

Talking Points for Vision Sunday

Introduction:

Today is an exciting day in the life of Friendly Avenue Baptist Church as we present Vision 2025 to you. I am reminded that what we share today is not a new vision. It is the continuation of an old vision that is rich in tradition, transcending several generations. It is a story that continues to unfold. It is a picture of a church always striving to reach its full potential. We build upon the legacy and vision of those who served faithfully before us and pave the way for those who will come after us. Today we look back in the rearview mirror to remember our historic past. We look around us to express thanks for what God is currently doing among us. We look forward into the windshield to consider our promising future.

For newer members, like myself, you may ask the question, "What is the history of Friendly Avenue, and how does its history influence the future?" Friendly Avenue has been, and will continue to be, a Christ-exalting church dedicated to biblical preaching, missional living, unified worship, and life-transforming community. It is a place where the Bible is believed, taught, and preached. It is where the needs of its members have been ministered to in love and where a zeal for missions is prominent. This focus has not changed and will not change.

As such, our purpose for gathering this morning is to accentuate a vision that started in 1899 and to continue that vision forward with vivid clarity. We highlight what we believe to be most important for Friendly Avenue Baptist Church over the next five years as we take a peek into the future. You will find a digital copy of the Vision booklet online. I encourage you to take time now and look through the Vision booklet.

The leadership of Friendly Avenue constructed this vision presentation under three headings. You will find these headings in the table of contents section of your vision booklet. There were three primary objectives that we set out to accomplish as we began the revisioning process.

1. We aimed to **define a reality** for our church
2. We purposed to **determine a direction** for our church
3. We worked to **develop a path** for our church

We present these findings to you today.

I. We aimed to define a reality for our church

How we got here...

- **2016 | “Prayer Triplets” | 3 months**
 - Friendly Avenue members met in 47 triplets (142 participants), with more than 120 hours spent in prayer during 10 sessions. Numerical and textual information was collected.

- **2018 | “Cottage Prayer and Listening Sessions” | 3 months**
 - Three questions were asked in 31 Cottage Prayer and Listening Sessions: 1) What do you like most about Friendly Avenue 2) What would you like to see changed over time; 3) How can we reach our city for Christ? Responses were recorded, collated, and then used in establishing our vision.

- **2019 | “Auxano Consulting Group” | 8 months**
 - Auxano, a church consulting firm, assisted Friendly Avenue in the revision process.
 - Auxano’s lead consultant, Bryan Rose, visited with the Friendly Avenue staff in September 2018. Friendly Avenue voted to utilize Auxano to assist with the five-year vision in October 2018.
 - The Friendly Avenue Church Council (staff and committee chairs) conducted three extended weekend sessions with Bryan Rose, lead consultant, in January, February, and July 2019. A “Guest Perspective Sunday” occurred in January when our consultant made evaluations of Friendly Avenue.
 - All ministries of Friendly Avenue were evaluated through a ministry life cycle analysis tool. It was determined that our outlook as a church is positive with lots of potential in each ministry. With that said, we have a significant gap in reaching 25- to 40-year olds. Reaching this group will take a significant investment and will look different than reaching other generations.
 - The Friendly Avenue staff contacted over fifteen (15) churches who are reaching families well.
 - The Church Council discussed, deliberated, and agreed upon the 5-year vision informed by a vision frame which contains 90-day, 1-year, 3-year, and 5-year initiatives.
 - A decision was made to present the vision on August 18, 2019.
 - The adoption and ratification of the vision will be taken by vote at the Fall 2019 Ministry Celebration.

II. We aimed to **determine a direction** for our church

First, the Vision Frame...

Just about everything you see comes through a filtered viewpoint or lens. We call this a frame of reference. So how does Friendly Avenue see things together as a church? We need a common frame of reference to see where God is taking us together. You could call this a “vision frame.” Our vision frame is made up of four parts and provides clarity for who we are and what we are about. Before we discuss what God has called us to over the next five years, we need to see the frame that holds together the vision.

MISSION. We start with our mission. We answer the question, “What are we doing?” *Our mission is to bring all people into the joy of a transforming relationship with Jesus Christ.* Our mission statement is like a compass; it points us in the right direction. The mission here at Friendly Avenue is based on the Great Commission. The mission is to make disciples; the method is to go. You cannot spell “gospel” without “go”. You cannot spell “God” without “go”. Jesus’ final words are of first importance.

STRATEGY. That brings us to strategy. In other words, we answer the question: “How are we doing it? How do we fulfill our mission?” Our strategy is based on four keywords: *Connect, Grow, Serve, and Reach.* These four words are like a conduit – connecting the strategy and mission together. The strategy keeps us on a path – illuminating key stops along the way so that we live out our mission on a regular basis. You will see from the diagram on page four in our digital booklet that we want visitors and guests, upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ, to join Friendly Avenue. We see every new member, and every current member:

- Enrolling in Sunday School and becoming active participants
- Joining Grow Groups and becoming active participants
- Discovering their spiritual gift(s) and exercising their gift(s) through a ministry in the church
- Seeing themselves as missionaries (i.e. leveraging their lives on mission)
- Becoming verbal witnesses for Jesus among friends, colleagues, and neighbors
- Accompanying others to join them on the discipleship pathway at Friendly Avenue

VALUES. Next we come to values and answer the question, “Why are we doing it?” Our values define the Friendly Avenue experience and serve as our church’s guiding principles. Every decision that is made at Friendly Avenue will be made with these values in mind. These values are a fire that burns in our heart to drive us forward. Our values are:

- *A church focused on Bible-centered worship*
- *A culture of disciple-making*
- *A commitment to family ministry*
- *A calling to missions*

MEASURES. Finally, we have our measures. We answer the question, “When are we successful?” In other words, what does the mission mean personally, to you and me, and what does the mission mean to our church corporately? The measures keep us on target and describe what life looks like when we are fulfilling our mission. When we see these things coming true in our lives, personally, and our church, corporately, we know we are living out our mission, moving forward together. Many churches define success as an increase in attendance, budgets, and campuses. Some churches determine the effectiveness of ministry by nickels and noses. Such measures are derived from a secular model of leadership and do not take into consideration the primary mission of Christianity – to make disciples.

As such, our congregational measures are:

- The number of believers moving...
 - From learning to actively reproducing other disciples
 - From learning to intentionally building relationships with not-yet-believers
 - From learning to actively serving the needs of not-yet-believers
 - From learning to having gospel conversations with not-yet-believers
 - From learning to participating in organized outreach opportunities
 - From only attending worship to also participating in Sunday School
 - From only participating in Sunday School and worship to participating in a Grow Group
- The number of believers...
 - Attesting to the discipline of a daily quiet time
 - Attesting to a regular family devotion and prayer time
- The number of older...
 - Wives/widows moving from learning to teaching younger wives to love their husbands and children
 - Husbands/widowers moving from learning to teaching younger husbands to love their wives and families
- The number of parents moving from depending on the church as the primary discipler of their children to themselves personally becoming the primary discipler of their children in spiritual disciples and missional ministry
- The number of children moving from children's to student ministry
- The number of students moving from student to young adult ministries

Our personal measures aim to produce individual disciples of Christ with distinct personal M.A.R.C.S. We want every believer at Friendly Avenue to be:

- (M) – Missional
- (A) – Accountable
- (R) – Reproducible
- (C) – Communal
- (S) – Scriptural

Next, the Horizon Storyline...¹

Horizon Vision (5 years)

Family Vision 1:100 – In 2025, we see Friendly Avenue Baptist Church as a unified church reaching one hundred new families using God-given resources and raising them towards biblical maturity.

We dream of the next five years as a season of renewal inside and outside of the walls of Friendly Avenue. In 2025, we see FABC as one church family, unified across every generation, with a love for Christ and each other that supersedes tradition, worship style, generations, and personal preferences in favor of Gospel centrality and meaningful outreach. As a result of this renovation across the church, we will reach 100 new community families from underrepresented groups and raise them to biblical maturity and active involvement across the ministries of the church. We will reach these families by use of our God-given resources of facility, homes, and community events.

As part of this five-year horizon:

- We envision a renewed commitment inside the church that drives us to geographically saturate Greensboro with the gospel outside the church
- We envision being one church family, celebrating a unified calling, whereby the priority of our mission and core values supersedes styles, traditions, and preferences
- We envision 100 new families of all ages joining our church and its mission.
- We envision the full use of God-given resources, such as our homes and the church facilities, as ministry outposts in Greensboro.
- We envision new Sunday School classes formed in our church as community families are assimilated into our faith family
- We envision our church building and potentially community homes full of vibrant Grow Groups.
- We envision a church reaching not-yet-believers one life at a time through intentional relationships and gospel proclamation.
- We envision a spiritually minded church meeting physical needs among a hurting community.

¹ In a nutshell, the Horizon Storyline is a tool to develop the right amount of vision content for 90-day, 1 year, 3-year, and 5-year initiatives. See page seven in your digital booklet for more information.

Background Vision (3 years)

Some people in our church may want to know the larger picture of the vision. That is, what is the primary objective? Other people may want to know the tactical steps that it will take in order to fulfill this vision. If you are detail-oriented and want to know how we will reach Greensboro, this section is for you.

What is the tactical plan that will assist Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in reaching one hundred community families? We will focus on four key background initiatives.

➤ **Family Ministry Outreach Plan.**

- *We will strive to create new young adult Sunday School classes.* The creation of true biblical community and the cultivation of personal relationships is one of the most critical factors in a successful outreach plan to young adults. We must find Sunday School teachers (preferably those who have experienced the challenges of raising a young family) who will invest and equip a younger generation in the model of 2 Timothy 2:2.
- *We will strive for an interior facility refresh.* We will investigate the cost to repaint walls, change the bulletin boards to posters/pictures, update and modernize young adult Sunday School classes, create better signage inside and outside, and declutter rooms and hallways.
- *We will strive to make families more visible.* Families will be encouraged to serve as greeters and become more visible in leadership positions.
- *We will strive to create family reach groups.* We will offer training so that children can accompany their parents on outreach efforts and the whole family can help with outreach events.
- *We will strive to make a great first impression on families by creating an atmosphere of friendliness, care, and concern.* The first impressions team (i.e. parking lot ministry) will be filled with smiling faces. The welcome desk in the Ministry Center will be fully staffed to answer questions and meet the needs of visiting families.
- *We will strive to intentionally equip and empower families to make disciples in the home, church, and world. We will make it easy for parents to be the primary disciple-makers in their home by providing accessible and applicable resources for a variety of life-seasons and situations. We will give parents a path, including a resource called Faith Path Kits, in order to help them nurture the faith of their children one step at a time. We will make it likely by giving families tools to apply what we are learning at church.*

➤ **Restructure Sunday Morning Worship Schedule²**

- *We see the need to create more space in our later service.* The numerical increase in Sunday morning attendance necessitates that we ask *50 people* to transition from the later service to the early service. We cannot continue to grow in the later service if we are above 80 % seating capacity.
- *We propose a Sunday morning schedule adjustment.* All services and activities will be pushed forward, to begin fifteen minutes later. The implementation of two identical services

² This was originally a three-year initiative, but due to the Grow Group emphasis and the need to change the Sunday evening discipleship hour to 5 pm, we propose we update the schedule immediately. This initiative dovetails with the "Create Margin on the Calendar."

alongside a revised early morning service start time of 8:30 am should make the early service experience suitable to people of all ages.

- *We propose that this schedule change take place on Sunday, September 8, 2019 based on the reasons that will be providing in the one-year initiative “to create margin on the calendar.”*

➤ **Sports Ministry**

- *We will organize a sports ministry league to connect with the community – particularly with a goal to connect with younger families. We will begin with indoor sports (i.e. basketball) with a target date of 2021. We will look at adding an additional sport each year thereafter. You may ask, “Why a sports ministry?” We are told that there are more children playing basketball in Greensboro than any city in the United States per capita. Over ninety percent of children in Greensboro play recreational sports. A church in Charlotte, NC launched a sports ministry as part of their next generation vision and reported that over 30 % of those who participated in the ministry joined the church. Our recent soccer camp at Empire Crossing further confirms our community’s’ interest in sports and its ability to open doors for spiritual conversations.*
- *We will host sports camps, primarily in the summer, as a feeder into the sports ministry league. We will partner with local high schools to bring in student athletes to run and facilitate these camps.*
- *The use of the ball field and multi-purpose room will be a key resource. We will research and assess the needs and possibilities of our outdoor field. We will assess the possibility of two soccer fields (that can be converted into two small t-ball fields), and a picnic shelter/pavilion.*
- *We will create a new sports minister staff position (part-time) as the church grows and financial means are available. The Sports Minister will be responsible for the facilitation and organization of the sports ministry program, correlative camps, and the recruitment of volunteers.*

➤ **Reach Events**

- *We will continue to host Reach Events such as, but not limited to: The Christmas Store, The Living Christmas Tree, Egg Drop, Harvest Festival, First Responders’ Meal, VBS, Backyard Kids’ Club, Instrumental Night of Praise, and Business Leader Revival Luncheons.*

Midground Vision (1 Year)

100 % Member Maturation – In 2020, leveraging Sunday School and Grow Groups, we see every Friendly Avenue Baptist Church member growing in biblical maturity through the key disciplines, starting with daily prayer, Bible study, and the resulting application.

Beginning this fall, our desire is to see 2020 become a high water mark in the life of Friendly Avenue Baptist Church, as every person who calls FABC “my church” and who has completed the Membership process, increases in their Biblical maturity by prioritizing daily Bible Study, the studying of God’s Word and striving to apply this in every aspect of daily living. While this is not a complete picture of biblical maturity, in this first year we see these three disciplines leading to other key marks of maturity in areas of evangelism and ministry service. The primary vehicles for supporting our members in this work will be Sunday School and Grow Groups, as a consistent opportunity for accountability and encouragement.

Foreground Vision (90 Days)

➤ **Create Margin on the Calendar**

- The goal is to create margin on the calendar in order to fulfill the 1-year calling of 100 percent member maturity.
- The reasons for this initiative are based on the prioritization of our core values.
 - The core value of a church focused on Bible-centered worship is minimized when excessive meetings, often uncoordinated, prohibit opportunities for spiritual growth. Membership involvement for Sunday School (Sunday a.m.) and Grow Groups (Sunday p.m.) requires the elimination of Sunday afternoon meetings. The staff has agreed to change the Grow Group meeting time from 5:00-6:30 p.m. on Sunday evening. We will eliminate Sunday afternoon meetings so that every church member can participate in Grow Groups. It is not advantageous for the development of our discipleship ministry if families are at church two and three hours before Grow Groups start due to other programming/meetings. As such, we will “clear the Sunday afternoon calendar” to highlight what is most important – spiritual growth through biblical maturity. Details will be provided on Vision Sunday. In addition, the earlier start time will enable younger families with children to participate. We think that an end-time of 6:30 pm will allow parents to have their children in bed at an appropriate time. We are also under the opinion that the change in schedule will encourage our senior adults to join Grow Groups. Many seniors avoid driving late at night.
 - The core value of a calling to missions is minimized when excessive meetings, often uncoordinated, prohibit opportunities for mission. We will not fulfill God’s plan for us to live on mission in our community if we do not create margin in our church calendar.
 - The core value of disciple-making is minimized when excessive meetings, often uncoordinated, prohibit opportunities for evangelism and discipleship. We cannot build relationships with unbelievers and faithfully advance our “Who’s Your One” initiative when meetings and church activities dominate the church calendar. Disciple-making is a lifestyle, not a program. As such, we have to create time on the church calendar so that FABC members can make disciple-making a priority.
 - The core value of a commitment to family ministry is minimized when excessive meetings, often uncoordinated, prohibit families from being together. Friendly Avenue staff members serve as liaisons on multiple committees. It is not healthy for a staff member to be away from his/her family several nights during the weekday. Our staff should live by the mantra, “Give your morning and afternoon to the church; give the evening to your family.”
- The plan is to corral all regular scheduled meetings to one night a month (3rd Monday). Childcare will be provided for members with children so that mom and/or dad can participate in the leadership structures of Friendly Avenue Baptist Church. 6 p.m. – Committee Meetings; 7 p.m. – Ministry Team Meetings (plus Personnel & FACP Committee); 8 p.m. – Deacons Meeting. A full list of meeting times and room assignments will be provided to committee chairs and ministry leaders.
- The implementation date is set to begin on Monday, September 16, 2019.

6:00 p.m.

Building and Grounds (Liaison: Kevin Lucas) **MC 101**
Missions (Liaison: Steve) **MC 104**
Finance (Liaison: Daniel) **104 C**

The committees listed below do not meet every month. However, when meetings are necessary, they will meet in the following locations:

By-Laws **MC102** *When applicable
Recreation Liaison: Jamie) **MC 103** *When applicable
Leadership Meeting Liaison: Doris) **MC 105** *When applicable
Trustees **MC 106** *When applicable
Baptismal **MC107A** *When applicable
Love Fund **MC107B** *When applicable
Deacon Nomination **114W** *When applicable
Transportation **101W** *When applicable
Hospitality **105W*** When applicable
Flowers **112W** *When applicable
Stewardship Development Committee³

7:00 p.m.

Youth Ministry Team (Leader: Jamie) **MC 101**
Children's Ministry Team (Leader: Laura) **MC 102**
Grow Ministry Team (Leader: Steve) **MC 103**
Personnel Committee (Liaison: Daniel) **MC 104**
E-Ministry Team (Leader: Chris W.) **MC 105**
WMU (Leader: Doris) **MC 106**
Sunday School Leadership Team (Leader: Dale) **MC 107A**
Friendly Avenue Christian Preschool (Liaison: Sandy) **MC 107B**
Worship Ministry (Leader: Kenny/Connie) **Choir Room**
Reach Team (Leader: Mac Mclean) **112W**

The ministry teams listed below do not meet every month. However, when meetings are necessary, they will meet in the following locations:

Shut-In Ministry (Liaison: Phil W) *When applicable **104 C**
Karen Ministry (Liaison: Bryan P) *When applicable **114W**
Other FABC Ministries *When applicable

8:00 p.m.

Deacons Meeting (Daniel) **MC 106**

³ The Stewardship Development Committee will meet each Tuesday night in February (MC104). This is the only committee that will not meet on the 3rd Monday of the month.

➤ **Sunday School Next Steps**

- We see the need to elevate Sunday School as a primary engine that fuels Friendly Avenue.
- We will continue to emphasize the five purposes of Sunday School: Teach, care, reach, disciple new believers, create new classes.
- We will encourage each class to fill their leadership structure.
- We will look to create new classes as the church continues to expand and grow.
- We will offer customized training to assist the needs of each class. Training will be hosted by members of our Sunday School Leadership Team.
 - Teacher training – Sunday School Director
 - Care Group training – Pastoral Care Minister
 - Outreach training – Outreach Director
 - New believer discipleship training – New Believer Discipleship Director
 - New class launch training – Sunday School Director
 - Deacon Training – Chairman of Deacons

➤ **Come Home Campaign**

- What: The “Come Home Campaign” is an initiative to re-connect with unengaged Friendly Avenue church members who are on the roll, but not on our radar.⁴
- Purpose: Auxano, the church consultant firm working with Friendly Avenue Baptist Church, teaches four reasons why people choose a church.
 - People attend church because of the place
 - People attend church because of the people
 - People attend church because of the pastor/staff
 - People attend church because of programs

Auxano describes these four reasons as a “lower floor mentality.” While these factors may initially draw people to a church, they will not keep people at a church for one simple reason: Each of these factors are subject to change at a moment’s notice. (i.e. the geographical landscape around a church changes, thus prompting that church to relocate; church members move to another city; a pastor is called to another assignment; a church determines to create new programs and eliminate old ones). The goal for every church leader is to move people from the lower floor mentality to the upper floor mentality. The upper floor is an adage to describe a disciple-making culture where people attend a church because of the mission, strategy, core values, biblical measures, and vision proper.

- Proposal and Strategy. The strategy is two-fold: 1) Open the front door; 2) Lead them upstairs

I. Open the Front Door

Connect with the Pastor and Staff

- Create a database contact list of unengaged church members.

⁴ Unengaged church member is defined as someone who has not attended Friendly Avenue in the past 12 months.

- Select a restaurant venue for dinner and Q&A with pastor/staff.
- Set 2-3 dates this fall for lunches/dinner ([October 22 and 24, 2019](#)).
- Create graphics for an invitation card (registration link included).
- Print invitation cards.
- Have a church member, who lives nearby, to deliver the invitation card to the unengaged member. A video tutorial will be provided on what to say when delivering the invitation. (Auxano provides a resource whereby you can insert home addresses into a spreadsheet, and it pin drops where church members live in a community. We can create two spreadsheets, 1) active church members 2) unengaged church members, to determine which active church member is in closest geographical proximity to an unengaged church member).
- Track the RSVP's through online registration.
- Use handwritten letter from Pastor Daniel to reinforce invitation.
- Invite the active church member, who delivered the invitation to sit at the dinner table with the unengaged church member who responded.
- Determine seating arrangements at the dinner. Each FABC staff member will host a table.

Connect with the Place

- Select a date for "Come Home" Sunday ([November 17, 2019](#)).
- Create a post card, to be mailed out (2) weeks following the dinners.
- Create a website link on the postcard that contains a video message from Daniel. The content of the message is to: 1) Thank those who attended the dinner(s) and 2) Invite dinner attendees and those who were unable to attend the dinner to the worship service on "Come Home Sunday."
- Mail postcards to unengaged members, inviting them to attend the worship service on "Come Home Sunday."
- Ask all church members to put information on Facebook about the "Come Home" Sunday.
- Ask church members to invite any unengaged member with whom they have a relationship to attend "Come Home Sunday."

Connect with the People

Through Relationships:

- Encourage active members to schedule a dinner with an unengaged church member for the purpose of cultivating a relationship.

Through Sunday School:

- Have the Sunday School Leadership team to review class rosters from the past 10 years.
- Provide Sunday School outreach leaders/teachers the contact information for any person who was on the roll in the past ten years but who has not attended in the past year (must cross-reference for those who have: 1) moved church membership 2) moved away 3) passed away).
- Have each Sunday School outreach leader to write handwritten cards to unengaged church members who previously attended their class.
- Have each Sunday School class to personally invite unengaged church members to a class breakfast on "Come Home Sunday."
- Allot funds for the Sunday School Leadership team to purchase breakfast for every class.
- Plan an additional Sunday School breakfast for January.

Connect with the Programs

- Track the number of unengaged members who attend 1) Dinner; 2) Coming Home Sunday; 3) Sunday School breakfast.
- Send email with information about Friendly Avenue programming.
- Ask, in the email, if a Friendly Avenue staff member can contact them with more information about our ministries.
- Invite unengaged members to attend a Reach Event at Friendly Avenue.

II. Lead Them Upstairs

- Track the number of unengaged members who attend 1) Dinner; 2) Come Home Sunday; 3) Sunday School breakfast.
- Friendly Avenue Baptist staff to schedule home visits with unengaged church members who attended dinner, Come Home Sunday, or Sunday School breakfast.
- Invite unengaged members to attend the Connect Class to learn more about our vision, beliefs, measures, core values, and discipleship pathway.
- Invite unengaged members to the once-a-month dinner at the Pastor's House where they can meet new guests of Friendly Avenue.
- At once-a-month dinner, encourage unengaged members to walk forward on a Sunday morning. in the near future to make public their re-engagement to Friendly Avenue Baptist Church.
- Connect unengaged members, now committed to reengagement, to Sunday School.
- Connect unengaged members, now committed to reengagement, to a GROW Group.
- Connect unengaged members, now committed to reengagement, to a ministry of service.
- Connect unengaged members, now committed to reengagement, to Church on Mission; Life on Mission; Go as mission.

➤ **Schedule Changes**

- Schedule changes begin on Sunday, September 8, 2019.

Sunday Morning Schedule

8:30 a.m.	1 st Service
9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
11:00 a.m.	2 nd Service

Sunday Evening Schedule

Adults

5:00 p.m.	GROW Assembly
5:30 p.m.	GROW Groups
6:30 p.m.	Depart

Children

4:45 p.m.	Kids Praise
5:45 p.m.	Grow Groups (Children)

6:30 p.m. Depart

Youth

4:45 p.m. Meal/Attic/Grow Groups

6:30 p.m. Youth Bells/Youth Choir

Wednesday Evening Schedule

5:15 p.m. Church Fellowship/Meal

6:15 p.m. Mid-Week at Friendly (Adults)

Choir Rehearsal (Music Ministry with Youth included)

Awana/Children's Ministry (Children and Youth)

Youth Small Groups

7:30 p.m. Depart

III. We aimed to **develop a path** for our church

➤ **What is the current path...?**

“Discipleship is a map, not a menu” – One of the leading advocates and practitioners of biblical church-based discipleship ministries among Southern Baptist today penned these words to point out that:

- Discipleship does not happen when we gravitate to Bible studies that simply peak our interests (a menu) and from which frequently little to no real-life application is initiated.
- Discipleship is a map with a starting point and a prescribed destination; that of a new creation in Christ moving towards biblical spiritual maturity as a reproducing disciple-maker just as Jesus defined it.ⁱ

Let’s walk around this map we call the Discipleship Pathway (see digital booklet).

The mission of the church as Jesus defined it in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is to “make disciples as we go”. Disciple-making is a two-part endeavor:

- Evangelism – In order to connect with FABC one must first connect with Jesus.
- Discipleship – In order to mature in Christ, we learn to obey His commands, which propels us to:
 - Serve one another and the community around us,
 - Reach others with the gospel.

NOTE: A mature Christian, the role we all should aspire to, is that of one who:

- is a verbal witness of the good news of Jesus Christ,
- is equipped in God’s Word,
- is practicing God’s Word through daily application.

The Discipleship Pathway is our church plan for “equipping the saints for the work of ministry.... until we all attain... to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”ⁱⁱ

Look at the inner circle of the Pathway. It gives specific ways that we accomplish our goals of connecting, growing, serving, and reaching.

Once a person has received Jesus and is connected with FABC through membership the following seven steps define the pathway to spiritual maturity:

- Related to GROW:
 - **Step #1: Join a Sunday School class** (John 13:34-35, Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - p. 17 – Sunday School is the place, time and environment in which we start to live out the Christian life.
 - Teaching (Teachers and Apprentice Teachers providing quality training in the Word),
 - Caring (Care Group Leaders and Deacons leading the class members to minister to one another),
 - Sharing (Outreach Leaders leading the class to reach out to neighbors and friends)
 - Discipling (New Believer Disciple-makers shepherding the newly baptized in their early walk with the Lord)

- Birthing (Each class becoming healthy so as to replicate new classes in order to attend to the needs of the many new believers we believe will join us)

I want you to see the Sunday School as:

- a **“greenhouse”** for creating hunger to be in the Word and to be with God’s people in order to mature into disciples,
- a **“base of operations”** from which the class strategically engages the lost in the neighborhoods and workplaces of its membership.
 - **Step #2: Covenant with a GROW Group** (2 Timothy 2:2).
 - Description:
 - 3-5 like gendered groups,
 - Accountable to one another to learn the Christian disciplines and apply them,
 - Open and supportive of one another as we “put off” the old and “put on” the new habits of the Christian life,
 - Gathering from September through July each year,
 - Meeting on Sunday evenings for 1.5 hours:
 - 30 minutes in an opening assembly with a Master Teacher,
 - 60 minutes in GROW groups
 - **Hi/Low** – What has gone on in your life this week?
 - **Scripture memorization** – Hiding God’s Word in our hearts.
 - **H.E.A.R. Journal** – Sharing what God has shown us through His Word this week.
 - **Application** – How will we obey God this week?
 - **Prayer** for one another – Spend time in prayer.
 - Why do you and I need GROW Groups?
 - Being accountable through a GROW Group will help you become a disciple and it will help you make disciples during subsequent iterations of GROW Groups.
 - How can you join? Go on-line to registration, or see Pastor Steve.
 - **Step #3: Investigate your spiritual gifts.** (1 Peter 4:10) As you grow together in GROW Groups, we want you to find both a **service ministry** and a **reach ministry**.

NOTE: Our obedience to the mission of serving others in ministry and reaching others through evangelism is directly connected to our growth into mature disciples through discipleship.

- Related to SERVE:
 - **Step #4: Church Ministry**
 - Galatians 5:13, “...through love serve one another.”
 - See opportunities on pages 19-20. At FABC opportunities to serve abound:
 - through our committee structure,
 - through our various ministries, both within and outside the church.

- Related to REACH:
 - **Step #5: Life as Mission**
 - John 20:21 “Peace *be* with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”
 - See page 21 – “Life as Mission” means learning to leverage the rhythms of life in which we already live and move so as to include not-yet-believers by:
 - sharing meals together,
 - listening to their story,
 - celebrating special occasions with them,
 - meeting their needs,
 - sharing our story (testimony) and His story (the good news)
 - **Step #6: Verbal Witness** – We want each FABC member to become equipped and faithful at reaching others with the good news of Jesus.
 - Acts 1:8, “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”
 - Individually: Who’s Your One? – By engaging Life as Mission tactics in your spheres of influence (neighborhood, workplace, hobby, school, etc.)
 - Corporately:
 - “Church as Mission” (see page 22)
 - Karen Church ministry
 - La Red Hispanic Church Planting Ministry
 - Go 2020 Mission Opportunities (see page 23)⁵
 - Local Mission Trip in Pocket 22
 - State Mission Trip for Hurricane Relief
 - National Mission Trip to Knoxville, TN
 - International Mission Trip to Ukraine
 - **Step #7: Accompany to Connect** (John 1:41-42) “He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which translated means Christ). He brought him to Jesus”
 - When you share the good news with someone:
 - Invite them to your Sunday School class,
 - Accompany them to one of the worship services,
 - Bring them to the Pastor’s Connect Class

Note: As disciples who reproduce, our role is to continually move around the path, leading others as we go. Discipleship is a lifestyle, not a program. Jesus told us that we are to “make disciples as we go” and “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” We never stop walking the path. I hope you will join Jesus and others who wish to walk in His ways on the FABC Discipleship Pathway!

⁵ The Go Mission Opportunities are based on the “concentric circles” missional philosophy of Acts 1:8 (Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth). As such, each year we will plan a local mission trip in Greensboro; a stateside mission trip in North Carolina for disaster relief; a national mission trip in the United States; and an international mission trip around the world). We will unveil the following year’s mission trips at our annual “May is for Missions” luncheon.

Legacy Fund...

Good Morning! My name is Colon Knight. Along with Craig Cook and Jim Hicks, I have been asked by Pastor Daniel to develop a legacy giving plan for Friendly Avenue Baptist Church.

The purpose of the Legacy Plan is to ensure the long-term viability and equip the leadership of FABC to fulfill our mission, *"to bring all people into the joy of a transforming relationship with Jesus Christ"*. This is accomplished by allowing church members and friends of the church to bless and sustain FABC ministries via legacy gifts. To be clear, legacy giving is including FABC in your estate plan or as a beneficiary to certain assets. This should not take the place of your tithe or current commitment to the building fund.

The scope of the Legacy Plan is to educate and engage any interested church members on the benefits of including FABC in their estate plan, as insurance beneficiaries, or in other forms (QTIP, CRT, CLT, etc.) of long-term legacy giving.

The Legacy Committee, upon addition to the bylaws, will consist of five members, including the Executive Director of Legacy Giving. The committee will be formed from two church members at large, one deacon, one Finance Committee Member, and one trustee. Due to the long-term nature of investing and legacy planning, this committee will be unique in the church structure in that we will ask the committee members to serve for six (6) years. The Legacy Committee will have dotted line responsibility to the finance committee. The committee will be responsible for:

- General education of the church body on giving opportunities
- Working with church members and their estate attorneys, financial advisors, and insurance agents to set up FABC as a beneficiary
- Provision of standard language to be included in the estate plan
- Ensuring timely transfer of gifts
- Determining the best method for use of certain gifts (houses, land, artwork, restricted securities, etc.)
- Assuming authority to accept or reject gifts (if the requirements of the gifts do not meet our policy or church mission statement).

The committee will also be responsible for developing and maintaining a formal investment policy for all legacy gifts. The investment policy will protect and safeguard the assets gifted to FABC. The Finance Committee will continue to be responsible for the distribution of the gifts as needed or directed.

The members will be able to contribute to four (4) pre-determined specific areas: The General Budget, Missions (local, national, and international), capital improvements, and scholarships/education. The four areas will be handled slightly differently than in the past. Funds for each of the four areas listed above will be pooled, and there will be a specific investment plan for each, based on the time frame for need supplied by the Finance Committee. The reason for this change is to allow for a more cohesive and simpler method to manage the current and future assets given to the church.

Please see either Craig, Jim or myself if you have any questions. We will also be adding information to the FABC website regarding this program in the future. If you are meeting with your attorney or financial adviser in the near future and you would like to include FABC in your legacy giving plans, please contact one of us to help you get started. Thank you!

➤ **Capital Campaign Debt Retirement**

We encourage every new church member to pray about giving to the “Ministry Center Debt Retirement Fund.” The goal is to retire our current debt (\$1,259,224.19) in the year 2021. For more information, see one of the ministers at Friendly Avenue about how you can give towards the debt retirement program, or call the church office for a pledge card.

ⁱ Abide in the **Word** (John 8:31-32), Continue in **Prayer** (John 15:7), Walk in **Fellowship** (John 13:34-35), Reach through **Witness** (John 15:8), Reproduce **disciples** (Matthew 28:18-20)

ⁱⁱ Ephesians 4:12-23