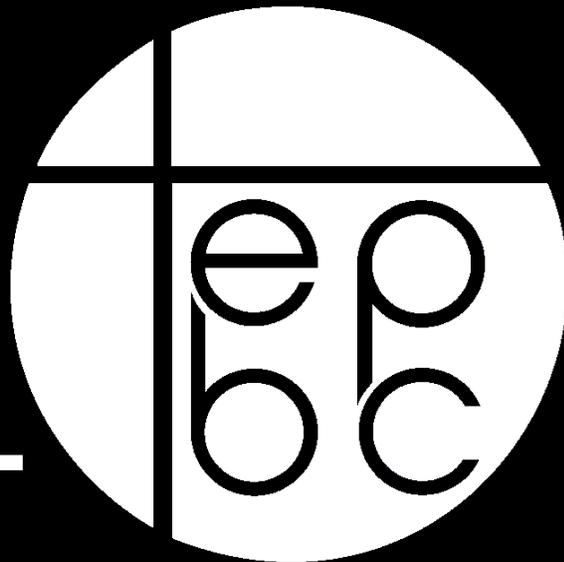


BEYOND 2020 REPORT



EAST PICKENS BAPTIST CHURCH

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Should the Lord tarry, what do we think East Pickens could look like in 2025?

In 2014, our church went through a discernment process that resulted in a bold 5 year plan. The result was the 2020 Vision Plan that was presented to the church. This plan has served the church well over the last 5 years, offering guidance in many ways. Many of the new initiatives recommended by the 2020 Vision team were attempted. Many of these initiatives were successful, resulting in a steady season of church growth and health. Some of the initiatives were attempted and were not successful. These failures offered moments of clarity, as well. A few of the initiatives from 2014 still lie dormant, yet to be attempted.

As 2018 drew to a close, it was impressed upon Pastor Jamie's heart to gather another vision team to discern what the next era of East Pickens will be. The Deacon Team selected 15 men and women who represented a vast array of ages, experience, ministry engagement, and tenure at East Pickens. This team met on Wednesday nights starting in early February and ended at the end of April 2019. In our meetings, we boldly prayed, discussed the history of our church, analyzed the current demographics of our area, evaluated our current ministries, evaluated our facilities, and discussed future plans for East Pickens. The result of that process is this report.

There are 4 stages of our discipleship process: Worship, Connect, Serve, and Share. Each of these values describe the ministry touchpoint that each believer should be engaged in the church, as demonstrated in Acts 2:42-47.

This report aligns with our discipleship process. Each section will have a definition, a biblical foundation, and a list of future recommendations.

Our recommendations are outlined on 3 levels:

-Immediate Recommendations that need to be addressed now.

-Short-Term Recommendations that need to be addressed in the next 1-2 years.

-Long-Term Recommendations that need to be addressed in the next 3-5 years.

Worship



Worship is regular engagement in our corporate worship services. It is healthy to engage the heart and mind, as we gather to glorify the Lord together. God has blessed our congregation for many years with a heart for worship. We want to continue developing this vital dynamic, utilizing our Sunday mornings as a strong way of reaching our community and displaying the glory of God.

Matthew 22:34-37

Immediate Recommendations:

-We see that a strategic communication strategy is one of the highest priorities we must address to reach more people and to keep our church connected to each other. As we have grown, it has become increasingly difficult to effectively inform our church concerning general updates, mission/ministry opportunities, and events. We are asking for a simple, unified church communication strategy as we move forward. We need to devote personnel and additional resources to establish clear lines of communication to the church using print, video, and the web.

-We acknowledge the priority of our online presence as we move into the future. It is necessary that our social media/online communication be prioritized as funds are available.

-The addition of the 11:15 service in March 2019 has been helpful in creating more space for Connect Groups and for worship. It will be important to secure the worship team necessary to lead this third morning worship service as soon as possible.

Short-Term Recommendations:

- As the breadth and complexity of the worship ministry grows, it will be increasingly important that we place a high priority on Worship Ministry leadership expansion.

- As more people have been attending church on Sunday mornings, our available parking lots are reaching maximum capacity. The expansion of parking is a vital issue to address in order to accommodate more people each Sunday.

Long-Term Recommendations:

-As we outgrow our worship space, it will be necessary to explore ways of expanding our Worship Center capacity to accommodate growth.

Connect



Connect is the challenge to “do life” with others in a Connect Group Bible study. Growing disciples are compelled to connect with others. It is important that we cultivate close connections with each other as we grow. Connect Groups foster healthy small group environments for the study of God’s Word, fellowship, and ministry to each other.

Matthew 22:34-37

Immediate Recommendations:

-We must maximize our existing adult and preschool classroom space. We should consider creative Connect Group locations to accommodate as many attenders as possible in Connect Groups.

-We recommend a Facility Expansion Team be formed by Fall 2019. This team will be appointed by the Deacon team to explore construction and funding options to increase our lobby/gathering space, children’s/preschool classroom space, and adult Connect Group classroom space.

-We call the church to a time of prayer and fasting as we approach expansion plans, seeking the Lord’s wisdom and provision for this project.

- The Preschool Ministry furnishings and toys should be updated as soon as the budget allows in order to demonstrate our priority of reaching future generations for Christ.

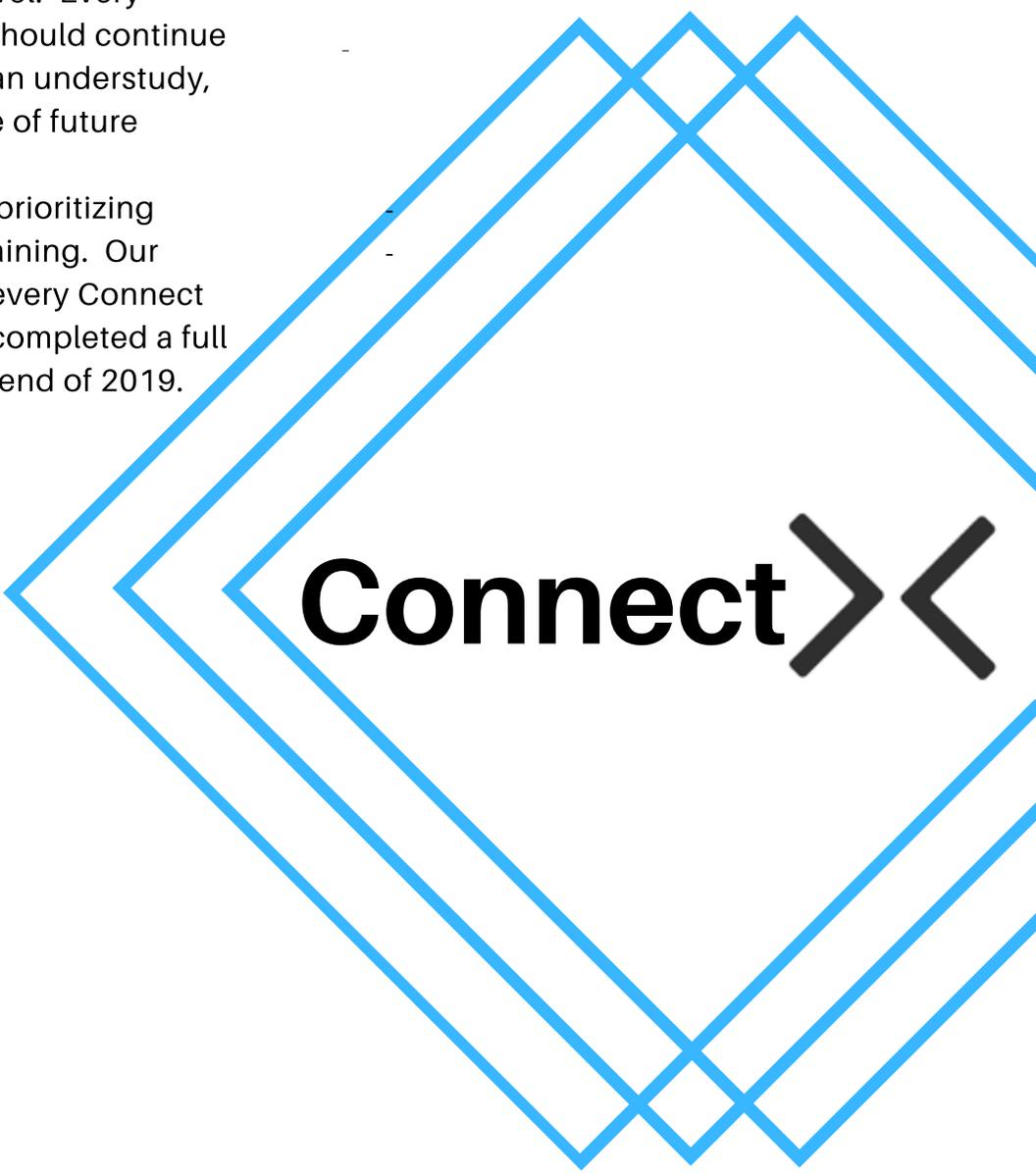
-As we have grown, we have seen many more preschoolers and children on Sunday mornings. This has put a strain on maintaining a full volunteer base for these ministries. We encourage the Children’s Ministry to lower the teacher/preschooler ratios in our classes by continuing to add additional workers to this vital ministry.

Short-Term Recommendations:

- We encourage all Connect Group teachers to prioritize discipleship and to coordinate ministry within their classes. Each Connect Group should be a “ministry unit,” caring for each other and growing their fellowship. As the church grows larger, Connect Groups will be the primary conduit by which people will connect with each other. Teachers should consider themselves as shepherds of their classes, discipling and caring for the people entrusted to them.
- Like every growing church, we need more leaders on every level. Every Connect Group teacher should continue to prayerfully designate an understudy, training up the next wave of future teachers.
- We see the necessity of prioritizing Connect Group leader training. Our recommendation is that every Connect Group teacher will have completed a full course of training by the end of 2019.

Long-Term Recommendations:

- We acknowledge that Sunday morning Connect Groups is our main Connect pathway. We must accommodate this priority by providing the space required to house this ministry for our growing church.
- As we explore facility expansion, we must keep thinking “out of the box” for Connect Group opportunities so we can continue to meet the needs of the people God brings to us.



Connect ><

Serve



Serve - Every Christian has been gifted by the Holy Spirit to minister in the church and to reach the world. Each of us is encouraged to discover his personal giftedness and to use those abilities through the conduit of the church. Serving the Lord is a great opportunity. We want everyone at East Pickens to discover the joy of serving the Lord by serving through the church. We desire to equip and empower our people to use their gifts in ministry and in outreach.

Philippians 2:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

Immediate Recommendations:

- We renew the challenge to see that every believer at East Pickens discovers his spiritual gifts, seeks out ministry opportunities, and plugs in to 1 or 2 serving opportunities as the Lord leads him.
- Our recommendation is that every attender at East Pickens participate in the Serve 101 class by the end of 2019.
- We see the importance of every volunteer at East Pickens training the next generation of volunteers. Every volunteer should have an understudy he is training to lead in his role as the ministry grows.
- We will continue to encourage a mentoring culture at East Pickens as a means of discipling servants in the church.
- Every volunteer needs to know their Ministry Role Description and understand the church vision for their particular ministry. This training should be accomplished by our Fall promotion date, August 25, 2019.
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-Short-Term Recommendations:

- As we surveyed our community we noticed pockets of populations we are underserving. We see the need for ministries to be started, or strengthened, that specifically target high school graduates, singles, single parents, and senior adults.
- We observed that many of our Connect Group teachers are mature leaders. It is imperative that our current teachers have an assistant to train so we continue the strong line of Bible teachers at East Pickens.

Long-Term Recommendations:

- One of our biggest obstacles to growth is an overall lack of training in most ministry areas. We must continue to place a high priority on a ministry training strategy that provides regular and thorough preparation for every ministry, birth to adult.

Share

Share - God has gifted each believer with resources to accomplish His Kingdom work. Each of us has been called to share of our Time, our Talent, our Treasure, and our Testimony to reach the world for Jesus. God has blessed us with these resources to be more than a personal blessing to hoard. Rather, we have been called to steward God's investment in us, leveraging His blessings to reach the world with the Gospel. We encourage proper stewardship of the investment God has given each of us. Mature Christians share of what God has given them to reach others for Christ.

Matthew 28:28-30; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Immediate Recommendations:

-We must emphasize prayer and evangelism as everyday disciplines for all believers. These disciplines are more than church events. These daily practices are the foundation of Christian living.

-Every believer's home is his primary mission field. Therefore, we are asking for a renewed focus on equipping parents to disciple their children.

-We see the need for a renewed focus on New Believer training for both children and adults. This training should include intentional relational discipleship.

-We must emphasize the spiritual gift of tithing and the joy of giving in our worship services and Connect Group classes.

-The church must emphasize the fiscal stewardship needed to address our reserve contingency fund while maintaining the upkeep of our 15 year old facility.

-We should explore ways to pay down our current facility debt of approximately \$550,000. At our current rate of payment, we will have this debt paid off by the end of 2022.

-Analyzing the needs of our community reiterated the importance of undergirding a strong Celebrate Recovery ministry. Celebrate Recovery can be a strong discipleship ministry that transforms many of the spiritual brokenness we see in our community.

-We must increase the frequency of effective testimonies in our worship services that encourage Christian growth.

Short-Term Recommendations:

-We see the benefit of focusing our mission priorities to strategic partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally. We will complete the process of formally adopting the Fulbe people of West Africa as our international missionary target as soon as possible while maintaining our other mission partnerships in Cincinnati and Cuba.

-We recognize the need to expand our local mission efforts in the greater Pickens area. We must address the needs of our community to capture their attention and to earn the right to share the Gospel.

-We must continue the important task of Mission Pickens, knocking on every door within a 5 mile radius of our church to bring the hope of Jesus. Since 2014, we have engaged approximately 30% of the households in this 5 mile circle. We want to see the remaining 70% of this ministry target reached before the year 2025.

-Within the next year, we must seek out a new national mission partnership as the current Cincinnati partnership is completed.

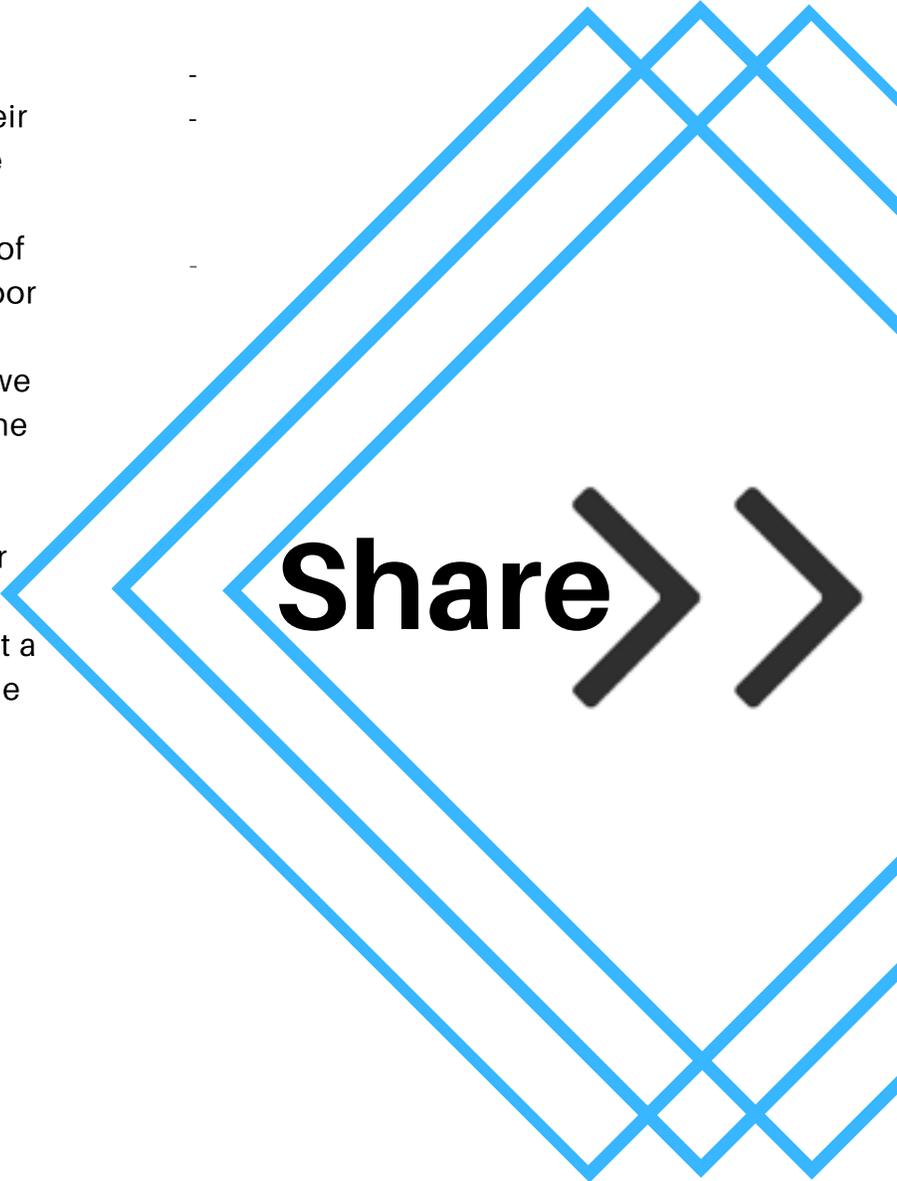
-We want to see 70% of our regular attenders engaged "on mission," participating in mission trips and involved in regular local and national projects. Currently, 58% of our regular attenders participate in these endeavors.

-By the end of 2019, every Connect Group should have a Prayer Captain who coordinates prayer efforts for each class. This person would track and share prayer needs within the class and pass along church-wide prayer requests to the class.

Long-Term Recommendations:

-In order to reach more people in our surrounding area we should explore expansion opportunities, including church revitalization and alternate campuses.

-We desire to be a primary sending church that plants churches, both locally and nationally.



Share > >