

Visioning Committee Report to the Congregation

May 2009

The task of the Visioning Committee began 3 years ago- our charge: to work toward an answer to the question: "What is God calling Lexington Avenue Baptist Church to be and do in the here and now?" After looking at our church, the community around us, and receiving input from our church family as well as outside sources, we have developed a framework for our congregation as we endeavor to be "the presence of Christ".

LABC Strategic Initiatives:

What We desire to achieve as a community of Faith

1. Expand the congregation's involvement in hands-on mission and ministry
2. Deepen relationships within the congregation
3. Utilize a relational approach to mission and ministry to those outside the church

LABC Core Values:

The foundation upon which we build and grow and the means by which we fulfill our strategic initiatives

The Visioning Team recommends that all the committees/ministry teams be intentional throughout the year and give specific attention to the core values during the Joint Committee Meetings held each spring and fall by asking the following questions:

- *In what ways/how do we take this core value seriously?*
- *What would it look like if we were intentional about this core value?*
- *What would it look like if we were to live out this core value?*

1. We value our Baptist heritage.

We value our Baptist heritage, which shapes how we live out our faith in an ever-changing society. We believe all are called and gifted and thus encouraged to participate in ministry and leadership in the church.

- Refer this core value to our Staff and Historical Committee
- Past activities have included Heritage Sunday (during this Visioning Process), LABC 75th anniversary celebration, displays of memorabilia from our history
- Ask staff to take lead in developing activities to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Baptists (Possible activities: emphasis in worship service in September or October 2009)
- find and/or develop short-term Sunday Morning Bible Study materials, which address the Baptist heritage, for all SS classes)

2. We value friendliness.

Through Christian fellowship we develop meaningful relationships with our church family. We value each person as a child of God. We seek to be warm and accepting, extending Christian love to everyone.

- Refer this core value to our Welcoming Committee and ask them to look at the Sunday Morning aspect of friendliness and hospitality
- Current ministries: Spring Block Party, Annual or Biannual neighborhood outreach, Community-wide Fall Festival, Welcoming team on Sunday morning and Greeting Time in worship services

3. We value caring.

We value the relationship we share in Christ, and so we care for one another in times of joy and sorrow. As the scriptures say, "Be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other."

- Refer to the Deacons and ask them to address this core value
- Current ministries: Crisis/Bereavement Committee, Homebound Communion by Deacons, Health Committee

4. We value prayer.

Communicating directly with God through prayer strengthens our personal relationship with Him and gives us access to His power and purpose. Personal and corporate prayer includes expressions of thanksgiving, praise, confession, intercession, and petition.

- Recommend that the Nominating Committee appoint a Prayer Ministry Team

5. We value missions.

In obedience to Christ we seek to share his message of salvation, build relationships, and join hands with others to help meet physical needs. We seek to accomplish this through prayer, sharing of God's word, hands on missions, and financial support. Using Acts 1:8 as a guide we practice this locally, nationally, and globally.

- Refer this core value to the Missions Committee
- Current ministries: Partnerships with Nada, Morocco, mission trips by members to Haiti, ministries with Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, and others
- Recommend that the Missions Committee prioritize our missions work over the next 1 to 3 years

6. We value worship.

Worship is an expression of the church's love for God. We value worship that is joyful, diverse, reverent, and inspiring. Through worship "we celebrate the joy of our salvation. We praise God for the life, death, and resurrection of the Son. We worship God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who loves us like a father and mother, who is always redeeming us, and whose grace empowers and sustains us." (From LABC Baptismal Affirmation)

- Current worship planning involves LABC staff as well as the Music Ministry Team.
- Recommend that a Worship Environment Ministry Team be appointed by the Nominating Committee to emphasize visual components of worship (i.e., opening the baptismal doors to view the cross, lighting of candles during Advent/Lent, use of banners, communion tableware, and other elements)

7. We value music.

We value music, which is joyful and diverse, inspiring and comforting to ourselves and others, uplifting and spiritual. Music expresses our worship of God, unites us as a body of faith, and enhances our personal connection to God.

- Refer this core value to our Music Ministry Team
- Current ministries: Austin Roberts Concerts, guest musicians (college choirs, LABC Quartet)

8. We value spiritual growth.

We are committed to equip and to help our church family to cultivate deeper relationships with Christ and to become effective ministers. Our spiritual growth is shaped through age appropriate Bible studies, Sunday school classes, and other opportunities for spiritual formation.

- Refer this core value to our Discipleship/Education Team with possible discussion of additional Sunday evening Bible study group (6-10 week time frames) in both spring and fall, Wednesday night Bible study emphasis (spring and fall), annual or semi-annual 8 week church wide Sunday School study similar to "It's Time" study in Fall of 2007
- Other possible considerations: Retreats, young adult Bible study group(s), womens'/mens' study groups, home study groups, devotional guides and resources the church could make available to assist in personal spiritual growth.

Although this report is the result of 3 years of work by the Visioning Committee, visioning is a continuous process. We must constantly ask ourselves "What is God calling LABC to do today?" We have tried to lay the groundwork for the ministry of Lexington Avenue Baptist Church with an eye toward the future as we seek to share the message of God's grace toward mankind by being the presence of Christ in our community and beyond.

Visioning Team Members: Bernard Montgomery and Carolyn Godfrey, co-chairs; Duane Campbell; Martha Robertson; Doris Cessna; Judee Vanderpool; Shannon Tarter; EmmyGlo Purdom; Jerry Farmer; Ken Wall; Keith Stillwell, Phil Quinn, Dave Garrett, and Tommy Valentine, ministerial staff.

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