

# The three Rs

Since the beginning of the year, three task teams have been meeting to develop implementation plans for our three ministry initiatives: **REACH** Our Children, **RENEW** Our Spirit, **RESOURCE** Our Ministry. Their discussions have crystallized into focus areas for each initiative. To share your thoughts on these, please contact any of the three team leaders: Rozenna Hartman, Brandon Grady, or Pastor Dave.

## REACH our Children

**Children and Youth in Worship** – We see how our children and youth are enriched when they are actively involved in worship through participating in praise choir, bells, Youth Sunday, the Palm Sunday processional, the Christmas Program, etc. We are exploring how we can build on this and be intentional in sharing the life of our congregation with children and youth by involving them more fully in worship.

**Revitalize Sunday School** – One of our strengths is the dedication and hard work of all who are involved with the planning and teaching of Sunday school for our children and youth. However, as with many churches we continue to see a decline in our numbers. We are looking at how we might rethink or restructure, and promote, our Sunday school hour to reach more children and youth.

**Family Support and Involvement** – We recognize the importance of providing nurture and support to families, and that our ministry to children requires the involvement of families. As we work to address this area, we are asking questions like: How can we provide opportunities for support and fellowship for families within the church as well as our communities? What can we do to encourage and nurture families?

## RENEW Our Spirit

**Prayer Ministry** – We are a congregation that prays! To build on this strength, we want to explore ideas like prayer groups and prayer partners, expanding our prayer chain, and holding prayer services. Strengthening relationships through visitation is a key element in our prayer life and we hope to enlarge our network of visitors. Our encouragement card ministry shows the value of extending our prayer beyond the congregation.

**Bible Study Ministry** – The early Brethren formed around understanding and applying scripture to their daily lives. We want to create more opportunities to use and study the Bible in worship, small groups, personal devotions and other ways to increase our familiarity of scripture, integrate it into our lives, and seek fresh insight into how the Word of God continues to speak to us individually and as the body of Christ.

**Music Ministry** – Music is an essential element of our worship and often graces other gatherings. Black Rock is blessed with many who offer their talent through choirs, bells, organ, piano, and, of course, congregational singing. We hope to encourage even greater participation by discovering and utilizing the musical gifts of the congregation, as well as explore using a wider variety of music while still enjoying traditional styles.

## RESOURCE Our Ministry

**Knowing and Showing** – To measure the impact of our ministries, we need to understand who we are and what resources we have, and communicate that clearly within the congregation and, where appropriate, to the community. Assessing church finances, membership statistics, and current demographics of congregation and community will help us appreciate how God has gifted us so we can make plans that build on our strengths.

**Sharing in Outreach** – Outreach giving and service opportunities are vital aspects of Black Rock's identity. We want to connect our community to the ministries we support, finding ways to involve our neighbors in our outreach. People who are not part of a church are seeking opportunities to make a difference in the world. Our heritage of service and caring for "the least of these" can help us reach and assist those who yearn to serve.

**Growing the Body** – Without growth in numbers we cannot sustain the ministries to which God calls us. We want to make our presence known through things like a community newsletter, participation in local activities, enhanced "curb appeal," and offering our facilities to outside groups. And we want to organize and train for invitational and relational church growth that brings people to Christ in ways consistent with Brethren values.