

STRATEGIC VISION

2024-2028

OVERFLOWING

WITH

Hope



CANADIAN BAPTISTS
OF ATLANTIC CANADA

Joining God in Our Neighbourhoods

CBAC STRATEGIC VISION 2024–2028

Overflowing with Hope

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

ROMANS 15:13, NIV

Every CBAC church is a **fountain of hope**, offering God’s hope on tap in their neighbourhoods. When every hope fountain is fully on, together, we overflow as an unstoppable ocean of hope in our neighbourhoods, communities, towns, cities, provinces, and across Atlantic Canada. This is the picture we have for the family of churches in the CBAC, every church effectively overflowing with the hope of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit so that lives and communities in Atlantic Canada are transformed by God.

This strategic vision is in two parts.

PART 1 – Inspiration for local churches, ministries and camps as you are these fountains of hope. This is what the CBAC will be measuring and celebrating as we watch for God to raise this hope among us.

PART 2 – The CBAC Team (staff) priorities that we must focus on over the next four years to support churches, ministries, and camps to be effective in their mission.

All of this will only take place by the power of God, and through our dependence on God daily through prayer and obedience.

PART 1 – EVERY CHURCH BEING A FOUNTAIN OF HOPE IN THEIR COMMUNITY

A hope-dispensing, hope-filled church is focused on God's mission. We encourage every church/camp to be able to explain how they are achieving the following four hope creators. These hope creators are pulled from Acts 2:42-44 and are what we emphasize together in our Baptist Distinctives as a family of churches.

ACTS 2:42-44, NIV

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Every CBAC church/ministry should be able to tell us how they are offering and growing in the following four hope creators.

EVERY CHURCH OVERFLOWING WITH:

1. *The Hope-filled Gospel (Proclamation)*
2. *Hope-filled Discipling Community (Discipleship)*
3. *Hope-filled Care for Neighbours, Near and Far (Care)*
4. *Hope-filled Prayer (Prayer)*

1. THE HOPE-FILLED GOSPEL (PROCLAMATION)

- Your church is faithfully teaching the Word of God and preaching the Gospel of Jesus
- Your church is equipping people in the congregation to share the Gospel in their everyday lives. The Gospel is being shared consistently and regularly through ordinary people.

2. HOPE-FILLED DISCIPLING COMMUNITY (DISCIPLESHIP)

- Your church is meeting together for discipleship. Your church has a plan for ongoing discipleship in peoples' lives.
- Your church is creating intentional discipleship relationships.
- Your church is providing meaningful care for those within the church family.
- Your church is creating community, even across churches, if it helps accomplish Kingdom care, discipleship, and impact.

3. HOPE-FILLED CARE FOR NEIGHBOURS, NEAR AND FAR (CARE)

- Your church is caring for needs in your community (to those outside the church family.) Your church can point to where they are tangibly making a difference with a need in the community.
- Your church is caring for a need in the world. Through Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM), one way the local church is involved in giving hope globally to our broken world.

4. HOPE-FILLED PRAYER (PRAYER)

- Your church regularly prays for the hope of Jesus to overflow into our communities, for revival and renewal in Atlantic Canada.

Each of these 4 things will look a little different in every church. That's good! That's the value of local church autonomy – churches figuring out the best way to fulfill the Lord's Great Commission in their context.

The CBAC Team – will be encouraging, measuring, and helping churches be effective in these four main areas, so every church is a hope dispenser in their community, and together, we overflow in Atlantic Canada with this ocean of hope.

PART 2 – THE CBAC TEAM’S (STAFF) ROLE AND PRIORITIES.

Over the next few years (between now and 2028), we’ve identified four strategic priority areas where the CBAC team will focus our energy and resources to make the greatest impact as we support you in being effective as a hope fountain in your community. These priorities were identified through the 2023 fall listening tour, the discernment of the vision team made up of 12 leaders from a diverse cross-section of the CBAC family, consultations and focus groups.

CBAC’S FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ARE:

1. *Calling Hope-filled Leaders*
2. *Hope-filled Connections for Coaching and Care*
3. *Hope-filled Conversations for the Future*
4. *Hope-filled Organizational Renewal*

1. **CALLING HOPE-FILLED LEADERS** – *We will raise the importance of a calling to vocational ministry and create opportunities for people from a variety of ages and backgrounds to understand and respond to a call to ministry.*

The CBAC Team will work on the following key action steps...

- **CALLING EVENT** – Create a new, premiere event where CBAC pastors intentionally invite people open to exploring a call to vocational ministry. At this event, individuals will have the space, mentors, teaching, and environment to understand and explore a call to ministry.
- **CALLING RESOURCE** – Create resources to equip pastors, churches, camps and clusters to have conversations about calling to ministry and share stories of calling.
- **APPRENTICESHIP** – In partnership, create an apprenticeship experience for young leaders and next-career leaders within our local CBAC churches focused on apprenticeship and mentoring. This apprenticeship program would be designed to happen before formal ministry education to give people an opportunity to experience the joys of ministry early in their discernment process and give them significant ministry experience. Create the standards for this apprenticeship and recognition for this program. Provide the systems so churches across the CBAC (e.g. rural, urban and various sizes of church) can participate in the apprenticeship program.
- **LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS** – We will create options for the recognition of leaders/pastors who lead co-vocationally, as a next career, in church planting, in entrepreneurial ministry, and as a newcomer to Canada. This includes continued reviewing of BMSE processes to simplify and clarify the journey, as well as creating new streams for recognition within the CBAC. We will, in conversation with our partners, create supportive structures for international pastors to successfully lead and be credentialed within the CBAC, including supportive structures for churches to be ready for new leadership.

We ask CBAC Pastors and Churches to...

- Strategically and boldly invite people to listen for a call to ministry and give them opportunities in ministry.

2. HOPE-FILLED CONNECTIONS FOR COACHING AND CARE – *We will come alongside pastors and leaders to care, connect, coach and resource them so they are hopeful and effective in their role of leading their congregation into the cultural realities of our day with their identity firmly rooted in Christ.*

The CBAC Team will...

- **PASTOR CLUSTERS** – Facilitate the creation of PASTOR CLUSTER groups. Groups of about 6 to 12 pastors that meet regularly throughout the year (at least 3 times). Pastors opt-in, and the CBAC Team will help these Pastors find a cluster. Whether it is with a Pastor Cluster or other group, we will encourage all Pastors to be connected to a small group of Pastors somewhere in the CBAC family – whether that’s through a Pastor Cluster, Sozo Centre Journey/Group, Leadership Development Intensive Cluster, Sharping Leaders Intensive Cluster or other peer group.
- **PASTOR HUBS** – At least once a year a CBAC Team member will bring Pastor Clusters together in a hub for a leadership circle. They will facilitate a key question for conversation, invite sharing of stories of what is working in Atlantic Canada and serve as a connecting point to the CBAC Team.
- **NEW PASTOR ORIENTATION** – We will refresh and bring back the New Pastors Orientation, creating a relational event that fosters connection within the CBAC family.
- **VOLUNTEER LEADER CONNECTIONS** – We will facilitate connections among lay leaders in churches, bringing them together for networking, equipping, and mutual support. E.g. Bringing together Deacons/Elders or Church treasures.
- **INVEST IN THE SOZO CENTRE** – The Sozo Centre will continue to create and facilitate spiritual formation and soul care pathways and communities for pastors and leaders, in order to deepen their relationship with God, self and others. This process will invite leaders to experience greater spiritual awareness, healing, and transformation.

As a result, pastors and leaders will be equipped and empowered to train their congregations to care for their own souls and the souls of others.

CBAC Leaders and congregations will become wounded healers embracing the fullness of our sozo salvation in the present and bear witness to the kingdom of God in a wounded world.

Specifically over the next few years through the Sozo centre we will:

- Greater spiritual formation, soul care and resilience for our pastors and congregations.
- In the Sozo Centre, ensure invitations and access for Youth and Children’s Pastors.
- We will offer grants and scholarships to help make Sozo accessible to Pastors and Leaders.
- **RESOURCE** Pastors and Leaders in areas of mutual concern and interest:
 - **NEXT GENERATION RESOURCING** – We will create further coaching and resource opportunities to equip leaders and churches to reach the next generation in Atlantic Canada.
 - **MULTI-CULTURAL RESOURCING** – We will create coaching and resource opportunities to equip leaders and churches to reach our multi-cultural context.

- **COMPLEX ISSUES RESOURCING** – We will equip leaders and the church to have conversations on the complex issues of our day, including issues of justice.
- **BEST PRACTICES RESOURCES** – We will provide sample best practices for churches in areas of common concern (e.g. child protection, sabbatical policies, hiring practices, care for your pastor(s), available benefits etc.)
- **OUTSIDE RESOURCES** – We will point our pastors, leaders, and churches to reviewed, excellent outside resources.
 - We will create a curated list of Christian counsellors for pastors/leaders.
 - We will create a curated list of recommended church consultants.
 - We will encourage the use of other helpful resources through our connections with EFC, Right Now Media, CB Partners, CBM, ADC, Crandall etc.
 - We will create a curated list of where to find support and resources during church conflict.

We ask CBAC Pastors and Churches to...

- Lean into this CBAC family through intentional connections, coaching and care. Do not try to lead alone, build your network in this CBAC family.

3. HOPE-FILLED CONVERSATIONS FOR THE FUTURE – *We will create intentional, courageous conversations about our future and seek church partnerships that further our mission in our neighbourhoods.*

The CBAC Team will...

- **CHURCH PARTNERSHIP** – Create resources and facilitate networking between churches for partnerships. These church partnerships could be sharing resources, ideas, equipment, space, programs, or mentoring.
- **CHURCH MERGERS** – Create resources and facilitate conversations between churches so that they can consider church amalgamations and adoptions for the sake of greater ministry and mission.
- **NEXT GENERATION** – We will intentionally invite younger voices and diverse voices into futuring conversations and roles of influence within the CBAC. We will continue to disproportionately invest in ministry to the young generations, for the church of today and the church of tomorrow.

- **FUTURE DENOMINATION** – We will prepare now for the future of the church and denomination. Including:
 - Through a Futuring Working Group, explore the future of denominations, specifically the CBAC. This group would recommend what we must do to prepare for the future of denominational work. In other words, what would it look like to be a thriving denomination?
 - Partner with the Futuring Lab at Acadia Divinity College to prepare for and become the church and denomination needed for the future. The ADC Futuring Lab will have significant input into this CBAC Futuring Working Group.

We ask CBAC Pastors and Churches to...

- Lead conversations about a new future within your congregations and this denomination to ensure we continue to thrive in our mission.

4. HOPE-FILLED ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL – *We will purposefully renew and reshape our CBAC Team, structures and systems to be healthy, effective, and ready for the future.*

Our CBAC Team will...

- **DONOR DEVELOPMENT** – Raise revenue through the newly created Donor Development team. This includes creating more clear opportunities for churches and individuals to give with purpose to the CBAC.
- **CBAC HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) HEALTH** – Bring clarity and consistency to CBAC HR policies and practices. This includes:
 - Clarify and update CBAC Team policies.
 - Share HR resources, policy, and best practice documents with churches.
- **COMMUNICATION** – Clarify our brand and best communication practices.
- **NIMBLE STRUCTURES** – Review our governance and policies to see where updates would be beneficial in our Bylaws and CBAC Council Policies.
- **NEW SCORECARD** – We will redefine what we measure, including updating our Church Life Reports, to focus on measuring and celebrating mission happening through our churches in Atlantic Canada, that is how churches are being fountains of hope, focused on the four priority areas (part 1 of this vision.)
- **IDENTITY** – Renew who we are as the CBAC and what it means to be a CBAC church.

We ask CBAC Pastors and Churches to...

- Support the CBAC Team with your finances, church budgets, prayers, and volunteering.



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