

REPORT OF THE TRANSITION TEAM ON THE HISTORY & HERITAGE SELF-STUDY EVENT (Unanimously approved by Deacon Body November 23, 2009)

On November 15, 2009 the congregation of Woodland Baptist Church was led by Jeff Cranford, Transitional Interim Consultant, in an event that focused on the history and heritage of the church. The purpose of the event was to look back over the history of Woodland to identify the people, events, accomplishments, and changes of significance to its people. Once having identified these historical items, the group reflected on them with the goal of determining trends and learnings for the future—those things to celebrate and carry forward and those things to learn from and leave behind. The significant historical items, trends, and learnings are as follows:

ITEMS OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Demographic changes beginning in the late 60s that brought greater diversity of population to the area
- A new church building constructed in 1969 as a result of the relocation required by the widening of Route 29
- A set of goals beginning in the 60s and continuing through the 90s including moving the parsonage, the new church facilities, and social hall construction which reflected a sense of God's presence and working at Woodland
- Baby boomlets in the church in the late 60s to early 70s and late 90s into the early 2000s
- Focus on a fiscally sound church with 10% giving to missions influenced by Bill Goldie from 1973 to 1981
- A shift to not being a typical neighborhood church with attendees coming from greater distances
- Shifting denominational approaches and beliefs along with pastors with a different leadership style and focus, e.g. Frank Russ and David Blevins
- A new era of mission and outreach beginning in the 1980s and continuing to the present
- Between 1985 and 1995 a stronger community involvement by the church
- Connections between pastor, deacons, and teachers with all the congregation in the 1990s
- The W.E.L.L. center, expansion of church programs, and upgrade of church facilities in the 1990s to the present
- Death of key leaders Jerry and Garnetta, 2003/2001
- 2000s Youth on Fire/Missions, building of community with youth and kids, outreach to families
- Developing of discord, divisions, differences in congregation over traditional versus contemporary, worship styles in 2007
- Differences in theological views
- David Blevins departure in 2009

TRENDS IDENTIFIED

- periods of conflict
- diversity, differences
- change
- lack of shared vision and more personal agendas
- inward versus outward focus
- lack of education about the history and identity of the church
- faithful, loving people
- eager, effective leaders and pastor

LEARNINGS

- Need to find a shared vision
- Need effective communication across the congregation

THINGS TO CELEBRATE AND CARRY FORWARD

- A sense of family within the congregation
- A focus on missions and outreach
- Opportunity for effective and eager leaders to lead
- Developing of the potential of people for service

THINGS TO LEARN FROM AND LEAVE BEHIND

- Learn how to manage conflict constructively
- Learn how to assimilate a diversity of people, approaches, and views without creating silos of isolation within the congregation
- Learn how to communicate across the congregation so that everyone is on the same page about the identity, vision, and work of the church

WORK TO BE DONE

- Carry forward the strengths identified in this event to the Spiritual Directions event
- Rebuild a shared vision and identity through the Spiritual Directions event
- Identify and develop tools for communication and integrate them into the life of the church
- Develop approaches to conflict resolution and apply them to differences to foster unity
- Study the demographics of the community and determine the diversity of needs and outreach methods needed to connect with and assimilate them into the life and work of the congregation