

# Strategic Plan Update

Administrative Board  
February 2, 2025

## Continue Existing Work

### I. Continuing Ministry Council Committees with input from survey and listening sessions to improve their work

- a. October 2024 all Ministry Council Chairs were emailed open ended survey responses, and a summary of the issues raised during the strategic planning process related to their committee's work. This email included an offer to meet virtually with the Strategic Planning (SP) Co-Chairs (Pam Auble & Gretchen Napier) and the Ministry Council Co-Chairs (Stephen Bryant & Laura Dickinson) to answer questions related to the SP process or gathered data.
- b. Advocacy Committee asked to focus on
  - 1) Gun Control, 2) LGBTQIA+ Rights, and
  - 3) Homelessness and Housing. Linda Mcfayden-Ketchum will present at WNAB in February or March about gun laws in TN and ways to advocate for sensible laws. Ken connected BFI with the TN Equality Project and offered help on LBGTQ+ advocacy. Advocacy has added immigration issues as an important focus given Belmont's connections with Ebenezer and ESL programs.
- c. On the right is a graphic they've created integrating the strategic plan into the core funding and mission properties. The goal is to align all core values across Outreach and Advocacy for a unified vision and messaging.



**II. Managing and optimizing church property to ensure upkeep, conserve financial resources, align with missions (Strategic Stewardship Committee, Trustees).**

- a. 2023 – Strategic Stewardship Task Force created
- b. 2024 – Hawkins Partners researched building codes, explored option with Metro Planning and Nashville Department of Transportation, gained conceptual approval for church to assume 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cul-de-sac, created “test fit” scenario.
- c. Applied for National Fund for Sacred Places (NFSP) matching grant. Denied with recommendations
- d. Centric Architecture began Building Condition Assessment of Sanctuary and Thomasson Hall
- e. Completed exterior pressure washing, window repair, painting, and other projects
- f. 2025
- g. January – Leadership meeting to discuss gathered information, discuss needs, and solicit feedback

## Evaluate Present Commitments

**Create a Golden Triangle Fellowship Strategic Planning Task Force to evaluate existing relationship and mutual engagement.**

- Chair named October 2024, Mike Engle
- Task Force had an initial meeting, Mike had a subsequent meeting with Sandy, and then there was a joint meeting of GTF leaders and the task force on Dec. 29, 2024 (present included Mike Engle, Bru Shee, Rose Aye, Wisinee Lyu, Sandy Sakarapanee, Lucian Geise, Pam Auble, Steve Bryant, Bill Lovell, Paul Purdue, Nel Schreiber and others).
- Takeaways from meeting:
  - o Sandy needing someone ordained to help with communion on the first Sunday in February and March following her knee surgery in late January. She believes that sermons are covered.
  - o Need backup piano player for Carolyn Jones for the opening hymn.
  - o Trust fund requests (see below)
  - o Sandy succession planning could include a certified lay minister (Wisinee?) and a committee to help with social work services (making appointments, transporting people, recognizing needs, navigating services) and those functions may be met by another member who isn't clergy.

- Created a Trust Fund request for scholarships for 20 GTF congregants (especially youth) which has been sent to Ministry Council for approval.
- GTF has designated two lay members as their delegates to Ministry Council and joined Ministry Council
- Explored the history of the GTF, it's decline in attendance (many live in Antioch and have joined other churches of convenience), the loyalty of the current membership and their sense of shared community (i.e. they ain't going nowhere)
- Bill Lovell has collected pictures, names, and contact information of 60 GTF congregants and is getting this printed.
- Interim Report due May 2025, final report due December 2025

**Create a Weekday School Strategic Planning Task Force to evaluate existing relationship and governance.**

- Co-Chairs named January 2025, Jennifer Bagwell and Lucien Geise
- Quarterly reports due throughout 2025, final report due December 2025

## Plan for Future Realities

**I. Create clear pathways of governance, communication and accountability among staff, lay leaders and the congregation.**

- a. Create a targeted communication strategy by asking groups what communication channels work for them.
  - i. Jan - Mar 2025 - Communications listening sessions to assess members' preferences, needs, and challenges with our communications (strategic plan task)
  - ii. March 2025 - Analyze listening session data
  - iii. April - May 2025 - Create an annual communications plan that includes overall Belmont communications as well as individual ministry communications, implement platform updates based on listening session data
  - iv. August - October 2025 - Branding and Style Guide
- b. Restructure staff agenda to include sections for 1) discussing the week's activities, 2) discussing decisions needed and issues needing resolution, and 3) discussing prayer needs

- i. October 2024 - added a more focused agenda (see Addendum 1) with Executive Director of Church Management to facilitate. Each meeting includes an evaluation of the meeting.
- ii. January 2025 began department updates. Each staff member will have 30 minutes to share updates about their department, approximately every other month, focusing on the big picture, long-term work of their area.

## II. Develop a process for engaging the community.

- a. Create and post banners quarterly welcoming the community to children's events.



- i. Mary Alice and Lindy were diligent in creating the Advent Family Craft Night and the Christmas Eve banners! They were so bright and cheery, and Neil and James were very helpful in putting them up and taking them down. Plus, when they were in the process of making these banners, there was a sale going on so they made as many as we could think of for the upcoming year, so that we could utilize the sale and last year's budget!!! They are all "evergreen," so they don't have a particular date on them, and can be used year after year, as long as the times stay the same. I'm so grateful for Mary Alice and Lindy co-chairing the Children's Ministry Team and leading by example!

- b. Increase # of newly recorded visitors – baseline documented (see Addendum 2)
- c. Create resources to communicate effectively to visitors about availability and location of restrooms & comfort resources such as children's packets, etc.
  - i. Began November 2024, several items still needed creation or updating (worship bags for children, updated Sunday school list, updated "Opportunities for Engagement" document)
  - ii. Worship Bags for Children, January 2025 Announcement, "Belmont loves having children in worship, and we feel that being in church is an important way of learning about the church! Children can sing, pray, look at the stained glass windows, listen for certain words in the sermon, and experience community through communion, just to name a few. We also understand that children might get restless, or need new activities during worship to engage them. After searching

and careful planning, the worship bags for children have been completed, and they will be available for parents and children to pick up as they enter the sanctuary this Sunday! The worship bags are divided by age groups, and as with any toy or new product, parent supervision is requested. Please feel free to intervene if a particular toy isn't appropriate for your child. Bags may be returned to the "used bag" tub after worship. Toys will be wiped down and used crayons and paper will be replaced each week. If you have a suggestion or question, please contact Brittany Jordan at [brittany@belmontumc.org](mailto:brittany@belmontumc.org).

A huge thank you to Brittany Jordan and Jennifer Bagwell for ordering and organizing. We are also very grateful for our parents who helped stuff the bags. Who knew volunteering could be so much fun?



### **III. Articulate a path for faith development.**

- a. Develop Discipleship System & Path for all ages (see Addendum 3)
- b. Ministry Council Co-Chair to begin attending Staff Meeting approximately every other month to coordinate and share ministry vision and implementation together.
- c. Develop two consistent Engagement Actions for every new visitor
  - i. Fellowship in the Foyer - Carolyn Primm hosts
  - ii. Coffee and Conversation - The 2nd Sunday of the month in Iris Room, Anne invites visitors of the last 6 months. Q&A, visiting, building tour. It happens in the Iris Room, we talk for a bit, answer questions and then tour the building.

### **IV. Transformative Worship**

- a. Worship and Music Committee has meeting scheduled on Feb. 9 to consider an initial draft for a theological framework for musical selection and a theology of worship.
- b. Communication strategy still pending (due in April 2025).

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*Addendum 1*

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*Addendum 2*

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*Addendum 3*

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