

IMPLEMENTATION OF VISION TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

March 13, 2016

Be humble and gentle in every way. Be patient with each other and lovingly accept each other. Through the peace that ties you together, do your best to maintain the unity that the Spirit gives.

There is one body and one Spirit. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over everything, through everything, and in everything.

God's favor has been given to each of us. It was measured out to us by Christ who gave it. He gave apostles, prophets, missionaries, as well as pastors and teachers as gifts to his church. Their purpose is to prepare God's people to serve and to build up the body of Christ.

As we lovingly speak the truth, we will grow up completely in our relationship to Christ, who is the head. He makes the whole body fit together and unites it. As each part does its job, Christ makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. —Ephesians 4

The following report summarizes actions and planning to address recommendations of the March 2015 Vision Task Force. Recommendations with completed action are followed by an asterisk*; however, most recommendations require continuing effort. The CLC is most appreciative of the considerable personal involvement of members of the congregation in the shared work needed to realize this vision for MBC.

#1: Hire two full-time ministers*

The Personnel Committee developed and the congregation approved position descriptions for two new full time ministers: minister of spiritual formation and outreach and minister to youth and young adults. Katie Morgan and Megan Clapp have been called for these positions respectfully. Megan Clapp joined the staff in November, 2015 and Katie Morgan in January, 2016.

#2: Repair and refresh the existing building

Short-term maintenance is being performed. Action on major repairs and upgrades are pending for coordination with the recommendations of the Facilities Strategy Committee.

#3: Explore options for a new or remodeled building

The Facilities Strategy Committee, chaired by Shirley Bass, was formed during the summer 2015, has been meeting regularly since. A preliminary report to the congregation is expected in Spring 2016.

#4: Promote Christian Education program

The Faith Formations Council, in partnership with the Outreach Council, revised descriptions of Sunday morning adult classes to make it easier for long-time church members and newcomers to stay aware of study opportunities on Sunday mornings. This information is updated quarterly and available in both hardcopy and on the church website. Maintenance of this information will be the responsibility of the Minister for Faith Formations and Outreach, with input from the teachers and other ministers.

#5: Develop and offer a Bible basics class

The development of basic classes has been initiated and will be presented as time and demand become clear. A class for newcomers to McLean Baptist Church is being offered to help those new to MBC become familiar with the opportunities for service and worship at our church. Elements of this class may be woven into Wednesday night programming or offered as a limited-run class on Sunday mornings. Elements of basic Bible knowledge are also an important part of our MBC children and youth programs, where a complete integrated program is being developed.

#6: Improve the Wednesday night program

The Faith Formations Council, in partnership with the Ministerial staff, is working to re-energize Wednesday evening study opportunities. Initiated last fall, Wednesday evening programs now consist of six-week topical studies on areas including Biblical studies and current areas of interest. These sessions are scheduled and published well in advance and are providing exciting new opportunities for growth and fellowship. The Pastor of Spiritual Formation and Outreach is working with Outreach to offer education sessions on Wednesdays and Sunday mornings for new attendees to welcome them into the fellowship.

#7: Invigorate the 11:00 service

Worship, one of MBC's shared values, and its musical component, received some of the highest ratings in the surveys done by church members. Our two new full-time ministers have brought new gifts, skills, and ideas, as well as energy and diversity to our worship. Their individual styles of preaching and praying are evident and result in a fresher and more vital service. Efforts continue to vary the order of service as appropriate and to broaden how we read and listen to scripture including continued reading by deacons, more reading by youth, responsive readings, and group readings. In addition to the established excellent music from the Sanctuary Choir, Hand Bell Choir, Children's Percussion Ensemble, and Cherub Choir, we have had (and plan for more) vocal solos and small groups, instrumental solos and ensembles.

#8: Insure more intergenerational opportunities

Our plan continues to be to hold inter-generational fellowships (such as chili cookoff, picnic and bingo) once a quarter. Other events that are for more specific age groups are also scheduled (such as Winter Banquet and movie night.) The council meets every 6 months to plan for half year events. The new ministers as well as the broader congregation will have opportunities to share their ideas and lead events with support from fellowship council (that's how the chili cookoff started.) Publicity for events on calendar and advertisements for those will be part of our McLean Day booth.

#9: Articulate and communicate our values

Worship leaders have created a worship atmosphere that communicates moderate values through the liturgy and theological teachings. A Newcomers class will be held on Sundays and Wednesdays offering sessions on Baptist beliefs and the identity of McLean Baptist church. Last Fall, the pastor led a study on Baptist history and beliefs.

#10: Align finances with vision

To align finances with our vision and provide more transparent financial reporting, the Finance Council revised the 2016 budget preparation process by moving all Restricted Accounts with active income and expenses into the 2016 Budget. As a result, approximately \$80,000 in income and approximately \$65,000 in expenses were added to the budget. Only a limited number of special mission items and designated giving will now be included in a Restricted Accounts report. Additional alignment adjustments are being worked by the councils in coordination with Finance.

#11: Design and implement improved website

Regular updates and tweaks to the existing website are providing fresh appearances and currency to the information presented. A completely new website design is on hold while the Outreach Council works with the new ministers to evaluate current and future social media use.

#12: Create calendar to coordinate event planning and scheduling

Options for broadening accessibility to the calendar and coordinating the scheduling of ministerial responsibilities, church events, programs and church and outside user meetings are being reviewed. An ideal solution remains elusive.

#13: Build up fun, food and fellowship program

The highly-successful Fun, Food, and Fellowship program is a model for biblical study and learning outside the typical Sunday morning schedule. This summer we are again planning to offer several topical sessions for a variety of age and interest groups this summer. The breadth of topics will be limited only by the availability of teachers discussion leaders and meeting locations (member's homes). The past success of this program has been driven by the smallness of the groups, leading to intimate discussions. These sessions planned by the ministerial staff, with input and support from the Faith Formations Council.

#14: Create an inventory of mixed media resources

The library has been an important part of the Christian education program at MBC for many years. The inventory will identify all available resources (books, journals, media) and where they are located. We want to follow this with a survey of current and future needs based on staff, teachers, and users. The mixed-media library mentioned in the VTF report remains as a goal for a future library of hard-copy books and journals, online resources, and digital resources available to the congregation and potentially to the local community.

#15: Offer a contemporary worship service

During Lent in 2016, we are holding four prayer services on Saturday evenings to serve a dual purpose. First, it creates a space for prayer with and for the community. Second, these services pilot a possible future alternative service designed from feedback from these services and our ministers' leadership.

#16: Differentiate the 8:45 service

We have added two quieter moments to the 8:45 service giving the time a more contemplative sense and plan to review this after approximately 6 months. From that review we will consider the effectiveness of the changes and other possible adjustments. On most Sundays the pastoral prayer has included pauses for silent prayer, and the service has also included a short time of soft music for silent reflection. The differentiation between the two services is predominately apparent in the small group atmosphere of the early service.

#17: Articulate worship styles/offer blended service

The inclusion of two new ministers in both worship services brings added perspectives, voices, energy, and diversity to worship. Efforts are made each week to offer variety to the worship elements or their placement in the service, including instrumental and vocal elements, litanies, and interactive aspects. The differentiation between the two services is predominately apparent in the small group atmosphere. The early service allows for more reflection through silence and musical accompaniment. Looking forward, the ministers and worship council will exploring what is ultimately desired in the differentiation and make recommendations and changes based on feedback.

#18: Balance global, national and local missions

The Missions Council is reviewing activities in view of the recommendation to balance local, regional, national and global missions. Our first step was replacing the usual 2-3 recipients of the Easter Offering this year with a single focus, the Food Fight Project, which is sponsored by the NorthStar Church Network. This project provides, as requested by the VTF, a local opportunity for MBC members, young and old, to participate in a hands-on activity. We are hopeful the congregation participates both monetarily and in-person with their time and effort at the event in May. If this project is successful, both in giving and in intergenerational participation, additional similar mission projects will be planned.

#19: Develop ways to improve mission scholarships

When mission trips are planned and scheduled, the Missions Council will work towards setting up special offerings for scholarships. For those who wish to donate to mission trip scholarships, we recommend these be designated as "Mission Trip Scholarships." The Missions Council will also schedule a meeting with the Finance Chair and Endowment Fund Chair to discuss further scholarship options in April.

#20: Design and implement music outreach program

The children's ministry is discussing the option of hosting a music and arts camp (with a Biblical focus) in place of a Day Camp this summer, utilizing the wealth of artistic expertise in the congregation. Ministers are entertaining ideas of incorporating outside musical groups using our facilities to take part in the Festival of Carols or like events. Finally, plans are being discussed regarding the development of a music education program for children and teens operating out of our church.

#21: Offer program to dialogue about challenging issues

The Deacons are engaged with ministerial staff, Faith Formations, Outreach, and Worship councils possibilities for open dialogue opportunities on Wednesday evening programming, Food Faith and Fellowship events and Sunday School. The Deacons have begun a discussion prompted by the former chair of the Outreach Council on how the church can best recognize and address social justice issues.

#22: Explore ways to improve church governance

The CLC proposed terms of Reference for a Church governance review committee to the church and nominated members for the committee. Committee work will begin immediately following church approval.

#23: Deacons review of MBC's Mission and Vision Statement*

The Deacons began this action in June, holding 4 church wide collaboration sessions in July and August and 4 internal Deacon meetings. Proposed statements by the VTF and others based on congregational input led the Deacons to recommend update our current mission statement to read, "Seeking to be a loving and inclusive community that celebrates Christ through worship and service to our world." This statement was presented to the church near the beginning of Advent and is now part of our Sunday bulletins and other church materials since January.