

REPORT OF THE TRANSITION TEAM ON THE
INTERIM SELF-STUDY PROCESS OF
WOODLAND BAPTIST CHURCH
March 14, 2010

RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Transition Team recommends that the following results of the self-study process be implemented following the adoption by Woodland Baptist Church. The implementation will be facilitated by several relevant Sunday school block studies over the coming months including Finding Your Place in Ministry and Moving to Team Ministries. The Transition Team will assist other church leaders in the application process.

- ❖ Developing
 - An equipping/discipling/training/process is needed at Woodland and should be incorporated into all organizations and leadership roles.
 - Involve members in discipleship training, gifts-based ministry, and evangelistic witness
 - The preparation, enlistment, and deployment of members in ministry should be more Spirit led/driven and directed versus being controlled by institutional needs and filling of positions.
 - The organizational structure of the church should be revamped using more flexible examples of empowering organizations that are adapted to Woodland's culture.
- ❖ Connecting
 - Identify and develop tools for communication and integrate them into the life of the church
 - Increase the effectiveness of our administrative ministries
 - Communication and involvement must be increased by incorporating provision for them in organizational structure.
 - Craft approaches to conflict resolution and apply them to differences to foster unity
- ❖ Sharing
 - Build creative, God-honoring worship opportunities
 - Encourage personal involvement of all members in outreach service
 - Strengthen ministry for all members
 - 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
- ❖ Partnering
 - Confirm in the church constitution and bylaws the preferred affiliations with the Baptist General Association of Virginia, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Baptist World Alliance.
 - Confirm in the church constitution and bylaws the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963 as the preferred summary of beliefs of the church.

The Transition team also recommends that the pastor search committee use the information in this report in screening and interviewing candidates for pastor.

Respectfully submitted,
Transition Team Members: Terry Crickenberger, David Giles, Anne Scruggs, Penny Umbarger, and Joey Wright

Review of Studies

HISTORY AND HERITAGE SELF-STUDY

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
 - 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

VALUES AND VISION SELF-STUDY EVENT

On Sunday, December 13, 2009 the congregation of Woodland Baptist Church was led by Jeff Cranford, Transitional Interim Consultant, in an event that focused on God's mission, vision, and values for this congregation. Entitled Spiritual Directions Day the event was an opportunity for the people of God at Woodland to discover their shared values and vision. The result of the day's sharing identified priority values, which reflect the identity of the congregation and its sense of God's direction for the future. From this information the congregation will develop strategic goals for the future.

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 ministry 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

DISCERNING NEW TESTAMENT MINISTRY SELF-STUDY EVENT

On January 17, 2010 the congregation of Woodland Baptist Church was led by Jeff Cranford, Transitional Interim Consultant, in an event that focused on 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 preparation, enlistment, and deployment of members in ministry should be more Spirit led/driven and directed versus being controlled by institutional needs and filling of positions.
- Communication and involvement must be increased by incorporating provision for them in organizational structure.
- The organizational structure of the church should be revamped using more flexible examples of empowering organizations that are adapted to Woodland's culture.

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

DENOMINATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND BELIEFS SELF-STUDY EVENT

On Sunday February 21, 2010 the congregation of Woodland Baptist Church was led by Jeff Cranford, Transitional Interim Consultant, in an event that focused on affiliations with denominational partners and the core beliefs of the church. The purpose was to discern some of the basic positions of the church in relation to these two key areas in order to establish criteria for screening candidates for pastor. Following presentations by Jeff Cranford and discussion, a survey was completed by those present. The selections made were as follows:

Of the 30 persons completing surveys 29 preferred affiliation with the Baptist General Association of Virginia while none expressed a preference for the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia

Among the national and/or international the following were preferred by the number of persons indicated: African American Fellowship (1), American Baptist Convention (2), Baptist World Alliance (14), Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (30), and Southern Baptist Convention (17).

In response to the question, "which Confession of Faith or Baptist Faith and Message, if any, has your church adopted/affirmed or you believe is generally preferred by the majority of your present church membership and staff," all 30 selected the Baptist Faith & Message 1963.

In response to the question, "which statement is closer to what the majority of your congregation believes the Bible teaches about salvation" all 30 selected: Christ offers the gift of salvation to all. We witness to everyone, knowing that anyone can potentially be saved if he or she will only confess to being a sinner, repent, and trust in Jesus. Each person decides whether or not to trust in Christ for salvation.

In relation to pastoral leadership style, 29 persons selected the statement: While serving as the spiritual leader of the church, the pastor expects the congregation as a whole to retain much responsibility for considering and voting on significant church matters in church-wide business meetings and through committees elected by the congregation. One selected the statement: As well as serving as spiritual leader of the church, the pastor is responsible for the direction of the church and makes decisions regarding church affairs without relying much on votes by the church as a whole or by congregation-elected committees.

Based on these responses the preferred affiliations of Woodland are Baptist General Association of Virginia, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Southern Baptist Convention, and Baptist World Alliance. The beliefs of the congregation are best reflected in the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963.