

**First Baptist Church
Springfield**

**THE VISION
AND PLAN FOR
REVITALIZATION
2020-2027**



This report is a result of prayer, a church survey, the work of the Visioning Committee, the Administrative Staff, and meeting with Consultant Mark Clifton, Replanting Director for the North American Mission Board (NAMB). During this process, we have pursued many possibilities seeking to discern the Lord's will for the future of First Baptist Springfield (FBC-S).

We recognize and acknowledge that **“Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain...” (Psalm 127:1)**. It is our firm belief that the Lord is not finished with us and that He continues to mercifully invite us to join Him in His Kingdom work.

We acknowledge the need for our church to be revitalized. By using this term, we mean “a supernatural work of God in which He works to bring renewed health to a plateaued or declining church resulting in that congregation becoming a unified, vibrant, disciple-making body of believers on mission to reach their surrounding community with the gospel.” (“REPLANT roadmap” by Mark Hallock). The Lord loves and cares for His Church and He is at work seeking to be glorified through His bride. We believe that the Holy Spirit will do a great work at FBC-S as we are found faithful and obedient to our Lord.

It is our prayer that by our 175th anniversary in 2027, we will have experienced God's favor by being revitalized and we will have begun the work of replanting another church. By using the term replanting, we mean, “the process in which members of a dying congregation discern God's leading to joyfully submit their church's current and future ministry to an outside Sending Church and its leadership, working together to begin a new church for a new season of gospel ministry in their community.” (“REPLANT roadmap” by Mark Hallock).

This report includes the Lord's vision for FBC-S, our core values, where we are headed, our plan to be revitalized, the Disciple's Pathway Blueprint, our membership covenant and consultant Clifton's report. It is our desire for the Lord to be glorified as we align ourselves with the will and Word of God as we seek His favor and blessings!

Visioning Committee & Administrative Staff

The Lord's Vision (Special Assignment) for FBC-S

“For the glory of God, we will by faith partner with the Lord to be revitalized and to revitalize/replant other churches.”

Our Core Values

Who God has called us to be that will serve as guardrails as we take steps forward.

- 1. Cross-Generational:** We are united as one, serving and worshipping together as the body of Christ.
- 2. Downtown Diversity:** We are a community within our community, representing all of Springfield.
- 3. Loving Fellowship:** We lovingly welcome guests as friends to connect with our family and find a place to grow and serve.
- 4. Clear Truth:** We preach/teach the Bible for life application and growth within a process of discipleship.
- 5. On Mission:** We intentionally look for ways to serve our neighbors and the world with the love of Christ.

Where we are headed as a Revitalized Church

1. **Worship:** To be a church where God is glorified.
2. **Evangelism:** To be a church on global mission where we adopt a missional lifestyle in our community and around the world so that lost people are being saved.
3. **Discipleship:** To be a church where equipping the saints to be disciples that make disciples will be fulfilled as the mission of the church.
4. **Ministry & Fellowship:** To be a church that will provide for the spiritual, physical, emotional and social needs of our church and community.
5. **Prayer:** To be a church that is a house of prayer.

We believe that as we live out these purposes and be a church where it is not difficult for the unsaved to turn to God, God will have favor and allow the church to experience revitalization that will result in large and small group attendance increases due to new salvations and growth in financial giving to further His work and provide for our needs as we carry out His vision.

Our plan to be a Revitalized Church

We have strengths that we will build upon and concerns that we are addressing. In doing so, we recognize that the future will look differently than the past. We recognize that attractional events alone will not allow us to fulfill God's mission, but we must 'go and tell' as a redeemed people that love God and love others. We recognize that for the church to be relevant today, changes are essential in how we organize and do ministry. We value effectiveness in fulfilling God's mission over traditions. We are preparing for the future knowing that our decisions today will impact the church of tomorrow.

Category: Prayer

Concern: Revitalization is impossible apart from prayer.

Goal: To be a house of prayer.

Strategy 1: We will set aside 15-minutes per day to pray for FBC-S asking the Lord to revitalize us. (Start date: 2020)

Strategy 2: We will begin praying for seven churches that are given to us by our Association Missionary, Mike Haynes, that are in need of revitalization/replanting. This will be a part of our weekly Wednesday Prayer Gathering. (Start date: 2020)

Strategy 3: We will adopt Evan Skelton, a North American Mission Board/Missouri Baptist Convention replant missionary, and begin praying for his work at Bayless Baptist Church in South County, St. Louis. (Start date: 2020)

Strategy 4: We will pray for a Spirit led prayer revival in our land that will lead to the revitalization of many churches and stop the eight to ten thousand churches that are currently closing their doors every year in America. (Start date: 2020)

Category: Church Membership

Concern: Our membership roll does not match up to our weekly fellowship. This gives the impression that there are no expectations of members and that God arranging the parts of the body has no meaning.

Goal: To make church membership more meaningful.

Strategy 1: We will contact current inactive members on the role and seek to restore them to active membership (partners in ministry). (Start date: September 2020)

Strategy 2: We will implement a New Member Covenant (see attached) as part of the new Member Orientation that will communicate clear expectations of membership and what can be expected from the church family. (Projected start date: Spring 2021)

Strategy 3: We will refocus the four Sunday night business meetings per year by calling them Church Family Meetings. These meetings will include progress reports related to our plan to be revitalized, testimonies, times of prayer as we celebrate victories and intercede on behalf of our church family, and the necessary ministry reports the church needs to consider. (Projected start date: February 2021)

Strategy 4: We will lovingly minister to and pursue any member who turns away from the church family for the purpose of winning them back and living out the Great Commandments. (Start date: Fall 2020)

Strategy 5: We will remove from membership any member who is inactive for three years following ministry contact. (Start date: 2021)

Category: Organizational Structure

Concern: The current organizational structure was designed for a larger church and for a different time. Time is our most precious commodity, and we need to be more efficient and effective.

Goal: To simplify the church organizational structure to support our mission.

Strategy 1: We will implement an Operations Manual to serve as a third document included with our Church Constitution and by-laws that will include our committees, church policies and allow for virtual meetings and how the church will manage through a pandemic by appointing a special committee to bring a recommendation to the church. (Start date: November 2020)

Strategy 2: We will complete phase two of our signage project.

Strategy 3: We will increase the plurality of pastors as God provides by calling as the Lord wills some who are called and qualified from the church body to serve and lead so that a variety of spiritual gifts are represented on the Administrative Staff. (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, 1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Peter 5:1-4, & James 5:14)

Category: Worship Styles

Concern: We continue to divide over styles of music while seeking to maintain a single service enjoying the benefits of our cross-generational gathering.

Goal: To embrace cross-generational differences in styles of music and unify knowing that the Lord is pleased when we worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

Strategy: We will sing “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” along with “new songs” recognizing that the Lord enjoys variety as we worship Him through music.

Category: Ministry/The Great Commandment Principle

Concern: We struggle to see lost people saved and to efficiently carry out God's mission for His church to 'make disciples that make disciples.' We believe that the Great Commission is best fulfilled by living out the Great Commandments.

Goal: To be a church that is incarnational by living out the Great Commandments in order to fulfill the Great Commission.

Strategy 1: We will serve our community and neighbors by intentionally looking for ways to meet needs for the purpose of building relationships in order to share the gospel. (Start date: 2020)

Strategy 2: We will encourage every member to be committed by attending the Sunday morning worship service, a small group and to serve for at least one-hour per week.

Strategy 3: We will expand our small group opportunities by equipping members to host and/or teach 'home groups' believing that we can more effectively connect with lost people. This new ministry will replace our Sunday evening service. Business meetings will still occur on Sunday nights quarterly. (Projected start date: Spring 2021)

Strategy 4: We will offer an annual missions fair by inviting our ministry partners and other ministries to provide opportunities for our members to discern the Lord's will on places of service where they can love on others. (Projected Start date: 2021)

Strategy 5: We will reimplement the SMART (Small Maintenance and Repair Teams) to provide opportunities to serve by providing for the needs of our church and community. We will use the FBC-S Acts 1:8 Missions money from the Annual Missions Offering to help with the costs of these projects. (Projected start date: 2021)

Strategy 6: We will transition our Friday Freeway service to a "Friday's @ First" in partnership with Freeway and recruit mission teams from other local churches to help us with the volunteers needed. (Projected start date: 2021)



For the follower of Jesus, our mission is simple and comes directly from the words of Jesus Christ as he gave us the *Great Commandment* (Matthew 22:36-40) and the *Great Commission* (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Great Commandment: *“Jesus said, ‘Love the Lord your God with all our heart...soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.’”*
 Matthew 22:36-40

The Great Commission: *“Jesus said, ‘Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.’”* Mathew. 28:19-20

These two statements can be boiled down into a simple, memorable mission statement:
*We want every person to Love God, Love People, and Make Disciples.
 We say that we are “fulfilling the Great Commission in a Great Commandment way!”*

Membership Covenant

As a covenant member of the First Baptist Church of Springfield (FBC-S), I commit to being on mission. Specifically, I commit to Connect by gathering to worship Christ, to Grow as a disciple, to Serve as an act of love for others and as a means to fulfill the Great Commission, and Go as a missionary sent by Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.

As a Covenant Member I will:

CONNECT

Faithfully and joyfully gather for public worship with my church family. Participate fully as a worshipper of Jesus by serving the body, giving of my resources as an act of worship, confessing and repenting of sin and surrendering to God's will and way.

GROW

Actively pursue biblical community within FBC-S through regular involvement in small groups and classes in addition to regular personal devotional times. I understand the purpose of these groups and classes is building community with other believers and holding each other accountable.

SERVE

I will follow the servant model of Jesus Christ and serve others. I will make my attitude that of Christ and through humility, love others as Christ loves me.

GO

Pursue intentional, transparent relationships with non-Christians in my sphere of influence. Be involved with the living out and sharing of the gospel both locally and globally.

I recognize that these commitments are not requirements for being a Christian, but rather what it looks like to partner in ministry with FBC-S. I also recognize that by being a part of this church family, I can expect the church to love me as a covenant member of the church family and encourage and equip me to grow in my faith. I can also expect that my church family will be growing in their faith as they live out the Great Commandments and the Great Commission.

Member Name: _____ Date: _____

Member Signature: _____