

Attendance: Barbara Reese, Faye Carroll, Bernice Satterfield, Chris Bishop, Andy Myers, Theresa Cunningham, Kathy Moss, Elizabeth Hart, Tony Smith, Joey Anderson, Mike Hall, Joel Davis, Kristin Clardy, Kayla Griffith, Mat Griffith, Shane Clardy, Joe Davis, Justin Smith, Cathy Myers, Steve Roach

The BLT met and reviewed the presentation and motion that will be made to the church. Kristin Clardy, Justin Smith, and Joe Davis teamed together to make the presentation. Copies of the slides were given to everyone. A number of changes were identified. **The below document was revised to correct, remove, and add some details that will be reflected in the presentation. Additional changes will be made as we have time to discuss them and get feedback from the presentations scheduled.**

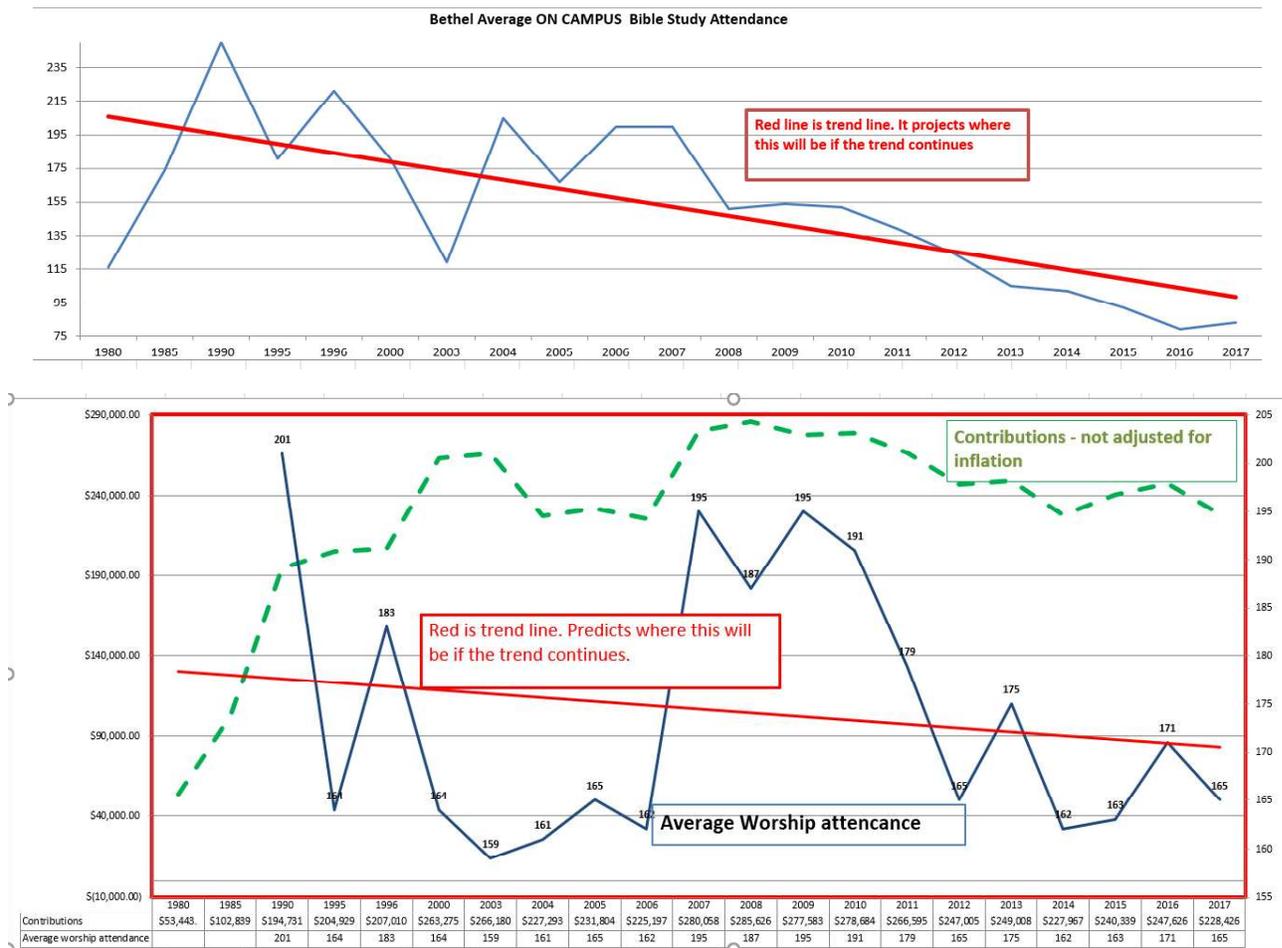
The decision was made to present this to the church three times, Sunday evening, February 24, Wednesday evening, February 27, again on Sunday evening March 3, and on Sunday evening March 10 in the regular business meeting at which time the church will be asked to vote on the motion to adopt this plan. With the motion approved, the necessary Bylaw changes will be developed and presented to the church as required by the current bylaws.

**Purpose of this document:** The purpose of this document:

- Provide a brief review of the work of the Deacons, Personnel Ministry Team, and the Bethel Leadership Team (BLT) that began in the fall of 2017 and describe the process that was followed.
- Describe the actions the BLT is asking the church to approve. This will be a motion from the BLT that the church approve this plan of action which will lead to a new set of Bylaws for the church.
- This plan does the following:
  - o Defines the Bethel Core Values
  - o Defines the Bethel Mission
  - o Defines the Discipleship Process Bethel will follow
  - o Shows how all of these are aligned with each other
  - o Defines the organization that will use these values, mission, and process to follow God's will for Bethel
  - o Defines the roles and responsibilities of each team/group in the organization
  - o Defines how decisions are made on priorities and who makes them to lead Bethel members to live out the Bethel Core Values
  - o Identifies some changes that should be made in the conduct of worship services
  - o Establishes the times services and other activities will be conducted
  - o Establishes a Transition Plan to implement these recommendations and begin a search for a new pastor

**The Why:** Why has God stirred change in our hearts?

- Churches are closing all over our nation, all over our state, all over our county.
- Our church has shown consistent decline for many years especially compared to the growth in the Oakway area.



**The What:** Christ is stirring our hearts to change, so what did we do?

- In the fall of 2017, the Deacons realized that our church was declining as this chart shows. They reviewed the church bylaws and realized over the years we have created over 45 positions and committees with no organization except they all reported to the pastor. Further they acknowledged that some committees were not functioning properly. The Deacon working with the Personnel Ministry Team searched for help and found The Malphrus Group.
- With some advice from The Malpurs Group, and the study of many other resources, a group of church leaders began to search for ways to revitalize our declining church.
- The Deacons and personnel team asked all the leaders of the committees to come together to evaluate what to do. This led to the formation of the Bethel Leadership Team (BLT)
- David Shirley, Beaverdam Baptist Association, talked with the BLT and presented many very concerning facts about the significant decline of churches in Oconee County, South Carolina, and the Southern Baptist Convention. He also gave us access to an online computer application that gives us current population data in the Oakway area (as well as anywhere in the county and state) in many different categories like age, gender, education, home ownership, etc.
- *Autopsy of a Deceased Church* and *Simple Church* were studied by the church and discussions were led by Pastor Tony
- Starting in October 2018, the BLT began meeting. It clarified our mission. The BLT then discussed our Discipleship Process. Realizing we need some guiding principles, we then developed our Core Values.
  - Biblically Faithful

- Passionate About Worship
- Spiritually Growing
- Discipling the Next Generation
- Committed to the Uncommitted
- Discipling in Prayer and Bible Study Groups & Serving through Ministry Teams
- During this time, we also developed a new Logo. There have been over 12 - 1 ½ hour long meetings (attended by an average of about 15-25 leaders) plus countless hours of study, preparation, and discussion by the team outside of these meetings. ALL MEETINGS HAVE BEEN OPEN TO ALL CHURCH MEMBERS AND ALL MINUTES ARE DOCUMENTED AND AVAILABLE ON THE BETHEL WEBSITE with names of attendees and the information studied and discussed along with decisions made.
- Our last Core Value states how we believe God is leading us to organize and carry out the other core values through the implementation of our discipleship process. From this we, the BLT, developed the organization that we believe God wants us to implement.
- We established a “Passionate about Worship” Team (PAW) of about 12 people of all age levels to visit 4 growing churches that were attracting significant numbers of young people to help us learn what God wanted us to do at Bethel. Over a 5-week period they visited 5 different churches in groups of 3-5 with most groups visiting four churches. They have developed a list of actions they recommend we implement at Bethel.
- Several of the BLT leaders met with other church leaders of growing churches and got insight on the processes and programs in the areas they are successful

## **Core values:**

### **Biblically Faithful**

The Bible is our guide, given to us, and written for us by God himself. The Bible is our source of truth and the foundation for everything we do. It explains how life is designed to work including how we should relate to God and to all people.

### **Passionate About Worship**

We believe our weekly worship time should be an overflow of our daily walk and our Discipleship Team time with the Lord. We worship and honor God with our whole heart, mind, body and spirit. We support our pastor’s allocation of his time to studying the Bible and praying so that he can lead us in Bible centered preaching that comes from an overflow of what God is doing in his life. We lead our weekly worship times to honor and praise God in ways that will bring unity in our church and attract those in our community that are not yet in our church family. We are passionate about worship and passionate about effectively bringing the message to all people. We do this by staying relevant and adaptive within biblical parameters to best reach our community with a special focus on reaching the teens and young adults. Though we have set times to worship as a church family, we also make worship our everyday lifestyle; our daily actions are inspired by our desire to worship the Lord.

### **Spiritually Growing**

We are passionate about growing spiritually in our relationship with God. We are intentional about studying Scripture, praying, and training to prepare ourselves to be effective followers of Christ. We conduct each ministry to grow our relationship with God by following our mission (loving God, making disciples, and

serving others) and using our discipleship process. To grow spiritually we have ministries, programs and activities that motivate all of us to walk with the Lord all the time.

### **Discipling the Next Generation**

We let God use us to raise up God-centered, Jesus-magnifying, Bible-saturated, culturally-winsome disciples of Jesus Christ in the next generation. Ministry to the next generation will never be pushed to the margins at Bethel. We are not content just to offer “something” to keep our children occupied. We want God to give them hearts full of wonder, awe, and fascination with the bigness and power and beauty of God, with affections that will not be overwhelmed by the pleasures and promises of the world. That is why we are committed to developing an intentional, gospel-infused strategy aimed at winning the heart, mind, and will. Our aim is to partner with parents, who have the primary responsibility to disciple their children, and help them lead their children to know, love, and serve God by faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe one of the primary reasons those in the next generation stay in church after their teen years is because they develop meaningful relationships and a sense of community. We also believe they are more likely to be engaged in church if they have a mentor; a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. Therefore, we devote significant resources of time and money to build these relationships.

### **Committed to the Uncommitted**

Because we have a personal relationship with God it motivates us to help others experience that same relationship. God sent His Son to seek and save the lost. We choose to live in such a way that when others see our daily lives, they want to have the same relationship that we have with God also. As we grow more and more in our relationship with God our lives will reflect this conviction. We are passionate about meeting the spiritual needs in our community and sharing the love of Christ with those, both young and old, who may not know Him.

### **Discipling in Prayer and Bible Study Groups & Serving through Ministry Teams**

We believe spiritual growth and uncommon unity with each other happens best in the context of deep and honest relationships. These kinds of relationships can be developed and maintained best in Prayer and Bible Study Groups. Prayer and Bible Study groups are small groups of people that meet regularly at a time that is most convenient for them. In these groups of caring people, individuals share and encourage one another in their walk with God. By engaging in prayer and bible study groups, we develop uplifting relationships with other Christians who will pray, support, and mentor however needed. Here, individuals come together, build one another up during the week, sharing life together at a time that best fits their schedule.

We believe that part of multiplying disciples is ministering to our community. We ask members to be a part of a Ministry Team at Bethel. Here, we serve in ways that use our God given gifts, talents, and calling. We use Ministry Teams to carry out the ministries of our church and our community. We are driven to make disciples; therefore, our leadership team aligns our ministries, programs, and activities so that we do not lose focus on our purpose to “Love God, Disciple Others, and Serve the World.” This ensures that the people and financial resources God has entrusted to us are planned and used effectively.

**What did we learn from Simple Church?**

- A *simple church* is a congregation designed around a straight forward and strategic process that moves people through the stages of spiritual growth. (pg. 61)
- The church is **DESIGNED**:
  - It is not carelessly thrown together. It is not haphazardly planned. The ministry does more than “just happen.” It is thought out. It is structured. It is designed with care.
- It is **DESIGNED AROUND**:
  - The design of the church is centered on the discipleship process. The programs and ministries revolve around this process.
- A simple church is designed around a **STRAIGHT FORWARD** and **STRATEGIC PROCESS**:
  - The process is straightforward. It is not confusing; it is easy to grasp. The leaders know it, and the people understand it. The process is intentionally kept simple. It is not lengthened. It does not change every few months. The church sticks to the simple process. Complexity is not welcome. More programs are not added to the process. The church rejects the multitude of new programs and models offered to it.
- The process is the **HOW** and it is also **STRATEGIC**
  - The process is tied to the purpose or vision of the church. The two are closely knitted. The process is built for execution, to impact people. It is designed to be sequential so that people may move through the process.
- The process **MOVES PEOPLE**
  - The simple and strategic process promotes movement. The process flows logically. People are attracted to Christ and the church and then are moved to points of attachment. The programs are used as tools to promote this movement. And the movement through the straightforward and strategic process has an intentional and intended end result...

### THE PROCESS MOVES PEOPLE THROUGH THE STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The goal is to partner with God to move people through the stages of spiritual growth. Changed lives are the bottom line, the intended end result. Christ formed in people is the goal. A simple church understands that people are at different places in their spiritual journey, that spiritual growth is a process. The church is designed to partner with God to move people through stages of spiritual growth.

## WHAT IS BETHEL'S PROCESS?

- Through several meetings we discovered that Bethel did not have a distinct process to lead members, and new members through the stages of spiritual growth.
- We spent time discussing, researching, and most importantly praying about how God wanted to structure our discipleship process at Bethel.

### *It starts by defining our mission:*

#### 1. Bethel Mission:

### **CONNECT - LOVE – DISCIPLE - SERVE**

*This simple statement shows us how we both relate to God and people:*

- **How we relate to God:**  
Connect with God, Love God, Become a Disciple of Christ, Serve the Lord
- **How we relate to people:**  
Connect with Others, Love Others, Make Disciples, Serve Others

#### **Our Detailed Mission Statement:**

“The mission of Bethel is to connect with God and build relationships with others, leading ourselves and others to love the Lord our God with all of our hearts, souls and minds, and love our neighbors as ourselves. We become disciples of Christ who make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to obey all that He has commanded. We prepare others to use their gifts to serve the community and the Lord faithfully in order to be Great Commission Christians in a Great Commission Church.”

This mission is based on the following scriptures:

#### **Great Commandment**

**Matthew 22:37-39 (TEV)** <sup>37</sup> Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” <sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and the most important commandment. <sup>39</sup> The second most important commandment is like it: “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

### **Great Commission**

**Matthew 28:19-20 (ESV)** <sup>19</sup> “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

### **1 Corinthians 9:22-23 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people that by all means I might save some. <sup>23</sup> I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

### **James 5:19-20 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, <sup>20</sup> let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

### **1 Peter 4:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace:

Our mission is also our process for discipleship:

**2. Bethel Discipleship Process – The table shows the process and the alignment with the core values.**

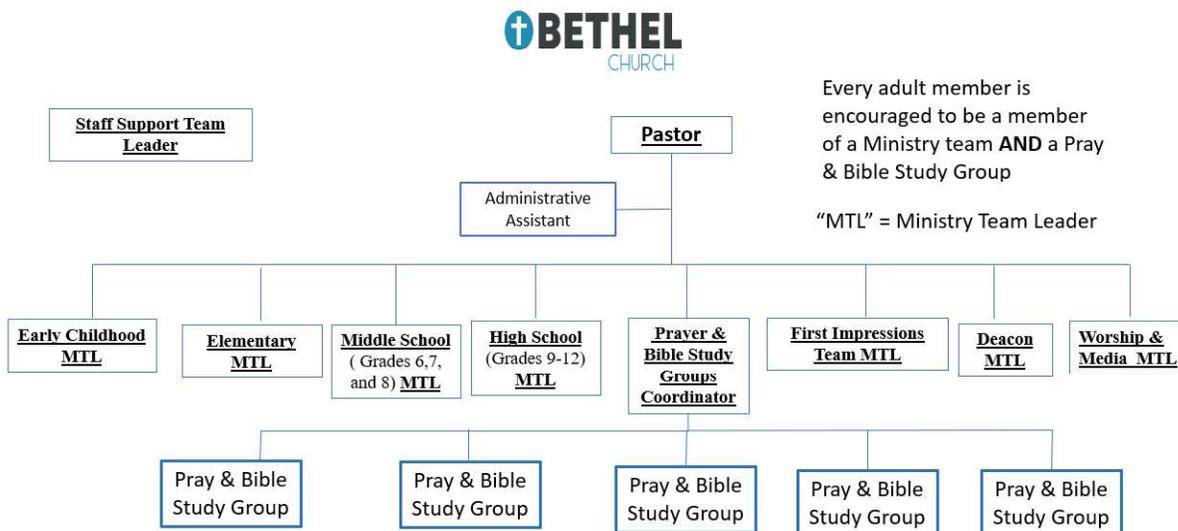
PROCESS	 CONNECT	 LOVE	 DISCIPLE	 SERVE
MISSION	The mission of Bethel is to connect with God and build relationships with others...	...leading others to love the Lord our God with all of their hearts, souls and minds, and love their neighbors as themselves as we do...	... We become disciples of Christ who make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that He has commanded...	... We prepare others to use their gifts to serve the community and the Lord faithfully in order to be Great Commission Christians in a Great Commission Church...
FOUNDATIONAL PROGRAMS	COMMUNITY OUTREACH	WORSHIP SERVICES	PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY GROUPS	MINISTRY TEAMS
DESCRIPTION	We are intentional about connecting with others through our daily lives by using church outreach opportunities. After making this connection, we will then encourage them to take the next step to attend worship or a Prayer and Bible Study Group	The worship services are where guests, new people, and non-believers enter the church. It is also the weekly event where believers draw close to God through inspiring worship and dynamic biblical teaching	Designed to help people connect relationally. The worship service does not connect people to others very well, people sit facing forward and have little interaction with one another. Prayer & Bible Study groups provide an environment for people to love one another in biblical community. Some groups meet on Sundays at church, some meet at homes or restaurants. People are encouraged to plug into one group.	People enjoy friendship and trust in a team environment while experiencing the joy of serving others. Some of the teams focus on the church, some of the teams focus on the community
CORE VALUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Committed to the uncommitted</li> <li>- Biblically Faithful</li> <li>- Spiritually Growing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Passionate about Worship</li> <li>- Biblically Faithful</li> <li>- Spiritually Growing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discipling in Prayer and Bible Study Groups &amp; Serving through Ministry Teams</li> <li>-Discipling the Next Generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discipling in Prayer and Bible Study Groups &amp; Serving through Ministry Teams</li> <li>- Discipling the Next Generation</li> </ul>

			- Spiritually Growing - Biblically Faithful	- Spiritually Growing - Biblically Faithful
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**1. A Logo:**



**2. An Organization aligned with the Mission, Discipleship Process, and Core Values**



**- The Bethel Leadership Team (BLT)**

- o Members –
  - Pastor
  - Staff Support Team Leader
  - Early Childhood Ministry Team Leader
  - Elementary Ministry Team Leader
  - Middle School Ministry Team Leader
  - High School Ministry Team Leader
  - Prayer-Bible Study Team Coordinator
  - First Impressions Team Leader
  - Deacon Ministry Team Leader

- **Worship Ministry Team Leader**
      - Nominated by the current Bethel Leadership Team and elected by the church
      - Members on each of the teams are selected/recruited/accepted/approved by Bethel Leadership Team
      - Prepare the annual budget at the Team level and submit to the church for approval
      - Establish an annual plan of ministries, activities, events, etc. that are determined by the BLT
      - Team leaders working with the team members would use the budgeted money in the best way to achieve the objectives of the team's ministry
      - The Pastor would lead the church through the Ministry Team Leaders. There would be a limit on the number of Leaders reporting to the Pastor of 8-10. If more teams develop beyond that, then the Pastor, working with the BLT, would combine some teams where other teams would report to them.
- **Staff Support Team**
  - Team of 4-6 people
  - Audit the financial records of the church to assure they were expended according to the budget established by the BLT and approved by the church
  - Conduct an annual performance evaluation of the pastor
  - Establish the salary for the pastor
  - Approve the performance evaluations of paid staff members performed by the Pastor
  - Legal Representatives of the church (Current done by "Trustees")
  - Includes the Church Treasurer and assistant
  - Documents church conferences
- **Responsibilities of Early Childhood, Elementary Team, Middle School Ministry, and High School Ministry Team**
  - Each of the four teams would consist of 12 -15 people (Total 48-60 people)
  - Conduct /lead all ministry/discipleship activities done by Bethel for that age group
  - Establish a standard of "spiritual maturity/Bible knowledge" desired for children in that age group to reach prior to moving to the next age group
  - Have a "fast track" process for children coming to be involved with discipleship for the first time to get them up to the level of "spiritual maturity/Bible knowledge" for their age (includes age specific "new member" training)
  - Early Childhood and Elementary age children will attend age specific classes during worship service. All other age groups would be in worship (10-11 AM).
  - Middle School and High School Ministry Teams will conduct discipleship training at a time that best works for those age groups and their families.
  - In Middle school and high school have a mentoring process to encourage students teaming students with adults to get them involved in serving so after high school they join a ministry.
  - Teams plan and conduct their ministry. They do not plan activities and events for other teams. Events or activities that involve more than just one team (example Vacation Bible School) would be coordinated by a leader from one of those teams. All teams involved should be in agreement.
  - Because we are focusing on the age specific spiritual growth of Early Childhood and Elementary age children during worship services, there will not be other regular scheduled activities at other times of the week
  - The Bethel Learning Center would be part of Early Childhood Ministry Team

- **Prayer – Bible Study Groups**

- Everyone above high school age through senior adult is encouraged to be in a small group of caring people who share and encourage one another in their walk with God.
- Prayer and Bible Study groups are small groups of people that meet regularly at a time that is most convenient for them.
- Group members support as well as hold each other accountable to balance their lives. This ensures that each person lives out Bethel’s Mission to Connect, Love, Disciple, and Serve.
  - Group members help each other to grow spiritually through:
    - connecting with the community
    - personal prayer and Bible study
    - intentional team prayer and Bible study
    - worship with the church body
    - actively encouraging each other to participate of one of the Ministry Teams
    - regular fellowship with one another (ex: Bethel Jewels)
  - Group members support each other by encouraging each other to:
    - take care of themselves physically
    - care for their family
    - conduct their work/profession in a God honoring way
    - disciple others in their team
    - nurture and care for those who experience sickness of a family member on their team (bereavement handled by deacons)
- Each group provides their own childcare if needed
- Prayer & Bible Study Groups Coordinator will ensure a “new member” class for adults is conducted

- **First Impressions Team (FIT)**

(Hospitality can be defined as “the quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way.” In the New Testament, the Greek word translated “hospitality” literally means “love of strangers.” Hospitality is a virtue that is both commanded and commended throughout Scripture.

**Hebrews 13:1-2 (NIV)** <sup>1</sup> Keep on loving each other as brothers. <sup>2</sup> Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. )

- FIT members are sensitive to how others experience our church and strive to look through their eyes
- Ensure all grounds and facilities are in proper condition/functioning and create a positive impression for all members and guests
- Conduct all activities (welcoming/security/ushering) to enable all members and guests to have a positive experience for regular and special worship services
- Greeting and leading guests to the proper places (Early Childhood and Elementary ministries, seating guests in the sanctuary)
- All signage through out all facilities.
- Staffing any welcoming stations or greeting stations for people coming to worship
- Opening and closing of all facilities after regular scheduled services

- Develop a longer-term plan to maintain and upgrade facilities as needed to accomplish the long-range plans of the BLT
- Work closely with Worship & Media Team to implement the recommendations of the PAW Team

- **Deacon Ministry Team**

- Visitation and caring for the elderly and widows who cannot participate in a Prayer & Bible Study Group
- Be the key ones to pray for the Pastor, and the BLT
- Nurture church members who are not in a **Prayer & Bible Study Group** striving to get them connected to one of the teams
- Support Lord's Supper and Baptism ordinances
- Support church members during bereavement
- The Deacon Ministry Team WOULD NOT be responsible for the caring ministry of people who are in **Prayer & Bible Study Groups**. Each **Prayer & Bible Study Group** is responsible for nurturing and caring for the members of their team (other than bereavement).

- **Worship & Media Team**

- Plan and lead all church worship services
- Lead the church to be Passionate About Worship
- Plan and lead all social media activities including Website, Facebook and all other media platforms
- Work closely with First Impressions Team (FIT) to implement the recommendations of the PAW Team and keep cohesive graphic design/brand among brochures, booklets, and any other documents related to the FIT Team
- Ensure the church networks and information technology equipment, software, including infrastructure, is maintained throughout the church

**Passionate About Worship Team Recommendations**

Passionate About Worship team recommendations to implement immediately:

1. Make a welcoming guest area
  - a. with equipped/trained volunteers who will accommodate guests and make guests feel very comfortable
2. Take away the meet and greet altogether OR change up the meet and greet with emphasis on greeting someone you don't already know
  - a. suggestions.... learn a new name, high five or greet a person behind you with emphasis on reaching out to someone you don't know
3. Enhance and liven up worship.
  - a. Change worship music by adding more contemporary praise and worship music- "Liven" up music
  - b. Make the sanctuary darker where people can feel like they can worship more freely
  - c. SUGGESTIONS: 20% traditional and 80% contemporary.

**Service Times Plan**

- Sunday morning worship would continue to be at 10 AM

- If some Prayer & Bible Study Groups decide to meet on Sunday morning before worship, they will need to plan for any needed child care
- Sunday evenings will be for **Prayer & Bible Study Groups** to meet if desired. They will need to plan for any needed child care.
- Wednesday evenings will be for **Prayer & Bible Study Groups** meet if desired. They will need to plan for any needed child care.
- The Pastor will be focused on teaching the Bible in worship and leading the Bethel Leadership Team in making disciples. To prevent overload and to help him stay focused on our purpose, he will not be conducting Bible study on Sunday evening and Wednesday evening.
- **Early Childhood Ministry Team & Elementary Team** will coordinate with the Worship & Media Team if there are two worship services

### **Bethel Transition Plan:**

Pending approval of this plan, a detailed transition plan will be developed. Some of the elements of this plan will be as follows:

- The Bylaws of the church will be changed and approved by the church
- The Church, Community, and New Pastor profiles will be developed and then the call for resumes will begin
- The church approved the Deacons and the Personnel Ministry Team to function as the Pastor Search Team. This Pastor Search Team for the next pastor would go through the process and select a new pastor and submit that person to the church for approval. In the future the process will be defined in the new bylaws.
- On a planned Sunday in May or early June:
  - o Sunday School, as it is called today, will be replaced with Prayer and Bible Study Groups.
  - o Sunday evening and Wednesday evening Bible study be discontinued.
  - o The Middle School Ministry Team and the High School Ministry Team will conduct their ministry at a time that best works for those age groups and their families.

The BLT makes a motion for the church to approve this direction we believe God is directing us to follow to revitalize our church. **In the regular Business Meeting Sunday evening, March 10, the church will vote on approving this motion. Approval of this motion would be followed with a new set of Bylaws to implement it which we will ask the church to approve.**

For reference from the current Bylaws:

X. AMENDMENTS - Changes in the Constitution and Bylaws may be made at **any regular business meeting** of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at **a previous business meeting** and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by two-thirds vote. **Amendments to the Bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority.**