

LONG-TERM PLANNING SUMMARY

First Church Myrtle Beach

Dr. Ken Callahan

March 17-20, 2021

Wednesday, March 17 @ 6PM

Key 8 Open Accessibility, Key 9 High Visibility, Key 10 Land Landscaping and Parking

Make the church more visible. Remove bus station (music annex, building A) and arcade properties (building B) to revitalize and add parking

- More visibility and parking. Traffic driving south on Kings Hwy will be able to see the church from the Joe White Ave intersection. Arcade property blocks the view of the church. The steeple top is only visible above the buildings.
- Traffic in front of the church is and drivers are focused on the traffic light – not the church or the sign. Traveling from the South, the steeple is visible, but the building is not visible until drivers are at the traffic light.
- The older buildings need repairs costing us in the way of 1) Preventative Maintenance, 2) Ongoing Restoration, 3) Major Emergency Restoration, and 4) Insurance.
- Increase parking owned by FUMC. Giving estimates valued per parking space. Current parking capacity is 290, but only 40 owned by the church.
- Based upon our current budget numbers (tithes/offerings) the total value of each current parking space we use is \$7,000. Estimated gain of 30 parking spaces in place of the music annex will bring an expected value of \$210, 000 into the budget. Removal of the arcade buildings will allow parking spaces an estimated yield of 50 spaces at an expected value total of \$350,000.
- For example, tear down building A in Year 1 to add parking. In Year 2, reap benefits of new parking with increased contributions to church.
- The big oak tree (“Tree of Hope”) is the best feature of the church view, but it is not visible until one is right in front of the property.
- Bushes are too large and not particularly inviting & provide places for people to hide. Replace current landscaping, except for the Oak Tree, with low-lying, seasonal material/flowers (or dwarf flowering plant material). Colorful flowers improve visibility and are inviting. Bushes are barriers!
- Enlist help of small groups (Scouts) to plant/maintain floral beds nearer the road, at the corners of the property, and near the building.
- Accessibility referring from main road to the front door and from parking to the door; no directions for visitors.

Questions:

- Can the church utilize the parking garage across the street? In the past we have used.
 - Parking Garage is privately owned (subsidy of the City); fee based
 - Possibly use only for “big event” Sundays
 - Have greeters, beverage/donut station, help crossing street
- Cost and safety? Garage use would require an off-duty officer to allow patrons to cross the road. We could have a beverage/doughnut station for guests.

Comments:

- In the past it was suggested that a parking structure/building could replace the bus station; or, the church could construct a parking building with classroom areas in that space.
- A more visible location for the Thrift Store would be needed as it would need to relocate.

- Church could offer “paid” parking in church spaces to tourists especially with the new brewery open. Members park free with church sticker; church visitors park free (designated “visitor” signs/area)
 - Considerations: Would MB require a business license? Would the church have to remit admissions or hospitality taxes? Could be a good source of revenue to offset costs.
- Arcade building generates \$60,000 in rental revenue. Give tenants notice of revitalization efforts.
- People look for a church after having experienced a compelling event in life. The facility as well as members must be inviting.
- Another possibility to achieve the church's financial needs for revitalization: Large donor charitable contributions can avoid capital gains taxes for the individual.

Goals:

- October 2022 removal of bus building (music annex)
- October 2024 removal of Arcade building

Thursday, March 18 @ 10AM

Key 8 Open Accessibility, Key 9 High Visibility, Key 10 Land Landscaping and Parking

- What are the total persons who worship with us?
 - Our church attendance 10 years ago was 400, and currently there are 400 in attendance. With Easter and Christmas, the total served in worship is 950. We track worship primarily by the 10 best Sundays of a year for attendance.
- The arcade is a symbol of a rundown neighborhood. There is better security with open spaces than with cluttered and crowded spaces. The Pavilion has been gone 12-15 years.
- North Campus purchased 25 years ago
- People moving here, i.e. Del Webb community, and may not yet have a church.
- Main campus is valuable and developers want it.
- How do we efficiently run two campuses?
 - Chair of the Long-Range Planning Committee, Trustees, Pastors will lead two campuses compassionately.
 - One church, led as family, not as an organization. People long for family, friends.
 - Encourage people to live lives best as family/friends.
- How would policy and administration work with two campuses?
 - Finances are central—no separate funds per campus.
 - All monies would be tracked, but central.
- Staff coverage?
 - All staff per campus is staff for First Church. Separation could lead people to want separate churches.
- Would there be expansion/renovations to the North Campus building?
 - Callahan: Take care of main campus first, but plan ahead.
- How would the North Campus affect attendance at the main campus?
 - Callahan: It would; there is sufficient concern; 25 years without worship at the North Campus; people there would find us here.
 - Main Campus is not visible to people in the neighborhoods of North Campus.
- Easter service at North Campus?
 - Goal is 200 people for growth; less than that creates a “cell” (a grouping of people that may become disconnected; own interests, etc.).
 - One-time Easter service to gauge community response.
 - Best focus for N Campus is new people moving here.
 - Pastor Howle: The intent is to not take from this congregation to go to N Campus. Want two entries to the North Campus; current entrance is hard to find. Long-range plan for that site is to add a building larger than a

- gym with flooring to accommodate basketball activity, to have fellowship gatherings, and worship. Reasonable paved parking. Timeline is a few years. Entry on 67th has been cleared and some planting done.
- New developments in the area might have a clubhouse, etc., that could be used for small groups or worship. They have met with Del Webb project VP.
 - We are already connecting with the area around the North Campus—YMCA, Del Webb, schools.
 - Bishop Rivas: Purpose of the North Campus is for people who don't have a church; for new Christians. Starting a fourth service of First Church; also have Facebook and television campuses. One church, two campuses. Services will be different, more contemporary.
 - Pastor Howle: Must reach young people and young families. Averaging 500 people in attendance prior to Covid. Room for growth at the Main Campus as well as for North Campus.
 - The factors of worship—flowers, open, spacious, warmth, welcoming. When you invite someone to worship, think about the media used (texting, phone, etc.).
 - Welcoming opportunities: Parking greeters, new person greeters (for first-time visitors). Eighty percent of visitor's first impressions encourages them to return. Possibly have "pew greeters" for new visitors seated in the same pew.
 - Music is 40% of the worship experience, preaching about 40%, the service itself is 20%.
 - Unchurched people don't have/know traditions, etc.
 - Afterglow: The service is over, now what? First-timers are welcomed by someone after the service, but don't focus on church programs; only get to know the visitor. This is when visitors decide they are home.
 - Follow-up with visitors on Tuesday following worship (at the latest). Phone call, invite for lunch or coffee? Follow-up is not for information, but for friendship (connection).
 - 10 special events during the year—Easter, Christmas Eve plus eight more services (focus on the Sundays before and after each of the 10 special services to total 20 special services). Service suggestions—blessing the spring plantings, the fleet, the harvest, etc. (tailor to local events).
 - In Myrtle Beach, a blessing might be the car show, tourist season, golf season, first responders, teachers, blessing of backpacks, school starting.
 - More information was requested on the last segment on expansion, etc. The Main Campus needs more Sunday school and office spaces.
 - Suggested to survey the members to find out what they want to see in our church, especially plans for North Campus.
 - Pastor Howle noted the survey could be generated by the Long-Range Planning Committee.
 - More special service ideas were raised: A major church crusade with other churches, possibly Franklin Graham, coming to the Convention Center
 - Blessing for bikers, the tourist season, the Country Music Festival in mid-June, the Beach Ball Classic, the Snowbirds, Coastal Carolina University – football, basketball, new year students
 - Bishop Rivas suggested that our church get a booth, etc., at local events and give a presence there.
 - Rev. Callahan noted that Easter and Christmas Eve are the most important major/special services. Need 8 people who can plan these 8 major church/community blessing services. Don't need a committee.
 - This is a new beginning—starting over—plan the special community services and have music, sermon, etc. pertain to special service message/theme.
 - Questions
 - One bullet point from yesterday was how to make the contemporary service more visible.
 - Pastor Howle: Lack of marketing because we are First Church; need to market traditional and contemporary services. Some marketing currently in the North Campus area. Looking at name/signage branding—First Church; been here over 100 years. Want to rebrand and need marketing, i.e. Facebook, website, etc.
 - Callahan: Select five people to come to the contemporary service as a start. Suggested meeting with Heather (VP) from Del Webb She can reach 300 people. The people from that would be some of the new people.
 - First-time worshippers are looking for grace, peace, hope, and freedom. They can find that at First Church.

The meeting was closed in prayer.

Thursday, March 18 @ 2PM

Key 1 Mission Outreach

Where are we headed; what kind of future are we building?

- Missional church
- Focus on one major mission
- Legend – what are we known for?
- Times – mission needs to be relevant
 - Currently, filling needs: bunk beds, flood buckets, wheel chair ramps, coats & socks drives

Thursday, March 18 @ 4PM – pushed to Saturday due to weather conditions

Friday, March 19, 2021 @ 1PM

Key 7 Major Program

- The more one-time groupings per year, the more likely to create lasting groups
- Groups planned around common interests
- Best to possess a spirit of progress rather than perfection
- Plan groupings per year
 - 8 or more 1-time (OT)
 - 6 seasonal (S)
 - 4 short term (ST)
 - 2 seasonal plus (S+)
 - 1 weekly/monthly/long-term (may arise from one of the above)
- Grass-roots approach—better to build consensus among by using small groups in decision-making; top-down leadership is unproductive.
- N Campus service and re-start of contemporary—begin with small group giving input to elements of the service
 - Interesting, welcoming, music, presentation, service, after-glow, follow-up
 - Select 1 or 2 primary suggestions for 2 or 3 areas to build the service
 - Callahan: Build 4th worship service around 3 groups—CDM children, soccer families, Del Webb community—a 3-cell formula
- Perform necessary revitalization at Main Campus before proceeding with improvements to North Campus
- Create a CDM children’s choir to be featured at a special Sunday event at North Campus

Friday, March 19, 2021 @ 4PM

Key 5 Strong Leadership

Key 6 Solid Decision Process

- To raise strong, competent leaders mentors should be encouraging and hopeful. Threats cause people/things to wither
- For helpful decision-making process, keep process enjoyable for participants to reduce stress and aid in good decision-making. Claim your strength, decide on what to expand or add then move forward.
- Important decisions—utilize a 20/80 percent model; 20% of decisions make 80% of the impact. Make these decisions quickly, with confidence, encouragement, assurance and strength.
- “Decisions are discussed on the grapevines, then brought to the formal group for ratification.” (*Twelve Steps*, p. 143) Then take action to make the decisions that lead to results.

- Keep consensus by following up with emails/phone calls to confirm the decision made as a group and keep the plan on track, reassuring the group that it is thought to be a good decision.
- How can we be open and welcoming if the building (arcade) looks mostly dismal, the campus feels closed, there are “no trespassing” signs?
- How can we overcome the vagrant issues/sleeping on our campus, members & staff feel unsafe, people in the community and on the grapevine saying First Church is not a safe place to worship?
- Blending long-time members with new additions is a challenge, but all desire a sense of community, compassion and hope. All deserve respect.
 - Start with one-time gatherings featuring fun and fellowship to build relationships.

Saturday, March 20, 2021 @ 1PM

Youth

- Enthusiasm + Planning = Strong Future (E+P=SF)
- Events—not about numbers but about how often and authenticity
 - One-time (OT)
 - Short-Term (ST)
 - Seasonal (S)
 - Weekly/Monthly
- Things to consider or do
 - Reach out to middle/high school to build programs
 - Team of adults/youth talk to teachers and students (FCA and/or bible classes?)
- Events to consider or do
 - Spontaneous events
 - Major community events
 - Major project giving (every 3 years)
 - Annual giving
 - Enduring giving (endowments), long-range
- Five long-term missions for giving
 - Space and Facilities
 - Youth Mission/Ministry
 - Mission Outreach
 - Worship & Music
 - General
- Need breakdown of money/purposes
- Need timeline and benchmarks

Saturday, March 20, 2021 @ 1PM

Key 3 Music & Worship

- Music is the original way people know the church
 - #1 reason to join the choir—family
 - Similar to a Sunday School class, meets weekly for rehearsals and weekly for worship
 - To grow a choir, invite people sing at a “special event” Sunday (Christmas, Easter)
 - Attendance ratio is 1/3: for every one person singing in the choir draws 3 people to worship (example: singer, spouse, child)
 - People involved in music on special Sunday events find family and home in the music ministry
 - Grow the choir to a second service; start with the current choir, family, friends and build from there

- Sermons, two types
 - Simple, stirring, inspiring
 - Complex, thoughtful, profound
- For 10 major Sundays (Easter, Christmas, etc), utilize “simple, stirring”
 - One choir member brings 3 others (family) with them (multiply for entire choir)
 - A choir of 25 members could generate 150 people in worship—times 10 special services annually, etc.
 - Likewise for contemporary band(s), handbells, children’s choirs, etc.
 - 10 “Community Sundays” (major) grow to 30 services (Sunday before, Special Sunday, Sunday after)
- All other Sundays, utilize “complex, thoughtful”
- Prepare different choral responses for specific sermons or prayers
- Consider a second choir director for a second service
- Grow the music, the congregation will grow
 - Difficult to grow the choir loft—now place to expand other than forward
 - Callahan: Not necessary to change current format; option is to allow choir members to sit in the congregation with family.
- Utilize enduring gifts (endowment) toward correcting technical/aesthetic issues around music in worship
- Choose a theme for the year (Easter, Christmas 2022) then expand through the year with the other 8 community/special event Sundays as well as the Sundays before and after a special Sunday
- The first century church did not follow a lectionary or specific liturgy; thrived on the Risen Christ.

Questions:

- Do we have a traditional organ? Is the maintenance a drain on the budget?
 - After spending \$300K in recent years on improvements to the organ, it is good for another 50 years.
 - Upkeep is \$300 twice yearly for tuning
- Are the acoustics in this church the way we want them, and can changes be done electronically rather than physically?
 - The acoustics are not the way we want
 - We’re doing things but can’t change the way the Chancel is set up
 - We need volunteers willing to get training on the sound system
 - Pastor Meredith: need to consider hearing-impaired people installing a “hearing loop” system that works with hearing aids

CLOSING

Dr. Callahan concluded with an inspiring message about a man named Sam. The messages he received from his mother through his life, no matter how well he did, was, “That’s good, but you can do better.” The translation Sam heard was, “You never do good enough, you always fail.” Sam became an alcoholic; he never heard “well done.”

People grow and develop on “well done,” but they don’t do well on “you can do better.” It is a gift to people to say, “well done.” Sincere praise should be given for good work, not for shoddy work. The art is to encourage, not discourage, in life.

The meeting was closed with prayer.