

FPC Family:

Approximately every five years FPC engages in a long range planning process to identify future areas of focus for our church. This effort involves the entire congregation, and it is founded on a sincere attempt to discern God's will and direction for our church, in grateful response to His many blessings and the great love that He has for each one of us. With your joyful concurrence and participation, we are ready this year to move forward again with that process.

In preparation for this planning effort, a Long Range Planning Committee was formed last year, and after several months of prayerful reflection, they identified eleven areas that they felt that God was calling us to focus on. They are listed in the attached FUTURE VISION BACKGROUND, along with a rationale and scripture references for each one. We ask that each member of our church family begin prayerfully seeking God's guidance on these suggested focus areas.

We have planned a congregational meeting for Sunday, February 18th immediately after our worship service; at that meeting each member of the congregation will be asked to complete the Future Vision: Areas of Focus Response Form that is also included in this packet. Please note that there are spaces on the form for additional focus areas that you may feel God is leading us to. With the broad participation of our entire congregation, we are hopeful to receive a clearer indication of God's direction for our church. Brunch will be served at this meeting (there will be no charge for the meal, but donations will be accepted), and child care and a meal will be provided for the children. Our youth, middle school and older, are encouraged to attend the meeting.

As you begin prayerful consideration of these suggested areas of focus, please contact me or any of the other members of the Long Range Planning Committee that are listed below if you have questions or concerns. Thank you so much for your commitment to this process and to our church.

Respectfully,



Tausha Alexander	Stacey McAdams
Deb Hurt	Chris Alexander
Paul Taylor	Brian Williams
Steve Bowers	George Smith
Courtney Bowen	John White

FUTURE VISION BACKGROUND

I. Develop expanded and innovative programs for children and youth to increase participation.

A. Rationale:

1. As adults and as a church, we have a fundamental responsibility to guide our youth toward a relationship with God. Our Book of Order, in W-4.0201, says: "It is the responsibility of the whole congregation..... to nurture those who are baptized as they grow in faith and seek to respond to Christ's call for discipleship."
2. Our youth's spiritual growth is foundational to building and maintaining our church's spiritual base.
3. Given the challenges that today's youth face, it is more important than ever that they be well grounded in God's love.

B. Scripture:

1. Matthew 19:14
2. Proverbs 22:6
3. Mark 9:36-37
4. 3 John 1:4

II. Implement a program focused on our Elders' and our congregations' spiritual growth.

- #### **A. Rationale:** Our Elders' ongoing spiritual focus helps them lead lives of service that reflect the priorities of God's kingdom and helps open their hearts to the strength and guidance of the Holy Spirit for our church.

B. Scripture:

1. Hebrews 13:7
2. Acts 20:28
3. 1 Corinthians 13:2
4. Psalm 127:1

III. Establish a renewed commitment to meeting the special needs of our older members.

- #### **A. Rationale:** End of life issues are becoming more prevalent as life expectancy increases. There is a great need and opportunity to help our older members deal with issues such as grief care, general declines in health and wellness, dementia care, financial struggles, support for caregivers, increasing isolation, and end of life depression and uncertainty.

B. Scripture:

1. Leviticus 19:32
2. Exodus 20:12
3. James 1:27

- IV. **Develop a plan to increase funding for our facilities and property that could include creating a second restricted property fund designated for large capital projects that would be initiated with a capital campaign and supplemented on an ongoing basis with gifts.**
- A. Rationale: Our current annual operating budget only allows for routine maintenance projects and repairs. Our church buildings and grounds are blessings that God has given us and we need to ensure that they are kept in good repair, and that we utilize them to the fullest to grow the faith of our FPC members and welcome visitors seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ. A fund dedicated to large capital projects would allow us to plan and schedule major projects in a timely manner.
 - B. Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-12
- V. **Re-invigorate in person worship attendance to at least pre-covid levels.**
- A. Rationale: Our church's streaming service offers an opportunity to hear the word preached for those who absolutely cannot be present physically for the service. But, our physical presence together to worship God deepens our joy and gratitude for the great love that He has for each of us and allows us to better strengthen and encourage each other.
 - B. Scripture:
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 1:9
 - 2. Hebrews 10:25
 - 3. Matthew 18:20
- VI. **Promote diverse and innovative additional learning programs.**
- A. Rationale: Programs such as Theology Pub, Faith in Film, etc allow for more diverse methods of messaging and are potentially more approachable for some than Sunday School or traditional bible studies. These programs can also allow for the use of the church grounds in different ways and even move out into the community and take programming to people where they may feel more comfortable. Christ's physical life was that of meeting people where they were. He didn't wait in the temple for them to show up; He was mobile and dynamic in meeting people in various places and settings to spread His teachings.
 - B. Scripture: Matthew 5-7
- VII. **Increase our connection to, and interaction with, our Playschool program.**
- A. Rationale: The need for childcare is significant in our congregation as well as in our community at large. The current program is well regarded and does a wonderful job of instilling the message of God's love in the children. There are opportunities for outreach and community building among families involved in the program that could lead to new membership and increased ties to our church.

- B. Scripture:
 - 1. Matthew 25:35-40
- VIII. **Re-emphasize and re-invigorate Wednesday night dinner and study groups.**
- A. Rationale: The Wednesday night program is an opportunity for fellowship, study, worship, prayer, and support for our community of faith. It is a wonderful chance to share insights and otherwise assist each other on our faith journeys.
 - B. Scripture:
 - 1. Hebrews 10:24-25
- IX. **Evaluate and implement opportunities to support John and Courtney and reduce their workload.**
- A. Rationale: John and Courtney are constantly helping a congregation that they love very much deal with myriad problems, anxieties, stress, and suffering. The constant challenge of helping our congregation deal with these issues can be emotionally exhausting and even overwhelming. There is a need and an opportunity to help them cope and handle this seemingly growing trend.
 - B. Scripture:
 - 1. Acts 20:28
- X. **Renew our focus on our stewardship of the earth.**
- A. Rationale: FPC is caretaker of one of the most beautiful facilities and grounds in Tennessee. We are an Earth Care Congregation, and as such we have made a commitment to care for God's creation intentionally and vigorously. As our world endures global warming, we are called to set an example as we value and care for our grounds.
 - B. Scripture: Genesis 1:26
- XI. **Develop a plan to increase our funding for benevolences that could include creating a second restricted fund designated to support benevolences that would be initiated with a capital campaign and supplemented on an ongoing basis with gifts.**
- A. Rationale: We are called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us, and with a love that requires action. Approximately 6.7% of our current operating budget is designated for benevolences. Those gifts are supplemented by approximately \$5,000 in annual dividends from our New Covenant Benevolence Trust managed by the PCUSA. Earnings from an additional restricted fund could significantly increase our support for worthy charitable organizations.
 - B. Scripture:
 - 1. Matthew 25:35-40
 - 2. 1 John 3:18
 - 3. James 2: 14-26

Future Vision: Areas of Focus Response Form

As you discern God’s will and direction for our church, please prayerfully reflect on the following areas of focus and add any others that you feel are important to consider in our future vision of our church. Then please rank them according to the scale at the bottom of the page. Please limit each level of ranking to three focus areas. (i.e. only three focus areas can receive a high emphasis (1) rank.) Please see the attached Future Vision Background for a brief explanation of each suggested focus area.

	1	2	3	4
I. Increase focus on children/youth ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
II. Increase focus on the spiritual growth of our Elders and congregation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
III. Increase focus on the needs of our older members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV. Increase funding for our facilities and property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
V. Increase in person worship attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VI. Promote diverse additional learning opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VII. Increase connection to our Playschool program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIII. Re-invigorate our Wednesday night dinner and study groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IX. Increase the lay delegation of John and Courtney’s workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
X. Increase focus on our stewardship of the earth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XI. Increase funding for benevolences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XII. _____				
XIII. _____				

Rankings:

1. High Emphasis (Maximum of 3 focus areas)
2. Moderate Emphasis (Maximum of 3 focus areas)
3. Lower Emphasis (Maximum of 3 focus areas)
4. Low Emphasis (Maximum of 3 focus areas)