



Today Southport Presbyterian's Session readily acknowledges and deeply appreciates that we stand on the shoulders of those who have previously led our church and without them we would not be in the fortunate position that we are today. In fact, the goal is to continue the exact same mission - discipleship and evangelism in our community and world. We feel God is leading us to adapt the vision that was set forth nearly thirty years ago.

Specifically, Session feels led to sell a portion of the land the church owns (see the indicated portion on the included map). This strategic direction stems from a number of factors, primarily:

- Our church still owes a significant mortgage debt of approximately \$1,700,000. This mortgage requires annual payments of \$234,000.
 - A portion of our land sale would be used to make a significant payment on the debt and thus reduce the annual mortgage payments. Those annual mortgage payment dollars saved could then be used for ongoing annual direct ministry investment.
- Those activities and ministries that currently use the land being contemplated for sale could be relocated to other places within the remaining land footprint with minimal if any negative ministry impact.
- Session has discerned the vision to build or expand structures should be adapted to instead work within the current building and a smaller land footprint. This is following trends of how our culture lives, interacts, and worships differently today than even 10 years ago. Session believes our call is to convert our land resource to be used instead for direct ministry investment in the coming years.

In addition to the land proposed for sale, there is another transaction that happens to be occurring simultaneously. As the government authorities continue to prepare for a significant project to widen Emerson Avenue, our church has been informed they will be acquiring a portion of our property (between 1/4 - 1/2 of an acre) by eminent domain. We are currently negotiating with the city on the terms of this acquisition.

We are being called to protect what God has given us and adapt it to the time and place in which we live. Each church member will have the opportunity to ask questions about this and ultimately vote to approve or disapprove the sale. We will be sending out more information soon about these opportunities and voting. In the meantime, we wanted to provide you with some answers to questions you may be having right now. If you have other questions or concerns please send your questions to: landsale@southportpres.com. We will be having two informational meetings before the vote as well.

Why are we talking about selling our land?

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A We felt led to explore ways to increase our church's direct investment in ministry. As we looked to identify where these new investments could come from, it became clear that a large portion of our resources today service our mortgage debt. So the question became, how can we reduce the mortgage? What resource(s) do we have that could make a significant reduction in the mortgage thus freeing up our mortgage payments for direct ministry investment? From these questions, the idea to sell land to serve this purpose was proposed and began being discussed.

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What piece of land is proposed to be sold?

The land north of the church building is the portion identified for proposed sale. It is approximately 11.5 acres. The exact line has not yet been determined and may not be determined prior to placing on the market as it may make the property more marketable to allow a buyer to collaborate in drawing the exact line.

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How much will we sell the land for and what will we do with the proceeds?

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A We have hired a professional appraiser to appraise the land value. Of course, this is just an appraisal. The actual sale price will vary from this. The plan is for the proceeds to be used to pay down a portion of the current mortgage debt.

With a school so close to the land contemplated for sale, how do we know the school and kids will be safe?

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A We will be engaging an advisor(s) to assist with the sale process who will help us navigate this very important matter. In addition, we have the ability to expand our buffer since we are not drawing the exact line at the offset. We could consider a fence or other barrier type structure if necessary. This would be something that could be determined once the buyer is known.

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How will this affect our current ministries?

Besides relocating some of the activities our current ministries perform on this land, we do not anticipate any current ministry being impacted

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How will this affect our future ministries?

A This is the exciting part! Depending on the ultimate sale price, we could free up as much as \$234,000 per year from our budget to use on direct ministry investments! While we have not determined exactly how these funds would be reallocated we are having these discussions alongside this sale of land proposal.

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Does this mean we aren't building a new sanctuary, restart the sports ministry, or other pieces to the initial vision for the land set out when it was purchased?

As explained above in the introduction, we feel led to adapt the original vision. As such, there are no discussions of building a new sanctuary or restarting the sports ministry. However, our mission of discipleship and evangelism remains the same.

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What about the groups that use this space including the shelter house?

A Our ministries that use this space currently can shift to other locations within the remaining property and be equally effective. In addition, we would plan to construct a new shelter house somewhere on the remaining property to serve in a similar capacity as the existing shelter house located on the lot proposed for sale.

Will this land sale change how we share and live out the Gospel of Jesus?

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A Yes! We believe this land sale will enhance how we share and live out the Gospel by allowing us to make new and increased direct ministry investments starting in the near future.

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Who makes the final decision on whether the property is sold?

The decision to sell the property requires approval of the members of the church. A Congregational meeting has been called for January 17th on which date a vote will be made to approve or disapprove the sale.

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Who can or will be our neighbor? Do we have any say in that?

A We will be listing the land for sale on the open market. As such, we cannot predict who the buyer or our new neighbor will be. We will be praying for the Lord to bring us neighbors who would be a great fit to be situated next to our church for His purposes.

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It seems there is some sense of urgency to make this happen. Is there and why?

To some extent, yes. We have been advised that the local real estate market is especially favorable for sellers right now. We would like to take advantage of this opportunity. Specifically, the sooner we can approve the land sale, the sooner we can place it on the market and in turn get it sold. This also moves the timeline up to increase direct ministry investments and more favorable to our mission.

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How can I voice my concerns and who do I contact?

A Please send your questions to landsale@southportpres.org. We will be having two informational meetings before the vote as well. We ask that you send your questions in advance and we will either answer you directly or at the informational meeting.