



The complete proposal from the Vision Team  
for the next five years and beyond  
May 2018

First Baptist Church  
215 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Radford, VA 24141





*Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.*

- Philippians 3:13-14





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## A Brief History of First Baptist Church

The First Baptist Church of Radford, Virginia was founded in 1886 as a result of missionary outreach work, which followed the expanding railroad system. In its earliest years, the church was known as Central Baptist Church. Thirty-nine persons were recorded as founding members. In 1921 the congregation moved to its present location (two blocks from the campus of Radford University). The 1921 sanctuary was destroyed by fire on Sunday, January 4, 1948. The building was reconstructed on the original foundation, and in the summer of 1949 worship services were held in the new building. A few of today's older church members remember these events. In recent years the church purchased four nearby properties in order to facilitate future opportunities for expansion.

The church has often undertaken various mission projects both in the United States and abroad. Congregants, ranging in age from elementary school children to retirees, have undertaken mission projects in various places including: South Dakota, Arkansas, New Orleans, Baltimore, Toronto, Central America, Europe, Africa and Asia. First Baptist has also consistently been involved in ministry to its community and has often partnered with various community organizations to help meet human need. The church has also shown a steady and keen interest in ministry to the Radford University community. A new ministry, still in its infancy, involving a residential faith community with space for homeless RU students, is housed in a rental property owned by the church.

First Baptist Church is a regional congregation; active members reside in the city of Radford as well as in Pulaski, Montgomery, Floyd, and Giles counties. Like many churches in the United States, First Baptist is smaller than it once was. This is due to changes in our larger culture as well as recent significant demographic shifts in the local community. Although there are active families including children and teenagers in the church, the congregation has a high percentage of senior adult members. Nevertheless, the congregation has demonstrated profound interest in discovering God's new vision for this church, and moving intentionally into the future together.



## Our Journey Toward Vision Discernment: The Process

Dr. Bill Wilson, from the Center for Healthy Churches, was asked to consult with FBC Radford through the visioning process. During the Sunday morning service on March 29, 2017, the church was introduced to the members of the Journey Forward by God's Call Vision Team, whose charge is to guide the entire church membership through the journey to discern God's vision for FBC Radford.

The Journey Forward by God's Call Vision Team members are:

Kirsten Mosby, Chair	Charles Millsaps, Co-chair
Clare Fugate	Nelson Sifford
Bonnie Graham	Meg Stone
Melvin Lester	

Staff members who participated are:

Paul Lane, Pastor  
Kent Taylor, Associate Pastor  
Kay Ellerman, Minister of Music

The Vision Team entered into a covenantal commitment to seek deeply God's guidance. We pledged to pray for one another, respect individual differences, be open and honest and to "speak the truth in love."

Our congregation and Vision Team prepared for this visioning process by reading the book, *40 Days of Prayer: Preparing Ourselves for God's Calling*, by Mark Tidsworth.

Throughout the process, the Vision Team has communicated with the congregation through Sunday worship "from the heart" sharing, Wednesday night prayer service updates and guest speakers, the church newsletter, bulletin boards and displays throughout the church, and informational letters sent through the mail.

Dr. Wilson introduced the Vision Team to the spiritual visioning process using the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) model. Appreciative Inquiry differs from the traditional method of identifying the problem and then finding a solution to the problem. Appreciative Inquiry concentrates on identifying the positive attributes of our church and focusing on how we can build on and improve those strengths. In the words of Dr. Wilson, we need to "pour jet fuel on our strengths." The involvement of the entire church congregation is critical to the success of this journey.

The desired outcomes of the Journey Forward by God's Call Vision Team are:

- Clarify the congregation's unique identity
- Identify the congregation's core values
- Identify the arenas of mission and ministry about which the congregation feels most passionate and feels called to pursue
- Project the types of facilities needed to fulfill the congregation's sense of call for future missions and ministry





The Journey Forward by God's Call Vision Team was challenged with very specific tasks:

- Function as the eyes and ears of the congregation during the planning process
- Process dates and guide the timeline
- Facilitate small groups
- Collect and interpret data
- Communicate data to the congregation
- Re-evaluate the process
- Present goals and action plans to the congregation
- Recommend a design and structure for implementing the goals and action plans adopted by the congregation
- Determine how to motivate the congregation to fully trust and embrace this process

Throughout this journey, the Vision Team gathered and synthesized diverse foundational input from many sources. These informational contributions came not only from members of our congregation through three "congregational conversations," but also came from various members of the Radford community. Vision team members spoke with Radford City leaders, Radford University leaders, local realtors, and various non-profit organizations.

During several Wednesday night services, we welcomed several guest speakers. Radford City Manager, David Ridpath and Rob Gropman, Radford City Council member, shared information to the group regarding the demographics and economic conditions of the city of Radford. Superintendent of Schools, Rob Graham, and Vicki Collins, Director of Radford City Department of Social Services spoke to the attendees regarding the rapidly changing needs of the children and families in Radford City. Radford City is the poorest municipality in Southwest Virginia and up to 50% of school children receive free or reduced lunch. Many children in the city are raised by grandparents or live in households where the parents are unemployed or underemployed. Laura Turk, Executive Director of Alumni Relations at Radford University, explained that approximately 40% of students at RU are first generation college students. Many of these struggle financially and may be in need of support with housing, food, and other basic needs.

We learned through these initial informational conversations from community and university leaders, that there are many urgent needs in our community. Many students at RU are in dire need of emotional and spiritual support. Numerous school children and their families not only struggle with economic hardships but are also in need of spiritual and emotional support.

As we journey through this process, our goal is to gather, absorb, and synthesize diverse foundational input from many sources. Information not only from our church family, but also from community and university leaders is a critical piece of guiding us toward God's vision for FBC Radford: nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.



## Our Journey Toward Vision Discernment: Congregational Conversations

### The Past

Our first Congregational Conversation was held on October 8, 2017. Church members gathered to recall our past and our personal history with FBC Radford. We created a time-line that indicated the year each of us joined FBC. Most members at this session joined FBC during the 1980's through the 2000's. There were notable exceptions. A few members joined in 1950's and 1960's and one member joined FBC that very day, October 8, 2017!



We had a grand time looking at collections of pictures throughout the years at FBC. What fun it was to have these visual reminders of our past. Remembering our large, energetic congregation inspired us to capture our memories and celebrate the success and vitality of FBC Radford. During this initial congregational conversation, we answered three questions:

- Why did you join FBC Radford?
- When did FBC become "the church" for you?
- What keeps you here at FBC Radford?

Most participants of the first congregational conversation said that they joined FBC Radford because family members attended the church, or a friend had invited them.



The overwhelming response to “what keeps you here” was that congregants stayed at FBC Radford because of the nurturing, fellowship, and feeling of being a part of a family. Other frequent responses to this question were: love of the music, common values, authentic worship, service opportunities, family, friends, tradition, Christian education, minister and staff, theology, and worship style.

Many touching stories were shared from members as they recounted when FBC became “the church” for them.

- One father remembered that on Christmas Eve, when Joe Burton was pastor, he would present the newest born baby and carry the child to the vestibule at the conclusion of the service. Eighteen years ago, his son was that newborn baby.
- A single mom remembered that while going through a difficult divorce, her Sunday School teacher, Koni Millsaps, called her every day to check on her and her children.
- One young, long-time church member remembered participating in “sword drills” under the Christ-like guidance of Ray DeHart.
- Another young woman who has attended FBC since birth, feels a strong sense of pride and community among this body of Christ.



After gathering and collating information, the core positives of FBC clearly emerged. As a congregation we value:

- Inspiring Worship: Sunday services are intentionally crafted so that music, prayers, scripture and sermon connect to a central theme, which facilitates a focused and meaningful worship experience.
- Building Meaningful Relationships: We share a worldview that God’s love is central to life’s meaning and intentional living. Relationships that foster and exhibit this deeper appreciation are created and nurtured.



- Nurturing Spiritual Growth: Christian discipleship is a lifelong journey with Jesus. We study, learn, share, and serve others together along the way. Growing in spiritual maturity and faithfulness enriches our lives beyond measure.
- Serving Community Needs: We identify needs in our community that our congregation has the resources to address. We eagerly work together to meet these needs while developing new and diverse friendships.

## The Present

The second phase of the process was on November 12, 2017. Ninety participants were asked to examine a list of our current church ministries, choose one or more ministry, and to reflect on its value and effectiveness. Attendees were asked to discuss in detail what works well about that ministry, what should be added to that ministry for improvement and what should be dropped from that ministry to make it work more effectively.

We received over 200 responses from these “Kool-Aid” (KeeP, Add, Improve, Drop) sheets. Each sheet contained valuable information regarding ideas on specific areas FBC should keep, information on things to add, areas to improve, and suggestions for areas to drop. Over 800 suggestions were systematically studied, categorized for the purpose of discovering the core values of FBC and the ministries in which we excel. This information gave the team meaningful insights to the attributes that FBC values.

One emerging positive value of our church was that our church **“inspires quality worship.”** Many attendees and members of the congregation love our traditional service and music, and some would love to see additions of occasional “contemporary” music and other elements added to the service.

Another positive value noted was that FBC **“nurtures spiritual growth”** through small group activities and Bible studies. The deacon ministry and prayer ministry were also noted as strengths. Many attendees hope that FBC will find ways to reach out to RU students and add more in-depth classes on sharing the gospel and biblical literacy. It was also noted that FBC could improve on including the youth and children in the Sunday morning service.

**“Serving Community Needs”** is another area we value at FBC. Attendees are proud of FBC’s outreach to the community and beyond with activities such as Operation Inasmuch, Elf Shelf, Rise Against Hunger, hosting Head Start, and many more. Participants had a myriad of ideas to add for service to our community. Suggestions ranged from “hunters for the hungry,” to refugee resettlement, to weekend mission trips, to more community activities, to providing bus transportation. An addition that was most frequently mentioned was providing a place for RU students to use as a study area, a “safe place,” and a space to congregate with one another.







FBC also sees our **“Building Meaningful Relationships”** as a core value of our church. We want to continue to build on our senior activities, Wednesday night suppers, fall neighborhood picnic, deacon visitations, and the welcoming atmosphere of our church. Creating partnerships with other churches, providing activities for RU students and school children, more pot-luck dinners, and supper groups were some suggestions for strengthening relationships within our surrounding community.



*(Fall neighborhood picnic)*

From this congregational input, the Vision Team was able to determine four clear core values that are the driving force of our church. Our congregation believes we do these things well:

- Nurturing Spiritual Growth
- Inspiring Quality Worship
- Serving Community Needs
- Building Meaningful Relationships

These four values are our Core Positives and the “North Star” or driving force of our journey forward.

## **The Future**

Our third congregational conversation was held on January 14, 2018. Participants were asked to dream “God-sized dreams” and asked to provide provocative proposals for ways that they envision God leading FBC Radford in the future. Conversations ensued between the 80 members gathered around the tables describing what we could be if we let go and let God work. Nearly 200 proposals emerged from individuals and table groups. These proposals were focused on our four core positives:

- Nurturing Spiritual Growth
- Inspiring Quality Worship
- Serving Community Needs
- Building Meaningful Relationships

All of these suggestions and proposals were systematically studied, summarized and incorporated into the God-sized dreams of FBC Radford and future implementation plans. Most of the proposals coincided with our hopes that FBC will be the community church for RU students and provide shelter and outreach, FBC Radford will form partnerships with other churches in the community and provide opportunities for children after school.

The God-sized dreams presented in this document are the direct result of the spiritual discernment process that allowed all members of FBC Radford to offer their vision for our church. These dreams are intended to be

# *Journey*

FORWARD BY God's CALL

Spirit-led and inspired so that our trust is not in our own abilities, but rather in the power of God to lead and direct our congregation into a new era.

We recognize that a vision is ever changing. Some aspects of a vision - how it is communicated and implemented - can change over time. Because of this, our vision should be periodically revisited, reviewed, and adjusted. Any modification of our God-sized dreams should only deal with specific implementation details, not its core purpose.





## Our Core Positives



**BUILDING  
MEANINGFUL  
RELATIONSHIPS**



**INSPIRING  
WORSHIP**



**NURTURING  
SPIRITUAL  
GROWTH**



**SERVING  
COMMUNITY  
NEEDS**



## We Worship God



Our worship glorifies God  
and inspires us to live like Jesus.

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*Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.  
- Psalm 29:2*

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### *Implementation Suggestions:*

1. Conduct periodic evaluations of our church's worship ministry in order to gauge its level of inspiration, innovation, and instruction.
2. Explore offering additional worship experiences at alternate days, times, and sites.
3. Expand the role of laity in worship.





## We Nurture Our Faith



We are a family of biblically and theologically literate believers.

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*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*  
- 2 Peter 3:18

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### *Implementation Suggestions:*

1. Nurture biblical literacy in all age groups through a comprehensive Christian education plan.
2. Encourage each person to embrace his or her own spiritual journey toward Christlikeness.
3. Conduct periodic themed spiritual growth events.



## We Serve Others



We are the hands and feet of Jesus  
in our community.

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*"I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me."* – Matthew 25:35

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### *Implementation Suggestions:*

1. Partner with other churches to meaningfully serve community needs such as mental health, addictions, hunger, and the elderly.
2. Partner with school systems and community organizations to support needs of children and families in our community.
3. Expand our ministry to the needs of college students regarding homelessness, hunger, and spiritual and emotional support.



## We Make Friends



Our faith-based community generates enduring friendships through radical hospitality.

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*Let us love one another, because love is from God. – 1 John 4:7*

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### *Implementation Suggestions:*

1. Create opportunities to develop new friendships with other congregations.
2. Encourage new friendships with visitors to our church, such as inviting guests to lunch with members.
3. Deepen friendships within our congregation, especially with those who are newer to our church.
4. Foster personal relationships between college students and church members.





## Official Motion to the Congregation

for consideration at a called business meeting on May 20, 2018

The Vision Team offers the following motion; if adopted implementation shall begin on May 20, 2018.

1. First Baptist Church acknowledges the four core positives of this congregation are:

Inspiring Worship  
Nurturing Spiritual Growth  
Building Meaningful Relationships  
Serving Community Needs

2. Based on these strengths, First Baptist Church adopts the following God-sized dreams for this congregation:

- ◆ Our worship glorifies God and inspires us to live like Jesus.
- ◆ We are a family of biblically and theologically literate believers.
- ◆ Our faith-based community generates enduring friendships through radical hospitality.
- ◆ We are the hands and feet of Jesus in our community.

3. First Baptist Church shall relentlessly pursue the above God-sized dreams. The church shall align itself in accordance with these dreams, which shall serve as the guiding principle for the organizational structure, staffing, finances, facilities, and ministry of the church. The four God-sized dreams shall serve as the guiding principle for the church's planning, implementation and evaluation of its ministry and activities.

4. First Baptist Church adopts the organizational structure as outlined on pages 23-29 of this report.

5. Whenever certain elements of this proposal differ from the current church constitution and by-laws, this proposal shall take precedent over those specific elements of the constitution and by-laws until such time as the church can update the constitution and by-laws to reflect these changes.





## Structured for Ministry: Overview



## Structured for Ministry: Detailed Examples

*Existing and future Action Groups are categorized under their primary Ministry Team below.*

### MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS Ministry Team

#### Possible Action Groups

- Social Events
- Senior Adults
- Visitors Follow-up
- Grief Ministry\*
- New Members
- Women's Ministry
- Dinner Groups
- \_\_\_\_\_

### INSPIRING WORSHIP Ministry Team

#### Possible Action Groups

- Baptism
- Lord's Supper
- Music Ministry
- Audio/Visual
- Flowers & Candles
- Enhancing Welcome
- Lay Leadership
- \_\_\_\_\_

### SPIRITUAL GROWTH Ministry Team

#### Possible Action Groups

- Sunday School
- New Christians
- Bible School
- Curriculum Design
- Small Groups
- Family Ministry
- Library
- \_\_\_\_\_

### COMMUNITY NEEDS Ministry Team

#### Possible Action Groups

- Hunger Projects
- Clothes Closet
- W.M.U.
- Project Events
- College Students
- Public Partnerships
- Global Missions
- \_\_\_\_\_

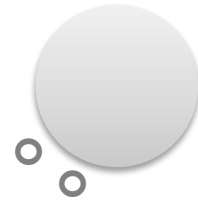
\*Grief Ministry, under Meaningful Relationships, is a new name for the work of the former Christian Services Committee





# What is a Ministry Team?

## *...and what are Action Groups?*



**MINISTRY TEAMS** are made up of people who have a passion for serving God and people through a specific focus area. These volunteers may have related training, talents, spiritual gifts, or simply a compelling sense that this is where they can best contribute to the work of the kingdom of God. We will have four ministry teams, each with a unique focal area:

Inspiring Worship  
Building Meaningful Relationships

Nurturing Spiritual Growth  
Serving Community Needs.

Each ministry team will continually strategize to accomplish the God-sized dreams proposed in this vision document. Suggested implementation ideas will be evaluated for their potential effectiveness in aligning with the God-sized dream. The ideas chosen will then be developed through SMART goal planning:

Specific  
Measurable  
Attainable  
Realistic  
Time-based

What's the difference between a ministry team and a committee?

Each ministry team will include volunteers from the congregation as well as appropriate staff ministers. Volunteers may serve as long as they continue to feel they can contribute meaningfully to the work. New team members can be added at any time by the existing team.

### **Ministry Teams:**

- made up of persons with a passion to serve
- members stay on as long as they wish to serve
- determine their own emphasis areas each year
- coordinate closely with other ministry teams

### **Committees:**

- enlisted by the Nominating Committee
- typically have term limits of 1 to 4 years
- follow a prescribed role within a job description
- may operate in isolation from other groups

**ACTION GROUPS** are made up of people who feel passionate about doing specific work that supports the work of the ministry teams. Each action team has one specific job or emphasis. Some of these have existed previously as committees and may continue to carry out the same responsibilities, but without term limits. They may be of any appropriate size. New volunteers can be added at any time.



## **ACTION GROUPS** (continued)

Example #1: the Audio-Visual Committee consists of 4-5 persons who have a special affinity for operating a sound system and radio broadcast during worship services. Converting from a committee to an action team means they will no longer need to be enlisted by the Nominating Committee each year. Instead, members serve as long as they are interested in continuing.

Example #2: a ministry team could determine there is a short-term need to create an action group for a specific assignment. The ministry team could advertise for volunteers, directly enlist participants, or ask the Nominating Committee to assist with enlistment. Upon completion of their task, this action team could disband.

## **SUMMARY THOUGHTS ABOUT MINISTRY TEAMS AND ACTION GROUPS**

- ❖ Ministry teams will coordinate closely due to anticipated overlapping of some of their work. For example, college student ministry will involve all four God-sized dreams.
- ❖ Ministry teams will have significant latitude to initiate new ministries and projects as opportunities develop, given their assigned responsibility to further the church's adopted God-sized dreams.
- ❖ Outreach and evangelism should be taken into account by all four of the ministry teams as they plan and carry out their work.
- ❖ Some Action groups will exist for a short-term duration, while others will be needed on an ongoing basis.
- ❖ Action groups may recruit their own membership as needed.
- ❖ Many current committees may become Action groups.

## **THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY TEAMS: YEAR ONE**

During the first twelve months or so within the new structure, each ministry team will be encouraged to select only a few tasks or projects to work on as they relentlessly pursue alignment of their ministry area with its specific God-sized dream. They will set SMART goals, and develop the human and financial resources needed to accomplish those projects. They will be able to clearly explain what groups of people are being targeted by each project, and how meaningful encounters will be facilitated. Finally, they will carefully review the effectiveness of each endeavor, and evaluate how they are making progress overall toward accomplishing the God-sized dreams. They will also provide input to the Journey Coordination Team on how and when paid staff members can be most helpful to their work.



## Team Ministry Leadership Structure

### **JOURNEY Coordination Team**

#### **WHO WILL STAFF THE COORDINATION TEAM?**

The four Ministry Team leaders, two Deacons, and ministry staff members will comprise the membership of this group.

#### **HOW WILL THE LAY PERSONS BE SELECTED?**

The Deacons will recommend to the church two at large deacons. For the first appointment, the Deacons will also enlist the Team Leader for each Ministry Team and recommend these to the church also. After the first appointment, Team Leaders will be selected by the Journey Coordination Team and recommended to the congregation for approval, as vacancies occur.

#### **WHO MAY SERVE AS A TEAM LEADER?**

Any active member of the church qualifies for consideration.

#### **WHAT WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE JOURNEY COORDINATION TEAM?**

The Coordination Team will meet monthly to share what each ministry team is planning and doing, to coordinate calendars, to plan appropriate financing in the annual budget, to communicate and promote the overall work to the congregation, and to advise when changes to emphases are needed. The group will review progress toward accomplishing all four God-sized dreams on a continual basis. The Team Leader of the Journey Coordination Team will be the Pastor.

#### **WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS?**

Each team leader will guide her/his team in relentless alignment with its specific God-sized dream; everything a team does will be geared toward making its God-sized dream a reality. A Team Leader will guide her/his team in: setting goals, coordinating action groups, communicating budget needs to the Finance Committee, and evaluating effectiveness. Team Leaders will work closely with appropriate church staff members, and they will serve on the Journey Coordination Team. Ministry Team leaders are responsible for leading the meetings of the Ministry Teams.



## Personnel as a New Ministry of the Deacons

### DEACONS

The Deacons, like the Journey Coordination Team, will operate from the heart of the new structure and will interact with all four ministry teams. This is common even now: Deacons assist in leading worship; they work to building meaningful relationships (such as the recent Fish Fry); and they contribute in various ways to both nurturing spiritual growth and executing community outreach projects. But the Deacons also provide a distinct ministry from other groups through hospital visitation, homebound visitation, and other forms of pastoral care to our church family. This will continue to be the unique ministry of the Deacons.

The Deacons have carefully weighed the dynamics and implications of the proposed vision and have voted to accept Personnel Ministry as an additional responsibility. They will approach this role as a MINISTRY in which they will *collaborate* with all staff members about their effectiveness in helping the church fulfill the four God-sized dreams.

These responsibilities may include the following.

- In the kick-off year the group might meet with the three ministerial staff members every 3-4 months to monitor and evaluate progress, to offer input and feedback, and to tweak responsibilities if needed.
- When need is demonstrated, the Deacons might collaborate with the ministry teams to propose revisions to staff position descriptions.
- Current staff positions might be considered for adjustments between full time and part time status.
- Some staff positions might be eliminated and new positions could be created, as required.
- Deacons will recommend salary structures to the Finance Committee for annual budget planning.
- Deacons will be responsible for ensuring that empty staff positions are filled appropriately. They may choose to delegate this role to others in the case of non-ministerial staff.

#### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- ❖ No staff position changes are recommended in the initial vision plan proposal. However, the wider scope of the work will continue indefinitely and should be dynamic from year to year.
- ❖ Significant changes to personnel and staff positions would still follow the provisions of the church constitution, and must still be approved by the congregation in business session.



## Structure for Foundational Operations

### **ADMINISTRATIVE Support Groups:**

**Church Officers   Endowment   Properties   Finance   Memorials   Nominating**

#### **Church Officers:**

Moderator	Church Clerk	Church Treasurer
Vice-Moderator	Assistant Church Clerk	Assistant Treasurer

#### **Committees:**

Endowment Committee  
Properties Committee – includes subgroups for Ministry House, Vehicles  
Finance Committee - includes subgroup for Tellers  
Memorials Committee  
Nominating Committee - responsible for staffing these committees, church officers, Sunday School

*Each of these groups will continue forward with the same responsibilities that they currently have.*

#### **Committees to be discontinued:**

Discipleship – Spiritual Growth Ministry Team replaces  
Facility Partnerships – no longer needed  
Music – integrated into Inspiring Worship Ministry Team  
Outreach – all 4 ministry teams will address outreach within their area  
Personnel – becomes Personnel Ministry, assumed by the Deacons (*see page 24*)

#### **Committee functions that will be carried out by Action Groups:**

Adjunct Properties (becomes Ministry House)	Lord's Supper
Audio/Visual	Missions
Baptismal	Social
Christian Services (becomes Grief Ministry)	Tellers
Flowers and Worship	Ushers & Greeters
Library	Van

#### **Church Council to be discontinued.**





## Frequently Asked Questions

Why is a plan like this one necessary?

**Because of the rapidly changing “look” of churches today, the congregation voted to think strategically about how we might fulfill God’s mission in our community more effectively. Clarity of mission is essential for effective ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This plan is an attempt to “re-dream” and focus our ministry plans for the next three to five years**

How will this plan be implemented?

**The plan calls for a Journey Coordination Team comprised of lay-persons, deacons, and staff. There will be subgroup Ministry Teams for each of our God-Sized Dreams for: Nurturing Spiritual Growth, Inspiring Worship, Serving Community Needs, and Building Meaningful Relationships. These Ministry Teams will utilize smaller Action Teams for specific initiatives/programs/outreach activities. Each team will prayerfully seek to introduce initiatives that will guide us toward our “North Star,” our dreams and vision for the future of our church.**

How will the church keep up with the plan’s implementation progress?

**The Journey Coordination Team will be responsible for making sure the Ministry Teams remain focused on our God-Sized Dreams (Nurturing Spiritual Growth, Inspiring Worship, Serving Community Needs and Building Meaningful Relationships).**

What costs will be incurred as a result of the plan’s implementation?

**Any expenditures beyond what has been adopted by the church through the regular budget process will come to the church for approval, as stated in our church bylaws, except when supplemental funds are available from the church’s Endowment Fund and other non-budget sources.**

What changes will come out of the plan’s implementation?

**We anticipate that some of the church structures will be realigned in order to provide for a more expedient and responsive ministry approach. Some ministerial staff may have some of their responsibilities adjusted in order to reflect our church’s ministry vision. Some committees will be changed or may become “Action Groups.” Some committees will be dissolved.**

Why wasn’t my suggestion included in the appendix list of possible implementation ideas?

**Input from the congregational conversations resulted in over 800 responses, observations, and suggestions. The Journey Forward by God’s Call Vision Team considered each of these. The Vision Team collated and categorized each response. Suggestions that were similar were written as one idea. (Please see appendix for a more complete list of possible implementation idea suggestions.)**



## **FAQ's, continued**

Can I volunteer to be on a ministry team or action team? How can I be a part?

**Yes, you may certainly volunteer to be on any team for which you feel a passion or "calling." The success of our plan depends on you! Think about what God has equipped you to do. Your expertise, your passion, and your input will be invaluable.**

Does this plan represent an exhaustive list of future ministry initiatives?

**No, this plan does not represent an exhaustive list of future ministry initiatives. As the various committees begin their work on the proposals/suggestions listed in the plan, they may see the need for unforeseen ministry initiatives, which will come before the church through the appropriate channels.**

Does the Journey Coordination Team replace the Church Council?

**No, there is no longer a Church Council. The Journey Coordination Team coordinates the tasks for our God-Sized Dreams (Nurturing Spiritual Growth, Inspiring Worship, Serving Community Needs, Building Meaningful Relationships).**





## Our Journey Toward Vision Discernment: Timeline

Fall 2014: 3 Task Force groups were created.

Fall 2016: Deacons recommended a church consultant.

November 2016: Dr. Bill Wilson met with deacons, church council, and staff.

January 2017: Congregation was mailed details of the church visioning process and on January 18, 2017, the church voted to enter a contractual relationship with Center for Healthy Churches.

March 5, 2017: The initial Leadership Team was selected and met with Dr. Wilson on March 8, 2017. On March 29, 2017, the church voted on this Leadership Team to initiate the first phase of the process, Conflict Resolution.

April 9, 2017: Dr. Wilson spoke to the congregation explaining his role as consultant and the visioning process.

May 5 & May 9, 2017: The Leadership Team and Dr. Wilson facilitated "Listening Groups."

July 5, 2017: Church-wide information session with Leadership Team and Dr. Wilson (make-up session on July 9 for those who could not attend).

August 2017: Deacons suggested members for the Vision Team.

August 16, 2017: Church voted to accept the deacons' suggested members for the Vision Team.

August 19, 2017: Vision Team participated in an all-day work retreat.

August 22 & 28, 2017: Prayer circles were organized for Visioning Team and process.

August 27, 2017: Charles Millsaps spoke to the congregation explaining the Vision Team's process and purpose.

August 30, 2017: 40 Days of Prayer began.

September 10, 17, 24 & October 1: Members of the Vision Team led the congregation in prayer for the Visioning Process.

September 19, 2017: David Ridpath, City Manager, spoke at a Vision Team meeting regarding the demographics and economic status of the city of Radford.



September 24, 2017: Kirsten Mosby updated the congregation on Vision Team's progress.

October 8, 2017: Dr. Bill Wilson began our "launch event" with the first congregational conversation about FBC's past. Prior to this "launch event" each member of the congregation was mailed a letter explaining the beginning stages of the visioning process. Deacons also contacted shut-ins to give them an opportunity to give input. Our logo was revealed.

October 25, 2017: Rob Graham, Superintendent of Radford City Schools, and Vicki Collins, Director of Radford City DSS, spoke at Wednesday night prayer service regarding the unique needs of the students in Radford City Schools.

November 8, 2017: David Ridpath, Radford City Manager, and Rob Gropman, Radford City Council Member, spoke at Wednesday night prayer service regarding the demographics and economic status of the city of Radford.

November 12, 2017: Dr. Bill Wilson preached; 2<sup>nd</sup> congregational meeting about "the present."

January 7, 2018: Members of the congregation reflected on the 40 Days of Prayer throughout the Sunday morning service. Nelson Sifford gave an update on the vision process to the congregation.

January 14, 2018: Dr. Bill Wilson preached; 3<sup>rd</sup> congregational meeting about "the future."

February 10, 2018: Vision Team participated in a day-long writing retreat with Dr. Bill Wilson.

April 11, 2018: First Town Hall Meeting to discuss basic structure needs to implement our four God-sized Dreams.

April 29, 2018: Second Town Hall Meeting to introduce the detailed plans for each God-sized Dream and the detailed structures proposed.

May 20, 2018: Congregational lunch and called business meeting for the congregation to consider the entire Vision Proposal and act upon it.

***Launching the Vision begins immediately after adoption by the church.***



## APPENDIX A: Suggestions from the Congregation for Implementing our God-sized Dreams

The following are provided for reference of Ministry Teams in their annual planning.

### *Inspiring Worship*

OUR WORSHIP GLORIFIES GOD AND INSPIRES US TO LIVE LIKE JESUS.

*"Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness."*

- Psalm 29:2

- Engage all people/generations
- Relevant across generations and backgrounds
- Various components of worship service (change/add) contemporary, time of day
- Participating/active participants
- Acknowledges our short-comings and uplifts God's grace
- Incorporates lay leadership
- Is atmospherically holy, reverent, relevant, beautiful
- Provide variety of worship experiences (holy, reverent, musical)
- Provide levels of intellectual stimulations
- Affirm worship as a time to exalt God with awe and wonder. Participants are so deeply inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit that they invite family and friends.
- Implement strategies around worship and host spiritual activities that create a sincere, warm, and welcoming sense of community and serve to build and unify the church fellowship.
- Implement worship opportunities, strategies, and marketing that welcome and appeal to diverse people/groups (young families, college students, adults, apartment communities, Head Start). Identify advocates for each group.
- Cultivate lay worship leaders. Children, teens, college students, adults, and seniors provide leadership.
- Incorporate a variety of worship services, styles, artistic expressions, sermons, prayer, scripture presentation, and music (drama, cross-cultural, new technologies, videos, slides, live streaming, stage designs, banners, illustrations, lighting, contemporary music, duets, quartets, guitar, and old-time gospel hymns).
- Fully embrace and continue a traditional style of worship.



- Design baptism as a significant celebration of worship. The baptizing minister makes it joyous and the congregation applauds and sings a song of celebration with the candidate who has just come up from the baptismal waters.
- Conduct evaluations or provide opportunities for feedback on our worship ministry to gauge its level of inspiration, innovation, and instruction.
- Provide a free hot meal on one Sunday per month at noon after worship to welcome and include diverse people and groups to come and worship with us and us with them.
- Have pre-or post-sermon dialog, face-to-face or online, to give people an opportunity to dig deeper and address questions.

### ***Building Meaningful Relationships***

OUR FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY GENERATES ENDURING FRIENDSHIPS THROUGH RADICAL HOSPITALITY.

*"Let us love one another, because love is from God."*

- 1 John 4:7

- Sharing meals in smaller groups
- Intentional follow-up of guests
- Serving together in community projects
- We support each other in times of crisis
- To own the Masonic Lodge and make it a safe, Christian based place for college students to study or just hang out.
- FBC and partnering churches effectively reach out to provide a niche for community members who are in search of friendship and spiritual growth and support. With tolerance and acceptance of diverse thinking, FBC through partnering with other churches, will provide opportunities for various age groups and diverse thinkers to participate in both traditional church activities (missions activities, Bible study, book group discussions, week-night worship service, etc.) and non-traditional activities (mother's morning out, coffee shop, community lunch, Tai Chi, etc.) held at FBC. Facilitators for these activities will be not only members of FBC, but also members of other congregations, and members of the community.
- First Baptist Church sets the standard for effective ministry to college students in the local area by providing diverse opportunities for student engagement based upon their needs and interests. Radford University recognizes that First Baptist Church is a valid and significant source of assistance to meet student needs.
- Our ministry house on Downey Street is an intentional faith community. Students do not have to be Christian to be residents, but all must express an interest in exploring spiritual dimensions and serving in the community together while living there. Church members are weekly in contact with these



students, through Bible studies, meal sharing, meals out together, meals at church, and community projects together.

- Our ministry house also provides rent-free housing for students in verified distress.
- We provide a unique food ministry specifically for hungry students who are unable to afford all living expenses while attending college locally.
- We partner with BCM to host meals and ministry opportunities for students.
- We contact BGAV churches each summer to let them know of the many ways FBC can be of support to their students at Radford University.
- We offer a non-Sunday morning time of worship in a style that appeals to college students. This may not necessarily imply contemporary style, since this style is commonly available in our area. Rather, it might be to offer a unique style such as Taize or Table-based Worship.
- Start a youth program run by retired teachers to help with homework or to tutor
- Place for parents to pick up their children after work
- Greeters at each door to welcome everyone warmly
- Visiting our members and friends at the hospital
- Website and Facebook page to communicate with members and our community
- More monthly events for children and youth
- Potluck dinners to involve college students
- Adult retreats/fellowship maybe while youth are on a trip
- Adopt a block around our church
- Look for ways to have members share their stories with the church so that we better understand one another's faith journeys.
- The facilities are refitted with spaces for gathering, to include informative signage, so that members and guests can find space when they are on site for prayer, friendship-building, and resting with God.
- A care structure is implemented in which small groups and Bible study classes serve as the front-line givers of care and compassion to members during seasons of grief, health issues, and crisis, while ensuring that those not connected with a group, including older adults, homebound participants, and widows are nurtured and cared for by the people of the congregation. This structure deploys the deacons to fulfill their mission of care and prayer while also equipping Bible study classes and small groups to care for one another.
- We form a social media team that is tasked with sharing vibrant announcements, sermon quotes, and inspirational messages via our social media accounts
- Activities involving seniors in nursing homes and assisted living facilities
- Ushers give to visitors a handout with detailed info about FBC, such as weekly schedule, opportunities for engagement, staff bios, etc.
- Provide lunch for guests in the fellowship hall after worship service with assigned members.
- Revive ministry of adopting RU students



## *Nurturing Spiritual Growth*

WE ARE A FAMILY OF BIBLICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY LITERATE BELIEVERS.

*"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."*

2 Peter 3:18

- Offer a comprehensive ministry design for nurturing children, teens, and families in personal and spiritual growth. All activities are demonstrably purposeful in creating a joyous atmosphere of learning, sharing, and serving others.
- A staff minister is dedicated to creating and implementing a complete ministry to children, teens, and families, as well as creating outreach opportunities to reach new families.
- The baptism of children and teens is always a significant celebration of worship.
- Seminars are provided for parents on being spiritual role models at home, understanding the stages of a child's spiritual development, and creating conversation about the spiritual dimensions of family life.
- Family-centered outreach projects in the community are carried out which reinforce the good each person is capable of contributing to others. Intentional debriefing reinforces this.
- Children and teens provide leadership in worship. Parents share faith journeys in worship.
- Annually, First Baptist Church partners with one or more local churches to accomplish a major family-oriented learning or service-oriented event in the community.
- First Baptist Church expects all participants in congregational life to be growing toward a mature commitment to living a life grounded in following Jesus as a devoted disciple and based upon biblical and doctrinal literacy. Our Christian education plan is designed so that children are nurtured within developmentally appropriate stages of learning. The design accommodates both adults who enter the church fellowship with extensive church and Bible background, and also those with little to no background in Christianity.
- A Christian education work group creates the scope and sequence of learning to be accomplished for each stage of child development, and for adult education. The group implements the plan by careful evaluation of curriculum, teacher training, and periodic review. The work group also designs short and long-term plans for adult education, to include new member training, "seeker" explorations, and ongoing adult learning opportunities.
- A "confirmation" process is created for older children and/or younger teens so that the long-term goals of learning can be highlighted, and progress monitored. Upon completion of the confirmation process, the congregation celebrates appropriately.
- New teachers are recruited, trained, and prepared to become teachers or group leaders.
- Short and long term small group learning opportunities are anticipated and provided as needed.
- Creative approaches to scheduling Christian education experiences allow for breaks that give teaching faculty time off.



- Vacation Bible School is given careful and critical scrutiny as to its effectiveness in learning and/or outreach versus expense of human resources and is retooled or replaced as deemed appropriate.
- FBC demonstrates a functional understanding of its responsibility to nurture the spiritual life of each individual and family through worship, education, fellowship, and service.
- FBC demonstrates a common, accepted understanding of what it means to worship, regardless of style.
- FBC is a learning organization, both in terms of Biblical literacy and membership in the Body of Christ.
- FBC embodies the spirit of the early New Testament Church which was grounded in agape love: fellowship and mutual support.
- FBC presents the face of Christ to the world through service "Unto the least of these."
- Individual Spiritual Training Plans
- Spiritual Leadership Academy
- Provide on-line courses and seminars for continued learning
- Invite guests as a short-term leader to speak on their specialty
- Have events that target needs in the community
- We use Sunday School and small groups to teach
- Adults at FBC are dedicated to approaching people and families in their own neighborhood
- Bible study that engages the community
- We have counselor/mentor for every member.
- We are known throughout NRV/SWVA for being a missionally based entity.
- College Bible study on Monday nights with Wed night supper at 5:30
- All members and participants are taught and coached through drafting their own spiritual training plan. Regular renewal of spiritual training plans is the hallmark of our congregational commitment to ongoing spiritual growth and transformation and preparing them to serve the world.
- A new small group ministry plan is developed that includes Sunday morning Bible study classes and small groups that meet throughout the week in various locations. All of these groups exist to disciple others and reproduce new groups within 18-24 months, emphasizing actively mentoring new leaders.
- We develop a spiritual leadership academy where adults, youth, and children learn how to live as spiritual leaders who mentor others in their life-long journey of obedience to Jesus.
- Provide more small group studies, both short-term and long-term.
- Host annual weekend event with well-known author/speaker; special music & open to the community.
- Expand prayer ministry to include instruction on how to lead in public prayer, such as directed prayer, conversational prayer, etc.



## *Serving Community Needs*

WE ARE THE HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

*"I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you took me in."*

- Matthew 25:35

- We have created a "safe place," study facility, gathering and worship place for university students.
- FBC has developed appropriate strategies to contact referring agencies for those struggling with addiction.
- FBC is well known by the larger community because of the church's commitment to human need. Whenever school, government, or other community leaders become aware of needs in the area FBC is at the top of the list of resources.
- FBC will be the "go to place" for community members and RU students to participate and sign up for various community opportunities.
- FBC will be the main contact for RU when classes and clubs need to complete service hours.
- FBC is often called upon by administrators at RU whenever there is a student who has a particular need or is experiencing any sort of crisis situation; the church responds swiftly to meaningfully address the situation. The church's collegiate ministry does more than react to emergencies. Students know that the church is a safe haven and supportive family during their time here.
- Reach out to underserved people, the youth and to the university/college age individuals by providing food and assistance, engaging activities, bible student and community involvement
- Incorporate other church groups, civic groups/organizations, and RU to help address community needs
- Spiritual, emotional, mental, educational, and physical needs of families in our Head Start program are met through innovative efforts and active partnering with churches (Rock Road) and community organizations
- FBC will provide a free hot meal every Wednesday at 5:30 as well as a monthly hot meal on a Sunday afternoon with various opportunities to sign up for the upcoming service projects as well as career focused initiatives: upcoming job fairs, information on who's hiring in the community and what classes might be offered for certifications at NRCC
- Through partnership with students at RU, FBC provides after-school instruction in music, dance, drama, and art. These fine arts activities will be located at FBC. Transportation will be provided from school to church and back to individual homes. Snacks supervision, and instruction will be provided by church members, community volunteers, and RU students. Performances will be presented by the children during occasional Sunday morning services. Parents and friends of the participants will be invited to attend.





- We provide a place for school-age children to come for after school activities which will include academic, emotional, and spiritual support.
- In association with Radford University, RU students will earn internship/practicum experience while providing after-school instruction.
- All churches and faith-based organizations in Radford work together, combining and sharing their resources and ideas, to support children and families through schools. FBC supports the lives of children and families in Radford by partnering with Radford City Schools to meet their physical, emotional, and academic needs.
- Conduct a survey of FBC members to determine abilities they have to offer and if they commit to serve
- Meet with school superintendent with findings from the survey to determine how these FBC resources can connect with the student and their families
- Establish a joint planning and operations team with whom teachers and administrators will communicate and address needs
- Retired teachers tutoring children, men fostering boys who have a male figure in their life, groups within the church providing funding for specific needs of a student, individuals, or groups sponsoring a teacher or classroom.
- We share our facilities generously with the community, and position hosts at these community events in our space who radiate the hospitality of Christ. Policies, procedures, and costs are developed to encourage community use of our facilities.





## Appendix B

### The City of Radford: Economic and Demographic Challenges in 2018

The City of Radford has experienced fluctuating economic cycles over its 125 year history. In 2018, the City faces a challenging economic reality. Significant fiscal and demographic changes have occurred since 1980 that have contributed to this current situation. The Vision Team members did not fully understand the depth of these challenges when we began our work in August 2017. We did not fully appreciate that the Radford of the 1990s and the 2000s no longer exists. We learned about this current reality over a period of months as we sought out and received information from various sources, including:

Radford City Manager David Ridpath  
Radford City Councilman Rob Gropman  
Radford Chamber of Commerce Director Lisa Davis  
Radford University Executive Director of Alumni Affairs Laura Turk  
Radford Public Schools Superintendent Robert Graham  
Radford Department of Social Services Director Vicki Collins

The work of the Vision Team from August 2017 to April 2018 was shaped by our deepening understanding of the current reality in Radford. As we came to realize that the City of Radford has significantly changed, we also came to understand that these same changes impact our church. We cannot return to the First Baptist Church of the 1990s and the 2000s; Radford City demographics affect our church demographics. Our proposal to the FBC Congregation flows from this challenging but inevitable conclusion.

What follows is a summary of information gleaned from our interviews, from a study of the City of Radford Strategic Plan, and from an article published in the Roanoke Times on February 10, 2018. Additional facts are set out in Appendix C: Research Gleaned from Social Service Agencies and are not repeated here in their entirety.

#### **Businesses and Employment:**

- In the 1980s, local retail businesses began to close or relocate to shopping centers outside the city.
- In the 1980s, major employers left the City including Lynchburg Foundry, Brad-Ragan, Russell Apparel, Burlington Industries, and Scotts Run.
- In 1999, Radford Community Hospital moved out of the City.
- While the role of businesses and industries declined from the 1980s, Radford University's role grew. The Roanoke Times describes RU as the "clear commerce driver in the city" as of 2018.
- Radford University is now the top employer in the City, with almost 1,600 employees. RU accounts for more than one-sixth of the total employment in Radford.



- There are approximately 4,500 primary jobs located in the City; 57% of those employees do not live in Radford but commute in to Radford to work. Less than 30% of Radford's population both live and work in the City.
- From 2011-2016, there was an increase of only 0.5% in the total number of workers employed in Radford. (The total number of workers in 2016 was 7,000.) Growth occurred in educational services, accommodation and food services, and health care. Decline occurred in manufacturing and public administration.
- Radford lacks layers of employment opportunities because of the loss of industry jobs. Residents tend to be high-wage earners or low-wage earners, with few middle-wage earners remaining.

#### **Access to New Land and Housing:**

- In 1987, the Virginia Legislature placed a moratorium on land annexation by all Virginia cities. This impacts Radford in many ways: Radford cannot annex land to attract new business expansion; Radford cannot annex land that would add new taxable land and generate new tax revenue; Radford cannot annex new land for new housing development.
- Housing availability in Radford has become a problem that impacts demographics and the City's ability to attract new businesses: 49% of the City's housing was built before 1970; 20% was built during the 1970s; 0.4% was built between 2010-2016.
- Radford has become more "bedroom oriented" rather than "single-family residence" oriented. The housing growth is occurring in bedroom rentals, not family homes.

#### **Demographics and Household Finances:**

- The population in Radford grew 7.55% from 2000 to 2015 (from 15,859 to 17,057). Of the total population, the City has about 8,000 permanent, non-student residents in 2018.
- Radford University current student enrollment exceeds 9,400. RU students now comprise over 50% of the City's total population.
- Radford University is one of the least-expensive colleges in Virginia. 40% of RU students are first generation college students. 33% of RU students are from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- The ratio of prime working age individuals (ages 25-54) to students and retirees has decreased approximately 13% since 2000. Every one prime working-age individual supported 2.93 people in 2015 compared to 2.59 in 2000.
- The real average median household income of City residents has decreased by almost 20% since 1990.
- In 2015: 33% of Radford residents were below the poverty level; 11% of families were below the poverty level; 15% of individuals 65 and older were below the poverty level; 21% of children were below the poverty level. The number of individuals who require public services continues to grow, while the number of individuals most likely to financially support those services continues to decrease.
- In 2006, approximately 25% of students at McHarg Elementary School received free lunch. That figure has increased to 67% in 2018.



## APPENDIX C: Research Gleaned from Social Service Agencies

### **Radford City Department of Social Services: Vicki Collins, Director**

Radford City DSS is a public agency that includes 13 full time and two part time employees. In 2016, Radford City provided 15% of the funding for the agency, the State of Virginia provided 44%, and the Federal government provided 52%. The agency includes three units.

- **Eligibility:** The Eligibility Unit manages the following programs.
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, monthly debit card for groceries, formerly known as food stamps)
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, cash assistance for families in poverty)
  - Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (low cost health insurance for children of working, but uninsured families)
  - Employment Services
  - Welfare Fraud Investigations
- **Services:** The Services Unit provides the following services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
  - Child Protective Services investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect.
  - Foster Care finds an appropriate home for children who are in the custody of Social Services and works with foster families, biological parents, attorneys, and court systems.
  - Adult Protective Services offers services to disabled and elderly citizens and investigates complaints of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of disabled adults and the elderly.
- **Office Support:** This unit provides fiscal management of the agency.

The population of Radford can be described as an inverted bell curve with many young adults 18 -24 years old and many elderly and disabled adults compared to a small number of middle aged adult professionals. The following DSS needs or possibilities for church partnerships were identified.

- Working adults mentoring adults that do not have a working history.
- Apprenticeships for incarcerated people that lead to permanent employment.

### **Radford Department of Social Services Profile Report 2016**

- The **Poverty Rate** of all people in Radford has increased from 24% in 2006 to 33% in 2015 and is much higher than the state poverty rate.
  - In 2015, the poverty rate in Radford was 33%.
  - .... in the Western Region of Virginia it was 19%.
  - ..... in Virginia statewide it was 11%.
- Percentage of **Children Living in a Single Parent Household** in Radford is higher than the state and regional average.
  - In 2014, the percentage of children living in a single parent household in Radford was 46%.
  - ..... in the Western Region of Virginia it was 39%.
  - ..... in Virginia statewide it was 34%.



- **Unemployment** in Radford has fluctuated in recent years from a low in 2006 of 4% to a high in 2009 of 9%.
  - In 2015, Radford's unemployment rate was 5.6%.
  - ..... in the Western Region of Virginia it was 5.8%.
  - ..... in Virginia statewide it was 4.4%.
- The **Teen Birth Rate** in Radford is lower than the region and state (reported per 1,000 population).
  - In 2014, the Teen Birth Rate in Radford was 6.7.
  - .... in the Western Region of Virginia it was 15.6.
  - ..... in Virginia statewide it was 9.4.
- Radford City DSS Services and Benefits Provided in 2016
  - 3247 residents received benefits (SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid).
  - 588 households received Energy Assistance (fuel, cooling, or crisis).
  - 76 children received Child Care.
  - 16 children in Foster Care.
  - 30 children received Adoption Assistance.
  - 123 Child Protective Services referrals were received for child abuse or neglect.
  - 22 Adult Protective Services reports were received for abuse, neglect, or exploitation of disabled adults or elderly.

#### **New River Community Action: Sheryl Helm, Director of Early Childhood and Family Services**

NRCA is a nonprofit organization that serves the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski and the City of Radford. Their mission is to promote and support the well-being and self-reliance of individuals, families, and communities. Services address basic needs of food, shelter and employment. They also provide early childhood programs that promote school readiness, healthy families, and parenting. Programs provided by NRCA include the following.

- Head Start
- Children's Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP)
- Homeless and Housing Programs
- VA Cares Services to ex-offenders
- Swift Start - job training and child care
- Americorps
- Emergency Assistance and Food Pantries Programs
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)
- Floyd County Backpack Program
- To Our House - homeless men's thermal shelter

**Head Start:**

- Serves 319 children from June 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018.
- Three years ago when government funding was cut they dropped from serving 345 children to 311.
- In June of each year the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) releases the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) based on the number of people in a family. For 2017, the FPL for a family of four was \$24,600.00 annual income.
- Head Start serves children from families that are 100% and below the FPL (\$24,600.00 and below).
- Children with higher risk factors are enrolled first. In addition to poverty other risk factors in children's life as reported on their application are included.
- Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) serves children from families that are 200% and below the FPL (\$49,200.00 and below).
- One great concern and barrier to progress for Head Start is that children are so transient. During the 2016-2017 year, 54 children left Head Start.
- Help from First Baptist Church, Radford is the reason NRCA Head Start can serve the 15 three-year-old children in Radford.

**New River Valley Agency on Aging: Tina King, Executive Director**

The NRV Agency on Aging serves the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski and the City of Radford with their office located in Pulaski. They provide support and work to enhance the lives of older adults, their families, and caregivers. Their services focus on self-management techniques including the mind, body, and spirit. The types of services provided include the following.

- Coordination of services
- Congregate meals
- Home delivered meals
- Elder abuse prevention
- Ombudsman program
- Legal services
- Respite care
- Homemaker services
- Virginia Insurance Counseling Program

There is an increase in services with the baby boomers aging. Baby Boomers have different expectations from previous generations. They are more technologically savvy (social media, Facebook, etc.), want more choices, and need to connect with a cause. For example, there is a decline in interest to come to events to socialize and have an activity.

There is an increased need for medical transportation services. Some RU and VT employees inquire about older parents moving to the area to be closer to their children.

The Agency on Aging welcomes partnerships with churches and have worked with our Operation Inasmuch.



### **Beans and Rice: Eric Bucey, Executive Director**

Beans and Rice works to improve the economic well-being of low-to-moderate income families through the following programs.

- Hunger relief
- After-school educational programs for at-risk children to raise academic achievement and pro-social skills
- Job creation
- Savings programs that help families buy their first home and children save for post-secondary education

Needs or ways to help Beans and Rice provide services include funding and help with meals.

### **Pulaski Community Youth Center: Tina Martin, Executive Director**

PCYC is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that serves youth from 13 to 21 years of age from Dublin Middle School, Pulaski Middle School, and Pulaski County High School. It is located in the Fairlawn area in the old Riverlawn Elementary School. PCYC began as an idea in 2016 through a community initiative by leaders of Phoenix Packaging Company after the death of Noah Thomas, a child that attended Riverlawn Elementary School. The concern was to support the community through the healthy growth and development of its children and youth. It opened in March of 2018 with a mission to provide a safe and well supervised wholesome environment, exciting programs, and healthy meals after school for youth. PCYC explored many options for partnerships, funding, location, programing, and administration. The working committee secured a professional to conduct a major needs survey, continues to hold numerous fundraisers, and seeks partners with other community groups including Communities in Schools, Young Life, churches, Beans and Rice, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, New River Community College, and New River Community Services to name a few. Pulaski County and the PCYC received a competitive planning grant of \$30,000.00 in 2018 from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, with a larger grant available the following year to implement the project. The PCYC currently offers the following programs.

- Tutoring and Homework in collaboration with the child's teachers and Radford University students
- Pulaski County Botix Robotics Program
- Fine Arts Programs: music and art
- Martial Arts
- Walking Trail
- Hot Dinner each night
- Open Basketball Gym and cooperation with Pulaski County Parks and Recreation
- Friday Night Live (open gym, snacks, music, planned activities - once per month – Ex.: Dr. Michael Smith sharing Sports Medicine and Concussion Awareness)
- Recreation: Ping-Pong, pool, and games