

In September 2009, the majority of the congregation of Woodland Baptist church voted to enter a five month self study process using the consulting services of Jeff Cranford from the Virginia Baptist Mission Board. The results of the congregational discussion from the first three self-study events follow. Please take the time to review each. Should you have any questions, please contact one of the Transition Team members (Terry Crickenberger, David Giles, Anne Scruggs, Penny Umbarger or Joey Wright). The final self study event will be on February 21st during both the Sunday school hour as well as after the worship service. Please plan to be in attendance for a discussion regarding “Affirming Partnerships and Beliefs, reviewing denominational relationships and beliefs”. Background information regarding the Baptist faith as well as differentiating characteristics of segments within the Baptist community can be obtained from the church’s website, www.woodlandchurch.org, by emailing Anne Scruggs at ascruggs@montvue.com or in the vestibule of the church.

REPORT OF THE TRANSITION TEAM ON THE HISTORY AND HERITAGE SELF-STUDY EVENT #1

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.

REPORT OF THE TRANSITION TEAM ON THE WOODLAND SPIRITUAL DIRECTIONS DAY SELF-STUDY EVENT #2

VALUES STATEMENT:

Over-arching and empowering our values is the desire to live together in covenant with one another and God, experience the presence of the Holy Spirit, share a commitment to the betterment of our church and community, and communicate with one another with integrity.

We value...

- *Creative, God-honoring worship and the continuing development of our music and worship ministries*
- *Effective church administration led by persons with clearly defined roles and expectations who are committed to a strategic focus and fiscally sound ministry*
- *Personal involvement in outreach through service in our global and local communities from a base of unity and support by our congregation*
- *Strong church ministries designed to meet the needs of all people in our congregation.*
- *Spiritual growth through recognition of spiritual gifts and discipleship training resulting in the involvement of all members in ministry and evangelistic witness*

VISION STATEMENT:

Over the next three to five years we desire to ...

- *develop creative, God-honoring worship opportunities*
- *increase the effectiveness of our administrative ministries*
- *encourage personal involvement of all members in outreach service*
- *strengthen ministries for all members*
- *involve members in discipleship training, gifts-based ministry, and evangelistic witness*

We envision a growing congregation of active members that expresses its own uniqueness within the larger Christian community by evolving an original model of being and doing Church.

GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION:

- *We, as a congregation, will establish measurable goals in each vision area*
- *We, as a congregation, will plan specific implementation steps to reach these goals*

TRANSITION TEAM REPORT
DISCERNING NEW TESTAMENT MINISTRY SELF-STUDY EVENT #3

The third self-study event was conducted on January 17, 2010 with eighteen participants. Through a group sharing process the attendees sought to identify the ways church leadership and organizations function that are inconsistent with biblical principles and/or the values and vision statements from Spiritual Directions Day and how changes can be made to more effectively apply biblical teachings and pursue the church's vision.

The results of the day's sharing are summarized as follows:

- An equipping/discipling/training/process is needed at Woodland and should be incorporated into all organizations and leadership roles.
- The organizational structure of the church should be revamped using more flexible examples of empowering organizations that are adapted to Woodland's culture.
 - The preparation, enlistment, and deployment of members in ministry should be more Spirit led/driven and directed versus being controlled by existing organizational structure as defined under Woodland's constitution.
 - Communication and involvement must be increased by incorporating provision for them in organizational structure. (Coordination of ministries)

Implementation of these shifts in leadership and organization should be pursued by appropriate leadership groups.