle Level of Goal)	ONE	TWO	THREE
In the next 8 weeks, our class/group will...				

<u>TEACH—Teach Towards Life-Change</u>	(Circle Level of Goal)	ONE	TWO	THREE
<i>In the next 8 weeks, our class/group will...</i>				

<u>INVOLVE—Involve Members in Ongoing Ministry</u>	(Circle Level of Goal)	ONE	TWO	THREE
<i>In the next 8 weeks, our class/group will...</i>				